

SPECTRUM OF KNOWLEDGE



Key to the Art of Living

**Complete Works of
Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya**

*(Samagra Vāṅmaya)
A Brief Resume*

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PREFACE

The life of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya reflects the nitid glow of divinity indwelling in the eternal origin of spirituality. His personality was a harmonious conjugation of a devoted saint, spiritual scientist, *yogi*, eminent scholar and visionary. His contributions in the freedom movement of India and in social reformation from the religious platform stand as the monuments of dedication to truth, love and justice.

His enlightened wisdom and spirituality had a reach into the deepest depth of human mind. He had felt the pains of humanity through heart. He could therefore identify the root cause of the ailing state of the world today as the crisis of faith, people's ignorance of the powers of the inner self, and the lack of righteous attitude.

Realising the potential of literature and its relevance in the present era of intellectual evolution, he had chosen writing as the principal mode towards uprooting the vices and illusions of human mind and simultaneously awakening its pure intellect, hidden strength and spiritual radiance. His distinct qualities as eloquent writer and inspiring orator had helped natural expansion of his noble mission of ethical, intellectual and social reformation and elevation with viable impact.

Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya wrote a record number of over 2700 books in Hindi on almost all aspects of human life. This covered wide-ranging topics pertaining to in-depth analysis of Spirituality, Psychology and Religion in scientific light; *Yoga*, as an Art of Living; Foundational Elements of Indian Culture; Science and Philosophy of *Gāyatrī* and *Yagya*; the Science of *Tantra* and *Mantra*; Evolution of vital energy; Activation of extrasensory power centres in the endocrine system; Unconscious and Superconscious domains of Mind; Total Psychology; Power of Intrinsic Faith and Sentiments...; Science of Entertainment; Total Health, Bioelectricity and Biomagnetism, Ancient and Modern Sciences of Alternative Medicine; Education and Initiation of True Knowledge; Absolute

Education in the Laboratory of Life; Personality Development and Refinement of Talents; Self-reliant education; Viable Economics linked with Welfare and Progress; Agriculture and Non conventional sources of energy; Reinvestigation of scriptures with modern perspectives; Vedic sciences of Astrology and Astronomy; Moral, Cultural and Social revolutions; Ascent of Women in the 21st Century; Origin and expansion of divine culture for new world order; Future of the world in the next millennium and beyond;,etc.

Some erudite reviewers opine that the perception, conception and realisation of different dimensions of Science, Philosophy, Religion and Spirituality are expressed most vividly in Gurudev Shriram Sharma's literature. The depth and expansion of his knowledge seem to have a natural coherence with every impulse of human mind and the subliminal cores of sentiments charged with divine force.....

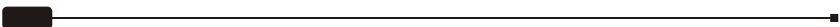
This book by Prof. Rajani Joshi, is an attempt to present a brief introduction to his monumental works published in "*Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya*" series of 108 volumes. Although it is difficult to preserve the soul-intimacy and lucidity of the original in the translations, it is hoped that the glimpses of the *Vangmaya* volumes given here would guide the minds and hearts of the readers to what they were looking for in their quest for completeness and would also provide a key to the art of living a fulfilling life.

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THE LIFE AND WORKS OF A VISIONARY & THE ARCHITECT OF A NEW ERA

(*Yug Draṣṭā Kā Jīvan Darśan*)

Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya was a *rishi* of the present age whose heart pulsated with divine love for all. Every moment of his life was devoted to the welfare of people and refinement of the moral and cultural environment of life. He also pioneered renaissance of spirituality and creative integration of modern and ancient sciences and religion -- in a manner, most relevant and necessary in the present circumstances of human life.

His writings carry the force of his enlightened inner self and have the power to let his thoughts reach deep into the minds and hearts of the readers. Each of his books is a milestone, a guiding pillar in the corresponding discipline of knowledge. His eloquence, logical arguments, authentic references, illustrations and experiences, and comprehensive discussions intimately engaging the readers' psychology are indeed remarkable. Perhaps this is the reason why his literature has been well received by people from all walks of life possessing different intellectual and psychological backgrounds. His literature also serves as an effective means of collective enlightenment.

Be that the decipheration of the esoteric aspects of the subtle science of *Kuṇḍalinī Yoga* and *Śaktipāta*,etc; research directions on brain and consciousness...etc, discussions on child psychology and family institutions etc; or, information on healthy food and modes of cheerfulness in routine life..., etc, Acharya Sharma's spontaneity and lucidity make every topic interesting and comprehensible. There is no place for illusion or misconception in his perspicuous analysis and guidance. His oral deliberations too manifest similar perfection of eloquence. The simplicity of language in his orations and his ability to set an enlivened linkage with the audience has a

hypnotizing effect on the listener's mind. The spiritual charge and integrity of his character, consonance of his words with his deeds and purity of his sentiments add to the motivating power of his pen and voice.

The *Vangmaya* series of 108 volumes is an attempt to present a compilation of his unique contributions to different disciplines of knowledge -- through his writings and discourses, encompassing almost every dimension of human life and guiding righteous path of prosperity and progress with peace and happiness for all..... The volumes also give details on the reformative and constructive activities and achievements of his noble mission. Adept knowledge for refinement of the personal, professional, familial and social spheres of our lives and gradual escalation of virtuous tendencies and talents is available here with immense guidance and information.

The first volume sketches the life of Acharya Sharma. It gives us the rare opportunity to sharing his experiences in the great *Himalayas*, experiences of his spiritual endeavors, his devotion, his encounters with the ups and downs and ever-new challenges of an austere and duty-bond married life dedicated to social welfare.... Above all, the volume would allow us to share with him, his serene love and compassion for all beings..., which grew and expanded with every breath of his pious life. This volume also introduces the subject matter, focus and scope of the successive volumes of the *Vangmaya* series.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma was born on 20th September 1911 in Anvalkheda, Agra district in India. He scrupulously carried out the biddings of his Guru, a great Himalayan *yogi*, since he was 15 years old. He had lived in arduous places in the Himalayas several times for varied duration of time ranging from few days to several years (vols. 1 and 93).

Science and Philosophy of Gayatri Mantra, Meditation, Yoga and Sadhanas of Spiritual Transmutation of Personality:

Acharya Sharma was a great devotee of *Gāyatrī*. He had successfully practiced and mastered the highest kinds of *sādhanās* (spiritual endeavors) of *Gāyatrī*, *Sāvitrī* and *Kuṇḍalini*. He had completed 24 *mahāpurashcharaṇas* of *Gāyatrī* meditation with ascetic disciplines while also sincerely transacting his familial, social and national responsibilities. There is no parallel to this kind of *sādhanā* ever performed by any one on this earth. He deciphered absolute knowledge of the philosophy and science of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* and hence that of the entire gamut of *yoga* and spirituality. He propagated this knowledge for the enlightenment of people across the globe without any discrimination of religion, caste, creed, sex, or social status.

Acharya Sharma had also pioneered experiments on simple *sādhanās*, which could be easily pursued by the people today. He had guided spiritual and intellectual refinement of millions of people by initiating such *sādhanās* of *Gāyatrī*. The nectar extracted by him from the gigantic ocean of the knowledge of *Gāyatrī Mantra* and the *yoga sādhanās* associated with it is presented in the volume nos. 4-6 and 9-15 of the Vangmaya series. These volumes also present the 'occult' or 'latent' treasure of knowledge on - the *sādhanās* of sublimation of the five levels (sheaths) of consciousness and divine attainments through *Gāyatrī sādhanā*; the *Sāvitrī-sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī* and transmutation of the serpentine power (*Kuṇḍalini*); Scientific basis of *sādhanās*,, etc. The myths and realities of supernormal attainments through *Gāyatrī sādhanā* - are also thoroughly analyzed by him in these volumes. Authentic experiences of thousands of people are presented to illustrate how *Gāyatrī Sādhanā* illuminates the worldly, mental and spiritual domains of life and initiates righteous progress. The intensive reviews and experiences cited here include those of erudite scholars, great personalities and noted talents of different ages from different parts of the world.

The above volumes would serve as eminent source of guidance for all aspirants of spiritual attainments through *Gāyatrī* meditation and for the scholars of *vedik mantras* and ancient sciences. These volumes also highlight the special training programmes of elementary and higher level *Gāyatrī sādhanās*, spiritual refinement and personality development offered in the spiritually charged center of the Gayatri Pariwar mission at Shantikunj, Hardwar (India).

Mantraa and Music Subtler Dimensions of Sound:

The science of music, *tantras*, *mantras* and the cosmic and spiritual dimensions of sound are discussed in volume no. 19, 95 and 96 of the vangmaya series. These volumes also report and review the findings of scientific research in modern laboratories on ultra- and infra- sonic waves and beyond...., and give new directions to advanced research. Multifarious aspects of sound and the science of mantras are covered here. These range - from the harmonious configuration of syllables in the mantras, the psychological and physical impact of the specific sonic pattern generated by their repeated enunciation...., to the origin and expansion of music...; importance of collective chanting of mantras to ... the state-of-art and scope of music therapy....; genesis and perennial expansion of the universe in the eternal sound of *Omkāra*....., to the realisation of *Shabda-Brahm* and *Nada-Brahm* and attainment of ultimate bliss and divine culmination through *Nada yoga*..., etc.

Science and Spirituality New Experiments:

Acharya Sharma had pioneered renaissance of the science of spirituality and established the foundation for its creative integration with the modern sciences. It was indeed a Herculean task given the trends of intellectual and scientific evolution since the past millenium and almost simultaneous deterioration of the institutions of religion and culture, which had resulted in a near total neglect of spirituality in human life and had led to all kinds of blind faiths, misconceptions, and prejudices..... The Brahmvarchas research centre established by Acharya Sharma in 1978 at Shantikunj

Hardwar (India) stands as a live example of how his ideas could be implemented and researched in the modern laboratories.

Absolute Health, Longevity of Youth and Beauty:

This centre has pioneered, under the noble guidance of Acharya Sharma, research in *yagyopathy* - cure by herbal medicines sublimated in the sacred fire of *Yagya*. It has re-investigated the methods of performing *Yagya*, which were experimented and propagated by the *rishis* of yore towards the ideal maintenance of the eco-system and healthy environment of life. Volume nos. 25 and 26 throw light on the integrated science and philosophy of *Yagya*.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma had also inspired in-depth research in *Ayurveda* - especially on the phytochemical, botanical and pharmaceutical analysis of the herbal (plant) medicines vis-à-vis the descriptions in ancient scriptures on this Indian science of medicine. A botanical garden of over 400 Himalayan herbs is planted in Brahmvarchas and Shantikunj premises. About fifty *ayurvedic* medicines are prepared here based on the research findings. These have been found to be effective in curing many chronic and otherwise declared incurable diseases. These are supplied by Shantikunj-Pharmacy at low costs and are in great demand within and outside India. For the first time in the modern history of *Ayurveda*, an expiry date is identified for the dry powders too.

The volume nos. 39 and 40 give detailed information on the above research and the herbal medicines along with a thorough review of the scientific basis and scope of the alternate systems of medicine. These volumes also offer practical guidance for preventive cure and maintenance of healthy and vigorous life today, when the external as well as the internal spheres of life are subjected to unprecedented pollution and mental and emotional aberrations. Secrets of - "Absolute Health" and "Longevity of Youth and Beauty", are elucidated by Acharya Sharma in the volume nos. 41 and 42. Psychological health is an essential component of "Total Health". The volume nos. 71-73 analyze the gamut of psychological and

psychiatric problems and disorders being faced by increasing number of people today. Absolute remedies and preventive measures are discussed here.... Right from practical guidance on stress management in day-to-day life to the principles and practices of cultivating positive thinking and perfect psychological health are presented here.

The knowledge extracted from the scriptures, and the new directions cited for research on the esoteric components like the endocrine system,etc, and interdisciplinary studies of neuro-biochemistry, bioelectricity, hormonal secretions, psychology, *yoga* and the science of spirituality, add to the invaluable contributions of these volumes.

Conscious, Unconscious and Superconscious Mind:

Acharya Sharma viewed spirituality as an evolution of human psychology. He realised divinity as evolved culmination of spirituality. He affirmed intellectual purity, prudence and piety of the sentiments of love, compassion and altruist service as spiritual virtues reflecting the presence of *thee* in the human self. His research on the astonishing potentials of human brain and miraculous powers of mind (volume no. 18), bioelectricity, bio-magnetism and elevation of vital energy (vols. 17-18), total psychology and conscious, subconscious and super-conscious cores of human mind (vols. 20-22) also elucidates those horizons of neuro-sciences, endocrine system and psychology, which are still beyond the reach of the 'conventional' modern sciences. These volumes seem to form the basis for comprehensive scientific research on human brain and mind in the years to come....

The above volumes together with the volume nos. 4-6, 20-21, 57-58, 73-75 and 80 will apprise us with the source of immense power hidden in our own body and mind and motivate ideal evolution of our personality with practical guidance. Acharya Sharma has envisaged awakening of divinity in man (vol. 54) as the natural process of evolution of consciousness which can be initiated by spiritual refinement. Quest for decipheration of the interrelation

between the human mind, Nature and the Omnipresent Consciousness Force is investigated by him in scientific light (vol. 55). The illusions and the facts about "Life After Death" - discussed by him in the volume 16 appear to be the best piece of scientifically sound works on this topic of common curiosity.

Scientific Religion and Theism:

Acharya Sharma had envisaged scientific religion (vol. 24) as the religion of future. His logical arguments, in-depth analysis of the philosophy of religion vis-à-vis human psychology (vol. 53) would enlighten us with the true meaning, relevance and necessity of religion in human life. His discussions on refinement of the present state of religious systems and on the mutual complementarity of religion and science (vol. 23) and adept guidance on viable interaction of the two streams of true knowledge (vol. 58), would convince us why his seemingly 'imaginary' vision should be, and could be, realised for happy survival of human civilization and resurrection of cultural values. How this would gradually materialize in the forthcoming decades is described in the volume nos. 27, 65-66, 101, 106.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma advises worshiping the deity of life (vol. 2) and total surrender to adoption of the piety and radiance of divine virtues (vol. 3), as the best modes of worshiping God. His answers to the multifarious doubts and queries like - "who or what is God...?", "where to find *thou*....?", etc, would open up the minds of all - including the ardent theists and devotees as well as the 'rational' atheists, scientists and intellectuals. His trenchant discussions would enlighten each one of us with the brilliance of truth about the existence, manifestations and realisations of God (vol. 8) and expression of the roots and reflections of theism (vol. 56) in human life.

Reinvestigation of Vedic Literature:

It was sometimes in 1960 when he had translated all the 4 *Vedas*, 108 *Upnishadas*, 6 *Darshanas*, 18 *Puranas*, *Yogavashishtha*, and hundreds of *Āranyakas* and *Brahmanas* in Hindi with lucid

commentaries to enable the masses get an idea of what this ancient treasure of knowledge contained. It was also aimed at eliminating the misconceptions, superstitions and blind customs which were propagated in the medieval era by deliberate misinterpretations of the *vedik* hymns and scriptures. This precious contribution to the world of knowledge and to human culture was revered by noted scholars and saints like Dr. S. Radhakrishana and Vinoba Bhave; The distinguished title of "*Vedamoorti*" was conferred upon him for this recognition..... The nectar of *Arsh Sahitya* (*vedik* literature) extracted by him is presented in the volume nos. 102-104.

Integration of Science and Religion and Mass Education from Religious Platform :

His deliberations on the teachings of the holy Gita and Ramayana stand as masterpiece of works on these monuments of cultural culmination and divine philosophy of life. His perspicuous explanations have also made these contributions (volume nos. 30-32 and 36) most vivid mediums of mass education.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma was a *rishi* of the present era. Knowing the psychology of people today, and recognizing the non-relevance, in the present times, of the allegoric characters and the background of life depicted in the Puranas, he endeavored substituting the latter by eloquent literature - written in similar narrative and conversational style, which would preach the eternal principles of happy, progressive and ideal life in scientific light with practical guidance of special relevance in modern age. He wrote the "*Pragya Purana*" for this purpose. Volume 38 of this Vangmaya series introduces the first six parts of this Purana of our century. The volume nos. 68, 91-92, 94 and 105 contain compilation of his recorded speeches, letters, selected thoughts and poem and songs. These provide an excellent mode for self-learning and contribute to enlightenment of the masses by setting a lively interaction between the readers and the noble guru, Acharya Sharma.

The volume nos. 43-45, 50-52, 67, and 97-99 also contribute in the above sequence where Acharya Sharma has compiled the inspiring episodes of many great people of the ancient and the modern times, encompassing almost all circumstances and different walks of human life. The lives and works of the elevators of culture, devotees of altruist service, glories of world history, great men and women whom the world will owe for ever...., are also described here. The volumes 69 and 70 together present an encyclopedia of quotable quotes from different scriptures of almost all religions of the world, and the thoughts and sayings of great personalities and distinguished talents of immortal glory. The author's explanation on the unified purpose and teachings here, make these volumes more useful and remarkable.

Revival of Indian Culture:

As part of his intensive study of the Indian culture and religious philosophy, he has recovered the sociological and psychological importance of pilgrimage (vol. 37). He has discussed how the ancient glory and the real purpose of the *tirthas* (sacred places of pilgrimage) could be revived in the present times for the welfare of the masses.... The immortal contributions of the divine culture of India to the rest of the world are reviewed in volume no. 35. The foundational elements of the Indian culture and the secrets of its divine nature are deciphered in the volume no. 34.

It is indeed inspiring to know how the sixteen sacred ceremonies (*Shodash Sanskāras*) devised here constituted a perfect system for ideal development, psychological conditioning and training...., since the post embryonic stage of one's existence.... Description and scientific basis of these *Sanskāras* is presented in volume no. 33.

Acharya Sharma also presents a modified system of such *Sanskāras*, which is more suitable and required in the present circumstances of life. The volume also highlights how the different types and initiation-timings of these *Sanskāras* help inculcation of righteous attitude, courage, talents and virtuous tendencies -- keeping in harmony with the changing psychology of a person at different stages of life....

The Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā Advent of Ethical, Spiritual, Intellectual and Social Transformation :

Gurudev Shriram Sharma attributes the power of thinking as the greatest of all the powers of Nature and its conscious component (vol. 73, 81). He emphasizes awakening of pure, discerning intellect to enable ideal use of this unique power bestowed on humans. Because, it is the advent of righteous thinking, which educes the spark of life in the otherwise 'dead' bookish education (*shikshā*) and thus illuminates the mind and inner self with the initiation of true knowledge (*vidyā*). The nectar of *vidyā* induces the vital charge of divine values in the 'materialistic' and self-centered intellect of man and activates the hidden force of his soul. Then, there remains no place left for any vices, malices, mistakes, fear, tension, sorrow, despair, weakness or scarcity in any horizon of life.... Every domain of life blossoms with immense bliss and brilliant success thereafter.

How the ideal concept of total education - comprising of constructive combination of *shikshā* and *vidyā*, could materialize in the modern times, is discussed by him in volume no. 49 of the Vangmaya series. His deliberations on the journey of intellect from ignorance to wisdom (vol. 7) and his guidance on total education system for the adolescent and the matured minds (vol. nos. 58, 76-78, 84), emanate from deep understanding of human psychology and the influence of external circumstances of life and the subtle world of consciousness on it. This is why his ideas seem to give rise to what might be considered a perfect system of education today. The symphony of self-reliant and moral education orchestrated by his organization at Shantikunj, Haridwar and Gayatri Tapobhumi, Mathura, have been very successful and have demonstrated how his ideas could be implanted in reality (vols. 66, 89, 106 of the vangmaya series).

Acharya Sharma's approach is comprehensive and down-to-earth. Most importantly, it encourages collective participation of people from all walks of life. He envisaged social, ethical and intellectual revolution (vol. 65) by elevation of people's life in associated dimensions on personal, familial and social horizons. On this basis he had conceptualized, planned and initiated "Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā"

(vols. 66, 106) to help ushering into a bright era of moral, cultural and spiritual evolution. The boons of scientific and technological advancement would then be used righteously to embark upon progress with peace and happiness for all and resurrection of the divine dignity of humanity.

The foundation of organizational structure necessary for the implementation of the *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā*, was laid by propagation of the knowledge of *Gāyatrī* and *Yagya* in scientific light. This had also made possible, endeavoring, the revival of the Indian Culture in its original glorious form.... *Gāyatrī sādhanā* is the universal source for purification of the inner self, illumination and righteous orientation of intellect, and evolution of spirituality (volume nos. 9 to 15). The philosophy of *Yagya* teaches the altruist mode of living a creative and enlightened life. Scientific experiments on *Yagya* serve the dual purpose of purification of environment and total cure by natural herbs (volumes 25-26).

Organizational Structure for Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā :

The unique experiment of "*Vichāra Krānti*" - gradual refinement of thoughts, righteous transformation of attitude and sublime transmutation of human psychology up to the divine realms of spirituality - was initiated by Acharya Sharma from the day he had organized a grand *Gāyatrī Yagya* in Mathura (India) in 1958. The saintly life of Acharya Sharma and his wife Smt. Bhagavati Devi Sharma, the spiritual charge of their personalities and the inner power of their sacred love for all beings, had attracted all those who had attended this *Yagya* to work for the noble cause of his great mission. This is how the "larger family" like organization - called "**Gayatri Pariwar**", came into existence. This has now expanded across the globe beyond the barriers of religion, creed, caste, sex, socioeconomic status or educational background.

National Development:

Acharya Sharma was a dedicated freedom fighter, who had sincerely participated in the movement of India's independence. In that phase of his life he was trained in the noble company of Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Sri Aurobindo and other revered national heroes of India. A postal stamp was released by the Govt. of India in 1992 to honor his great services to the nation. Right since he was a young volunteer in the non-violent freedom-struggle, this great patriot envisaged that - "if India were to be independent and progressive in the truest sense of the words, an absolute revolution would be necessary on the cultural front too....". The state of the nation today - after more than half a century of political independence, evinces that his vision was indeed real.

His sagacious deliberations, vision and accomplishments would convince us why his approach is most effective in making the nation strong and self-reliant (vols. 64, 90). That his saintly heart pulsed for the welfare of all living beings was clearly expressed, since his childhood, by his altruist service of the poor, weaker and down trodden ones around him (vol. 1). After India's independence, he had, unlike many other freedom-fighters, chosen to dedicate his life for social and cultural reformation from the religious rather than political platform. His definition, philosophy, and realisations of religion (vols. 23-24, 36, 53, 89) are scientific and universal as they emanate from an absolute understanding of human mind and realisation of the inner self.

Social Reformation:

As part of the social reformation programmes of the *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā*, he had given maximum importance to eradication of blind faith, superstitions and untoward customs and traditions prevailing in the Indian society in the name of religion. Details on some of these social reformative activities and their successful expansion are presented in the volume nos. 36, 59, 100-101 and 106-107 of this series. Emancipation of the glory of marriage institution from the clutches of the social evils of dowry, child marriages, exploitation of

women, etc., were propagated (vol. 60, 82-84) by Acharya Sharma from the religious platform too. This bears significant impact in the Indian context where blind customs in the name of religion appear to dominate the convictions and attitudes of the masses.

21st Century Women's Century:

Acharya Sharma had pioneered effective program of women's welfare and rising of the power and honor of womanhood under the banner of "*Nārī Jāgaraṇ Abhiyān*" of his mission since 1940s. The predominant role of a woman, as the first teacher of her child, developer of the future generations, architect of the family institution and hence of the society and the nation too...., is given high recognition under the reformative and educative programs of the *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā* (vol. 47, 85-86). Thanks to his inspirations that the glory of women has begun to re-shine in India first time after the Vedic Age; women have been conducting grand *Yagyas* and religious programs in large number under the auspices of Gayatri Pariwar.

He foresees the 21st century as women's century (vol. 62). The earlier the human society learns this and helps elevation of the status of its oppressed and so-called 'weaker' half, the better it would be... The above volumes also cite comprehensive reviews of women's contributions to the world history, their revered status in the (original) Indian Culture. The history of deterioration on the socioeconomic and religious fronts and the negative psychological trends, misconceptions and misdeed, which led to discrimination between man and woman, are also discussed trenchantly. The reviews also include those of the past, present and future of the women liberation movements, which sprouted with the intellectual civilization and the advent of liberal thinking and democratic developments.

Reformation of the family institution and the marriage institution is given maximum importance by Acharya Sharma as these constitute the building blocks of the edifice of a progressive society and nation (vols. 48, 60, 78-79). He taught (vols. 61, 87-88) and set live examples

to demonstrate that married life is indeed the ideal phase for ascetic practices and spiritual refinement and also for contributing to the worldly progress of the society. His guidance on child development and eminent training of the younger generation (vols. 63, 76-77) should be also read and followed by all those who care for the future of human society.

Architect of New Society:

The global welfare activities under the *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā* are not confined to providing external help to the needy and deprived ones. Rather, this mission aims at finding viable solutions to improve the status of people's life forever. It aims at enabling people solve their own problems and help educe confidence and positive thinking in others too. The personality development programmes (vols. 20, 80) of this mission focus at arousing the inner potentials of the individuals and giving positive and creative orientation to their talents.... The programmes of self-reliant education, coupled with moral elevation and spiritual refinement - initiated under the banner of this mission since 1971, have set shining examples of what is an ideal service of the human society (vol. nos. 66, 100-101, 106-107).

The comprehensive planning of *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā* encompasses simultaneous materialization of ethical, intellectual and social reconstruction in day-to-day life. Systematic action for this purpose begin with the objective of maintaining healthy body, pure mind and practice of industrious co-operation.... at the individual and familial levels, and gradually lead to the development of a culturally civilized ideal society....

The All World Gayatri Pariwar:

It is remarkable to note, how the determined pledge of a single person (Acharya Sharma), *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā*, has brought billions of people together in Gayatri Pariwar for the same purpose.... This grand organization has grown and is expanding without the support of any governmental or non-governmental funding or donations by rich bigwigs. The small sums and pennies contributed by millions of

its members on regular basis have played remarkable role in strengthening its financial resources. Generous devotion of talents and labors by these true followers of Acharya Sharama, ensure the successful progress of *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā*.

The mission's fraternity at Shantikunj, Hardwar - an academy for moral and spiritual awakening and training..., Brahmvarchas research centre (also in Hardwar) for creative integration of the modern science with spirituality, other major establishments - Gayatri Tapobhumi, Mathura, Akhand Jyoti Sansthan, Mathura, Janmbhumi Sthan at Anvalkheda, Agra, and over 3000 distributed social reform centres (called Shakti Pithas or Pragyā Mandalas) are engaged in making Acharya Sharma's dream of "revival of divine culture and global welfare" come true.

The activities of this mission rebuilt our faith in the miraculous strength of collective endeavors for altruist purposes. The details given in this volume would further educe our hopes in the possibilities of resurrection of human dignity even in the present times of - deterioration of cultural and social system and a near total crisis of faith in moral values.

The distinct excellence of Acharya Sharma's approach lies in the fact that he encourages natural escalation of people's bodily, mental, intellectual and spiritual potentials by inspiring their conscious and unconscious minds.... This way, every man and woman can rise consistently from whatever his present level is, by adopting what Acharya Sharma calls - "the art of living", and by sincerely following the simple disciplines and practices of self-analysis, self-restrain, self-evaluation and *Pragyā Yoga* taught by him in several volumes of the Vangmaya series.....

As the collective and continuous motion of waves in an ocean expands beyond every limit, similarly, the collective and progressive endeavors of refinement and elevation pursued by the individuals can lead to the grand awakening and transmutation of collective consciousness along the limitless grandeur of the divine origin of humanity. This is how the currently "unimaginable" objective of

resurrection of a bright era, is expected to be achieved in the next millenium.

Evolution of Humanity Dawn of a Bright Era:

Gurudev Shriram Sharma Acharya gives us a glimpse of the new world order and bright future in the next millenium and beyond - in the Vangmaya volume nos. 27-29, 68, 92 and 108, where he also cites the visions of great prophets and visionaries of the world. His great *shadhnas* of subtilization and spiritual sublimation of his consciousness (refer vols. 28-29 for details on these unique spiritual experiments of the present era) were focused at contributing to creation of ideal environment in the subtle world towards entelechy of bright future of the world.... As part of this *sukshmikarana sadhana*, he had voluntarily shed his physical sheath on Gayatri Jayanti, 2nd June 1990.

The last message of Gurudev (refer vols. 1, 108) unfolds the divine purpose of his incarnation..... Part of it reads -"*The light of which I have been an instrument a medium will not extinguish with my withdrawal from the physical realm. I assure all my parijans that I will continue living and working with them at Shantikunj and elsewhere in my astral-causal body and guide, help and inspire them in their efforts to lead humanity into the Golden Era of Truth, Light and Immortality. I will finally merge into the Blissful Luminous causal self, after humanity has taken decisive leap into the cosmic consciousness and attained the light of the New Era of spiritual Unity, Harmony and Peace.....*

My blessings, love and prayer-filled wishes to all..... I will always be with them in their selfless and noble endeavors in this divine work..."

May this Vangmaya series educe the afflatus of his spiritual charge in our souls and motivate each one of us to arouse and realise the high realms of humanity under his divine guidance.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 1, An Introduction

WORSHIPPING THE DEITY OF LIFE

(Jivana Devatā Kī Sādhanā Arādhanā)

Human life is bestowed on us as an invaluable treasure of physical, intellectual, mental and spiritual powers. Every domain of our life is endowed with such astonishing potentials which are beyond our imaginations. In ordinary case, most of us remain unaware of the capabilities and the mental powers hidden in our own self.... Awakening and creative use of these resources leads to enormous successes and supernormal attainments in every dimension of life.

Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya has described a human being as a 'fallen God' who has declined because of diversion from the ideal path of divinity and lost his originality. Man today is living as a social animal. Despite being the crown prince of the Almighty, he lives with scarcities, animal instincts, sufferings and pains because he has forgotten his identity and not paid due attention to know himself and to understand his own life. He does not know the possibilities of living an absolutely progressive and blissful life.

The art of living a totally healthy, happy, creative and illuminated life with righteous attitude and self-realization is taught in what could be termed as a practical science of spirituality. The endeavors of - refinement of the bodily, mental and sentimental cores of life, gradual inculcation and eventual culmination of moral tendencies, creative talents and virtues, and realization and accomplishment of the divine purpose of life - constitute what could be defined as "*jivana sādhanā*" or as the true devotion and worship of the God living in oneself.....

Great personalities of all ages have campaigned that "Man is an architect of his destiny". Their own lives stand as remarkable examples of the reality of this phrase. Every human being is given the freedom to select the path of his life... He may fall prey to the vices of egotistic atrocities, avarice, sensual pleasures and immoral activities driven by selfishness and untoward ambitions of power and

possession...., and thus decline and fall for ever.... On the contrary, he can touch the highest realms of success and divine elevation if he so desires and accordingly adopts the path of righteous evolution of his conscious faculties. It is the collective impact of our own attitudes, our own aspirations and efforts which shapes the course of our development and directs the fate of our life too. No one, not even the divine powers of Thou could ever change the fortunes of the person who refuses to change his attitude and wants to seek excuses in the adversities of circumstances.

In the words of Acharya Sharma - "There could be a doubt about the existence of Gods of heaven or uncertainty about when and how the grace of Thee would be bestowed upon somebody.....? But, *ātmadeva* - the God living in the inner self of each one of us, is so near to us...., so real and receptive....., so affectionate....., always keen to enlighten our lives by divine boons....!*Jīvana sādhanā*- the worship of *ātmadeva*, is certain to accelerate the overall progress of our lives and eventually lead to what could be likened to miraculous successes (*riiddhi-siddhi*) in the materialistic and spiritual domains of life". If we realize this fact and sincerely endeavor to make the best use of every moment of our life, we all can enjoy a vigorous, cheerful and glorious life..... It is a pity that most of us lose this golden opportunity either because of ignorance, carelessness, misconceptions, or lack of courage, zeal and righteous attitude....

Other kinds of spiritual endeavors demand endurance and perseverance. But, *jīvana sādhanā* offers instant results.... As we proceed with sincere practice of *jīvana sādhanā* we simultaneously get two folded benefits of - gradual elimination of evil tendencies or weaknesses and cultivation of what is required for evolution from the state of 'social animal' to that of a 'divine person'.....

Whenever one introspects himself and resolves to improve his nature, behavior or personality in some respect, that very moment he feels energized from within. If he continues to sincerely strive for what he resolved and creatively engages all his free time in finding feasible ways of progressing towards the decided goal and

implements the same in action....., he gains a lot at a gradually increasing pace, in terms of avoidance of untoward instincts which used to dominate his 'empty mind' during the free moments; better management of time, escalation of mental trenchancy, and illumination of thoughts are other natural attainments eventually leading to elevation of personality along with accomplishment of the resolution. This is an example of the immediate and definite returns of any endeavor of *jīvana sādhanā*.

The present volume teaches us the basics of the meaning, philosophy and purpose of *jīvana sādhanā*. It also gives the details on how to train ourselves for this great endeavor. Whatever be our circumstances, worldly engagements and daily routine, each one of us, as we will see in this volume, should and can start practising it from today instant. The adept guidance of a perfect master - Gurudev Shriram Sharma, is available here in comprehensive form and lucid style of presentation. Gurudev writes that - all problems of today would be solved if people understand the philosophy of *jīvana sādhanā* in its true perspective.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, humanity too seems to be sitting at an edge of extinction. The ailing state of human life is pathetic despite excellent development of comforts and materialist means of progress. At individual levels, people seek the solutions to the problems of their lives in extrovert activities - ranging from possession of wealth and power.... to 'somehow' adjusting the astrological movements in favor of their zodiac by way of religious rituals or worship of planets.... etc. All such attempts are unscientific and prove to be incomplete, unreasonable or futile because of the negligence of the fundamental principles of human life.

It should be noted that the consciousness, the inner world of a human being is as vast as his external world. The feasibility and viability of the solutions of any problem of human society, any attempt of progress, development and creation of peace and happiness depends on how it deals with and affects the external as well as the internal domains of human life..... Behavior, talents and actions of a person fall in the external domains of his life while his nature,

intrinsic tendencies, thoughts, faith and sentiments correspond to his internal character.....

Refinement and amelioration of the internal sphere of life forms the basis of cultural development and that of the external component leads to civilization..... Culture cannot expand without civilization and decline in cultural values leads to devastation of civilization.... Both have crucial place in human life and its evolution. Human Psychology - encompassing behavior, conduct, attitude, thoughts, innermost sentiments and spirituality - plays an inevitable role in shaping both.

The limitless power of thoughts and sentiments is clearly reflected in the saying of saint Emerson - "Send me to hell, I will create a heaven for me there too....". It is indeed true.... In fact, how the world around us or the circumstances respond or affect us depends a lot on how we consider them..... It is said that, our own convictions and attitude and the state of our mind in a given condition influence the effects of the latter on our life.... For example, excessive depression or tension in an adverse or tragic situation - is a sign of negative thinking or weakness of the mind; lack of self-confidence due to ignorance about the power of the soul and the dormant or maligned state of the inner self are the root causes of such psychological aberrations.

Although religious philosophies, especially those emanated from the science of spirituality, have an intimate relationship with Human Psychology, people often think that religion simply deals with conceptualization and worship of God.... They often think that performing specific rituals of worshipping a God according to the 'instructions' of some religious scriptures - is sufficient for fulfillment of a desire, rectification of a mistake or elimination of a weakness.... etc. Their 'religious efforts' result in a vain unless they realize the need for the refinement of their own character, behavior and overall personality and then endeavor worshipping the God living in themselves....

Worship of the God living in human self - the deity of life requires cultivation of righteous attitude and adoption of disciplined and

virtuous mode of life. This world is like a school of practical training which offers enormous opportunities for refinement and development of talents and potentials. This world is a 'battle field' for *jīvana sādhanā* where victory means culmination of virtues and absolute welfare of life.

The volumes in this Vangmaya series are of unique importance because, among other things, the depth and expansion of knowledge here also has a live coherence with every impulse of human mind and inner self. Acharya Sharma's deliberations on difficult and esoteric topics of philosophy and consciousness are lucid and constitute an Applied Science of Spirituality which can be adopted and practised in day to day life.

The present volume in particular would serve the purpose of a noble guide, an ideal parent or an intimate friend for the readers.... While reading this volume, one would feel as if all attention and affection of the author is focused at his (the reader's) life in particular.... On several occasions, Acharya Sharma's expressions would point out our own mistakes or weaknesses and at the same time, would give us immense moral support, courage and enlightenment to - solve the associated complexities in the worldly, intellectual, sentimental and spiritual domains of our life and improve it in a righteous way.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 2 , An Introduction

TOTAL SURRENDER IS TRUE WORSHIP

(*Upāsanā Samarpana Yoga*)

U*pāsanā* of the Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent Supreme source of Consciousness Force is said to be of fundamental importance in human life. Literally, the Sanskrit word "*Upāsanā*" (= *Upa* + *āsanā*) means "siting near...." . Its implications in the Indian Philosophy and Science of Spirituality are far more deeper... Here, the word "*Upāsanā*" is always used to imply - a devotional practice, a mode of activating the linkage between the individual and the cosmic consciousness, between the soul and its eternal divine origin..... *Upāsanā* is therefore also referred as a *yoga*. *Upāsanā* - is a core component of the *Bhakti Yoga*.

The meaning of "*upāsanā* of God" as "siting near God" implies endowing oneself with divine virtues. As any good conductor of heat becomes hot if connected to a source of heat....; electrical devices connected with a power generator get charged by the electrical current..., similarly, a true devotee starts receiving the grace and glow of divinity by *upāsanā*. Swami Ram Krishna Paramhans used to advice the disciples - "clean and shine the carrier of your life by regular *upāsanā*". The practice of *upāsanā* as described by Gurudev Shriram Sharma is like giving a spiritual bath to the inner self. It helps refinement of the deeper domains of mind and charging the intrinsic faith and devotional sentiments by the orgulous force of afflatus.

Today, we are living in a world of terrible pollution where the inner domain of thoughts and sentiments has also been maligned, that too in greater proportions than the external environment.... The 'glow' of the soul appears to be shrouded in the thick smog of declining moral values, the crisis of faith in divine disciplines, diminishing principles of humanity and near total disappearance of altruism.... Increasing influence of selfish passions, possessive attitude, eroticism, lust and ego...etc, has put a question mark on the very foundation of the human dignity. No remedy, no action, no law, no

system, no revolution could help reversal of the declining trends unless the original nature of humanity is brought back to life with its values reflected in every individual self.... A treatment at the deepest depth of the inner self thus seems to be inevitable. Devotional practices of *upāsanā* and spiritual refinement are therefore of significant importance today.

Does *upāsanā* mean only worshipping a deity or prophet, or, performing some rituals or uttering some prayers with or without meditation...? Certainly not. Rituals are only some 'tools' which help initial training of the ever agile mind.... These external modes of practising *upāsanā* are lifeless without the driving force of internal devotion that inspires the feeling of *samarpana* - total sacrifice of ego, selfish desires, self-identity - in the limitless ocean of divine love...., in the unlimited expansion and eternal expressions of the Supreme....

Upāsanā cannot progress for long without the emergence of true devotion through the deep core of sentiments or intrinsic faith in the *upāsya* (the 'object' of *upāsanā*).... The subtle connection between the *upāsaka* (devotee) and the *upāsya* does not get linked or activated without the feeling of *samarpana*. Acharya Sharma excellently illustrates the importance of *samarpana* as - "when a drop of water sacrifices its existence into the ocean, it unifies with the gigantic expansion of the latter in no time....; water of a dirty drain becomes pious once it is immersed in the waters of the Ganges....; a tiny piece of wood, which could be broken by just any body...., glows bright and cannot even be touched if it burns itself and become a part of fire....".

Shraddhā -- intrinsic sentiment of pious devotion for divine ideals and thy-love, absolute faith in moral disciplines, and serene love for the manifestation of Thou in all beings..., an internal urge of *samarpana* - of the devotee is said to be the sole supporter and eternal guide along the righteous path of *upāsanā*..... Prayer without *shraddhā* is 'begging', worship without *shraddhā* is

'hypocrisy', *samarpana* without *shraddā* is nonexistent - nothing more than emotional excitement and lunatic illusion..... *Shraddhā* inspires courage to dedicate one self for high ideals of humanity as the latter are manifestations of divine disciplines.

In *bhakti yoga* or *samarpana yoga* one nullifies the difference between "I" and "Thou" with the help of *shraddhā*... "Love is God and God is love..." becomes a reality in every aspect of life for a true devotee. Love for God means love for all His creations....., for all beings.... It is the level of one's *shraddhā* which is reflected in the glory of *upāsana*. Godliness represents - supreme ensemble of virtues, highest realm of humane ideals and divine potentials. In its truest sense, *shraddhā* in any form of God or in any manifestation of Thy power in the universe, indeed implies the absolute orientation of devotion for realization of Godliness in above respect.

Scriptures of Indian Philosophy state - "*Shraddhā mayoayam Puruṣaḥ, Yoyacchadrah, Sa Eva Saḥ*". Implying - the human self, his desires, deeds and character, his overall spiritual and psychological makeup is shaped by his *sharddhā*. One gradually adopts the characteristics of the *upāsya* to whom he devotes his *shraddhā* . The *upāsya*, in physical terms, could be an inanimate object such as an idol or a picture in front of which one practices regular *upāsana*; it is the attribution of *shraddhā* which makes 'it' realizable by the devotee as the latter conceptualizes....

The purer and higher the level of one's *shraddhā* in divinity, the greater will be the endowment of the conceptualized divine virtues in his personality.... and the stronger and more radiant will be his inner self.

The expansion of Indian philosophy and the development of the science of spirituality revolves around the central themes of *upāsana* and *shraddhā* . The understanding, realisation and adoption of *upāsana* with divinely pure *shraddhā* - is the most challenging phase of any endeavor of spiritual elevation. Success of this phase

ensures accomplishment of the basic purpose: progress towards spiritual transmutation and evolution of consciousness.

Deciphering the basis, implications, methods of practice and effects of *upāsanā* and explaining the subtle science of inculcation, realization and attribution of *shraddhā* - is an arduous task which demands something higher than intellectual sagacity and erudite scholarly knowledge... Even those who have attained success in spiritual endeavors find it difficult to elucidate these aspects which may be realized in the inner cores of sentiments but cannot be expressed in words... Acharya Sharma's splendid contributions are truly exceptional in this regard. It appears to be some kind of extra sensory power of this great spiritual master which enabled him describe these 'esoteric' topics so eloquently and perfectly in this volume. His interpretations, analysis and explanations are so convincing and inspiring that the text seems to become 'alive' for the readers and conveys the author's thoughts and sentiments right into their minds and hearts....

Among the methods of practising *upāsanā*, the author recommends *japa* - rhythmic enunciation of a *mantra* or a prayer with deep *shraddhā*; and *dhyāna* - meditation with a feeling of *samarpana*. *Japa* could be performed loudly, by silent recitations - where the lips and tongue may move but voice is not heard, or mentally by unperturbed contemplation. The *Gāyatrī Mantra* is supposed to be ideal for *japa*; any other *mantra* (Vedic hymn) may also be selected as per the *shraddhā* of the devotee. *Dhyāna* is more important in *upāsanā* as it helps - focussing the thoughts and sentiments and creatively attributing the devotee's *shraddhā* to the *upāsya*.... As the feeling of *samarpana* becomes more real with deeper meditation, the process of 'linkage' and 'communication' between the devotee and the *devatā* (divine power manifested in the *upāsya*) becomes more active and continuous.

Details on *japa* - *dhyāna* and other methods of *upāsanā* are

perspicuously described in this volume with adept guidance. Experiences of great saints and devotees are also cited along with references from the scriptures at several places. The topics of sonic power generated by *japa*, impact of sublimated voice and other scientific aspects are discussed by the author in volume no. 19 of this series. The topic of *dhyāna* - as a *yoga sādhanā* is covered in the volume no. 20. Specific methods of *japa* and *dhyāna* of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* are presented in volume nos. 12 and 13. The scientific aspects of *Gāyatrī upāsana* are covered in volume nos. 14 and 15.

Prayers emanated from the heart through pure devotion are also equivalent to *upāsana* based on *japa* and *dhyāna*. The warmth of sentiments generated during such a prayer melts the devotee's ego and transmits his inner call to the cosmic centers of Thy expression.... and brings back divine blessings.... In the moments of tragedy, severe adversities and helplessness, one prays to the Almighty through the deepest depth of his heart; he remembers nothing except the eternal kindness of the Omnipotent... All ego, selfish desires, ambitions,, etc vanish in no time..... A similar state of selflessness is a prerequisite in *upāsana*. If one prays in this state, for the welfare of all beings, for healthy development of the world, for collective progress and righteous evolution of intelligence....., his prayer indeed becomes so powerful that it conjugates his consciousness with the divine consciousness of the *upāsya*. Continuity and consistency of this *samarpana yoga* inculcates divine virtues in the devotee and bestows Thy blessings upon him.

Cultivating courage to fight against the ego and sacrificing self-identity is almost impossible for most of us. No scientific principle, no intellectual argument or advice of wisdom could help in this regard. It is only the power of *shraddhā* manifested in the inner sentiments, earnest urge and prayers that makes it possible for a devotee to pursue a *samarpana yoga*. "...How does it happen? What helps inculcation of *shraddhā*? What are the characteristics of a true devotee? How to judge the level of one's *shraddhā*?....." These and similar quests of most readers would find satisfactory solutions

in the scientifically rational and eloquent deliberations of Acharya Sharma in the present volume.

The *bhakti yoga*, *upāsanā* or *samarpana yoga* aims at the absolute realization of - "*Jivo Brahm Nā parah*" - eternal unity between the individual self and the cosmic Thy-self..... Transmutation of an ordinary mortal being into the absolute divine being, sublimation of all malice and selfishness into altruist compassion, immersion of ego into ultimate expansion of pure love....., spiritual elevation and unification of the individual consciousness with the omnipresent, supreme consciousness - is the ultimate goal of devotional life and also the eternal desire of the Supreme Creator. *Upāsanā* - *samarpana yoga* is a blessed opportunity for all of us to achieve this goal in the present life itself....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 3, An Introduction

It is rather a sad irony that people these days mistakenly assume that they have embarked on the path of self-realisation merely by uttering some words, performing certain rituals or making certain offerings to the Deity. They never try to transform their thoughts, character and attitudes in the light of the Indwelling Spirit which is a must for spiritual progress. I have always been cautious not to allow this falsity to enter into my way of sādhanā. This path is realistic, practical and easy to be followed by and beneficial to the common mass of humanity. My way of life should be studied keeping this in view.

-- Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE OF SPIRITUAL REFINEMENT

(*Sādhanā Paddhatiyon Kā Gyāna - Vigyāna*)

The treasure of Indian Culture is endowed with invaluable pearls. The philosophy and science of *yoga* is an ageless jewel among these whose glow has been illuminating, since the times immemorial in human history, the internal and external world of all those who have adorned it in the crown of their lives.... The *yoga sādhanās* - methods of practising *yoga* in an orderly and scientific way, have been devised by the seers of yore who had perfected the knowledge of human body and mind and experienced the eternal relationship between the individual consciousness and the omnipresent cosmic consciousness.

The mechanism of *yoga* works on scientific principles. There is nothing esoteric or imaginary in the development, practices and effects of *yoga sādhanās*. Positive effects of several practices of *yoga* on physical, biological and mental health have been verified in the modern laboratories as well. *Yoga*- research is a respectable discipline in the faculties of Medicine, Psychology and Philosophy in many reputed institutions and universities across the globe at present. However, on the other side of its popularity, practicing some kind of physical fitness exercises in the name of '*yoga*' has also become a fashionable hobby and business these days..... It therefore appears important to make people aware of the fact that - applications of *yoga* are not confined to physical fitness, clinical health and behavioral management only, nor is it a discipline of abstract philosophical discussions by intellectuals....; rather, it encompasses all activities and works in multiple dimensions of human life.

The science of *yoga* is much deeper than any other branch of science. The *sādhanā* procedures designed here also work at the level of

extrasensory, subtle and astral bodies. Sincere and disciplined practices of *yoga* involve maximum use of the power of intrinsic faith, courage, earnest desire and determination. These aim at gradual arousal and activation of the enormous potentials of human body, mind and the inner sentiments. The nectar of *yoga sādhanās* helps the tree of life blossom like a *Kalpavraksha* - the heavenly tree which fulfills all desires of the divine beings.....

The philosophy of *yoga* aims at the "yoga" (literally meaning "conjunction") of the soul with the supreme eternal consciousness.... Importance of *yoga* has been glorified by Lord Krishna in the holy Gita (6 | 46) as -

Tapasvibhyo Adhiko Yogī, Jnānibhyo Apimato Adhikah_
Karmibhyashca Adhiko Yogī, Tasmād Yogī Bhava Arjuna_

Meaning: "*Yogī* - a devotional expert of all practices and knowledge of *yoga*, is superior to those who refine the self by adopting ascetic disciplines and penance; much as knowledge is superior to the knowledgeable. The success of a *yogī* is greater than that of the people engaged in creative activities and dedicated actions aimed at preminent results. Therefore, you (addressing to Arjuna) must try becoming a true *yogī*".

Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya has reinvestigated the philosophy of "*Raj Yoga*" founded by Maharshi Patanjali in the ancient times. He has analyzed the feasibility and applications of the practices of *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prānāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna*, *Samādhi* in the modern times taking into account the attitudes, modes of living and circumstances prevailing in the world today. He has deciphered and presented the gamut of *yoga sādhanās* in a easy-to-understand, lucid style. He has also introduced some new *sādhanās* of special relevance to the bodily and psychological wellbeing in the present times.

In Acharya Sharma's words - "*sādhana* is essential for accomplishing righteous success in every walk of life.... Be that materialistic progress or spiritual evolution..., none could be achieved without sincere endeavors of refinement and escalation of one's abilities and virtues....". In the context of *yoga*, *sādhana* procedures are devised focusing at purification and strengthening of the internal world of the body and mind. These endeavors are like those of arduous hunting for hidden treasures; attainment of the treasures of marvelous potentials of the human body and miraculous functions of the human mind indeed makes one rich like Kuber who is allegorically described to be the wealthiest and most prosperous being of the heavens....

The ancient *rishis* had described the inner faculties of a human being as extrasensory sources of divine powers and referred them by different names of God. The successive stages of *yoga* and the disciplines of *sādhana*s are devised for gradual purification and strengthening of the body and mind and eventual awakening of inner potentials. These work at the external level of the gross body by way of specific physical exercises and *prāṇāyāmas* and energize every component of the body - from organs to muscles and nerves and from cellular to molecular systems.

This particular volume is devoted to the detailed description of the first three components of Maharshi Patanjali's *Ashtānga yoga* - namely, *Yama*, *Niyama* and *Āsana*. The remaining five together with the description of all other aspects - ranging from the *mudrās* and *bandhas* associated with the *āsanas* to the state of trance and attainment of absolute peace and beatitudoous bliss.... - have been covered in the volume no. 20 which deals with the methods of enlightenment and ideal evolution of personality.

The practices of *yama*, *niyama*, *āsanas*, are very important as they help conditioning the gross body for successively higher level *sādhana*s and prepare the mind for the same. As the gross body and conscious mind are the only tools used in most of the experiments of *yoga*, it is essential to keep them in excellent order. Healthy body and

healthy mind are essential for creative materialization of any endeavor. *Yama*, *Niyama* and *Āsana* are necessary disciplines, which help formidably in laying the foundation for further progress in *yoga sādhanās*.

The purpose of all *yoga sādhanās* is three folded and accordingly, their modes of actions too are three phased. The first phase focuses at improvement of the strength and healthy functioning of the gross body. This aims at purifying the body from within and harmonious conditioning of its components followed by enhancing the vitality. The second phase deals with refinement and charging of the subtle body - pertaining to the thought process, sagacity, foresightedness and other intellectual and mental faculties. The last phase corresponds to spiritual transmutation of the astral body - the core of consciousness, sentiments, intrinsic values, inspirations, devotional realizations,.... etc.

How the sincere practices of *yama*, *niyama*, *āsanas* contribute to healthy maintenance and harmonization of the natural tendencies of the three - gross, subtle and astral - bodies of the human self has been discussed in the present volume with scientific interpretations, reasoned justifications and evidential examples. The central theme of *yoga viz.*, "*Yogash Cittavratti Nirodhah*" - is also explained here with practical guidance in respect of the above practices.

The definition of the five *yamas* imply - observance of nonviolence, truth and chastity and avoidance of avarice and possessive attitude. Those of the five *niyamas* correspond to - external and internal purity; endurance and natural satisfaction; ascetic refinement of personality; self-analysis and enlightenment of mind by noble thoughts; contemplation on divinity existing within the self and pervaded in the every being, every where in Nature.... The *Yama-Niyama* lay the foundation for gradual refinement of the body and mind and devotional illumination of consciousness. The wide varieties of *āsanas* are devised according to the in-depth understanding of the complex network of nerves, muscles, knots and extrasensory power nuclei in the human body. These harmonize the

intra-body and brain functions and help activation of the otherwise dormant vital energy centers as one progresses in the *sādhana*s of *Ashtānga Yoga*.

The original definitions and methods of specific practices of the above components of *yoga* - as invented by Maharshi Patanjali - are presented in this volume with detailed discussions on their implications, relevance and feasibility in modern modes of life. The author has also effectively guided on how to observe the disciplines of *yama-niyama* in daily chores of ordinary life. Aspirants of getting authentic exposure to the great science and philosophy of *yoga* would find this volume as a comprehensive guide-book.... This volume along with others on the related topics - namely, volume nos. 5 to 7 and 20, will make a complete text for in-depth knowledge, implementation and higher level research on *yoga sādhana*.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 4, An Introduction

*A combination of determination, patience and devotion creates the firm background for spiritual awakening. Earning such merit is true discipleship, after which it takes no time to attain fulfilment. It is the attainment of merit which takes time. No time is taken in finding the **Guru**. Eklavya's Dronacharya, prepared out of clay, proved more effective than the real one.*

-- Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

SELF DISCIPLINE : THE SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL TREASURE - 1 (*Sādhanā Se Siddhi - 1*)

The methods of *sādhanās* (spiritual endeavors) devised, practised and advocated by the ancient Indian scientists of spirituality appear to most people as part of some kind of mystical knowledge and magical practices. More esoteric and adventurous seem to be the supernormal attainments (*siddhis*) associated with the success of these *sādhanās*. The detailed knowledge of the original philosophy and science of *sādhanās* and *siddhis* cannot be collected and accessed by people today because of the vast expansion and depth of the field and the destruction and deformation of most scriptures that took place during the long span of intermediate periods of history - especially the medieval era....

Gurudev Shriram Sharma is among the most revered spiritual masters and saintly social reformers of the modern times who have dedicated their lives for in-depth study and investigations of the ancient scriptures and who deciphered and explained the true meanings and important aspects of *sādhanā* and *siddhi*. Acharya Sharma brought this knowledge into scientific light after conducting long term experiments on himself to experience the truth and the scientific basis of the claims of "*Siddhis* from *Sādhanās*". He had also devoted his sagacity and spiritual excellence to the noble purpose of presenting the essence of this ancient knowledge for the benefit of people across the world. Several volumes in the Vangmaya series have emerged as part of his endeavors in this regard.

The present volume focuses on the basic philosophy, meaning, origin and objectives of the *sādhanās* in a very simple and comprehensive way. The gamut of potential *siddhis* associated with different kinds of *sādhanās* is also elucidated here with the main objective of eliminating the misconceptions and suspicions and to

apprise the reader of - "What is a true *sāadhanā* ? Who is an authentic *sādhaka*, who has been blessed by the *siddhis* and how....?"

The author explains the importance of *sāadhanā* as a natural necessity because it deals with refinement, control and ideal training of the mind and body in human life. Restraining the agility of mind is the most essential requirement for *sāadhanā* in any phase of life. But, as we all might have experienced, it is the most difficult task too. Acharya Sharma has meticulously analyzed the influence of inherent tendencies, internal desires, sentimental makeup, external environment and circumstances of life on the activities of the conscious and subconscious mind. He has identified four major methods of control and refinement of mental tendencies which are of specific relevance today. These also include adoption of *swādhyāya* and *satsanga* in day-to-day life to inculcate illuminating thoughts and piet sentiments.

He has elaborated each method with live examples to illustrate how it helps purification of mind, cultivation of righteous tendencies and creative use of enormous mental powers.....

It is highlighted that -- apart from the refinement of character, behavior and attitude and ascetic control over the agile mind, purification of the inner self and spiritual escalation at the levels of the subtle and astral bodies, is also important for the realization of *siddhis* from *sāadhanās*. The importance of faith, devotion and impact of subtle vibrations of *mantras* has therefore been elucidated with special reference to the nature and spiritual role of the unconscious mind.....

The influence of the impulses of consciousness pervaded in the surrounding environment has been described by the author as quite significant in the progress of specific *sāadhanās*..... The ambience of a graveyard or crematory suits the low level *tāntirka sāadhanās* whereas the serene, priestine and spiritually charged atmosphere of the Himalayan region -- where great saints and sages of all ages have performed devout *sāadhanās* and offered altruist service to the

Nature and to all beings -- inspires immense peace and enlightenment which is most suitable for arousing divine tendencies and hence for practising *mantra* based sacred *sāadhanās* of spiritual elevation.

The institution named Shantikunj has been established by the author himself in Hardwar as a live example of -- what used to be the special nature of the *Āshramas* and *Gurūkuls* of the ancient *rishis* that could be regarded as an ideal ambience for righteous and rapid progress of a pious *sāadhanā*. The cosmic vibrations, generated by the uncountably large number of *japas* (rhythmic enunciation with meditation) of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* ongoing for twenty four hours every day since nearly past thirty-five years, have charged the atmosphere of Shantikunj with so much spiritual energy that the minds of the *sādhakas* automatically get divinely inspired here.... The Himalayan surrounding and vicinity of the holy Ganges add to the liveliness, beauty and purity of this place.

Yagya is also performed in Shantikunj everyday by thousands of devotees. This offers multiple benefits of the Himalayan herbs sublimated in the sacrificial fire in terms of the cure of psychological disorders and expansion of the domain of influence of the vibrations of the *mantras*.... Detailed knowledge on *Gāyatrī*, *Yagya*, the Science of *Mantras* and associated higher level *sāadhanās* is presented in volume nos. 9 to 15 and 25 to 26 of the vangmaya series. Some of these volumes also contain the information on the scientific experiments and *sāadhanā* camps and training programmes conducted at Shantikunj, Hardwar.

How our mode of life, daily routine and quality of food-intake affects our physical, mental and spiritual health is also discussed in the present volume in the context of "*Āhāra Shuddhi-Satva Buddhi*" with substantial practical guidance. Basic disciplines of *sāadhanās* are presented here with focus on elementary *sāadhanās*. Successively higher levels of *tapa sāadhanās* and *yoga sāadhanās* are dealt in the next volume.

Pt. Shriram Sharma has discussed here the significant role of the *gurū* (spiritual master) in any *sādhanā*. While he emphasizes the importance of sacrifice of ego in the feet of a revered *gurū* and describes how the blessings of a noble *gurū* (*satgurū*) may help transmutation of the disciple's personality and inculcation of *siddhis* in the latter, he has also warned against the fake 'gurus' who exploit the faith of innocent devotees in the name of *yoga*, *sādhanā* and spirituality. He has brought into light how the much advertised '*siddhis*' like - extracting specific material substances from air or empty space; or, producing desired items in the fist..., etc. - are nothing better than magic shows which can be mastered by way of special effects of light, mesmerism or some *tāntrika* practices.... Exposition of such '*siddhis*' reflects the immature or mean mentality of the so-called '*yogīs*' who are greedy for cheap popularity or are driven by ego....

A person cannot reach high in spiritual progress or attain the true *siddhis* of a *sādhanā* unless he gets rid of ego, avarice, erogenous character and selfish attachments. Simplicity, integrity, chastity and purity of thoughts and sentiments coupled with serene love, compassion, generosity and qualities of industriousness and altruist attitude, etc, are first signs of the spiritual elevation of a *sādhaka*. No one should think of acquiring *siddhis* by some 'shortcut path' or 'magical effects'..... This will lead to nothing more than disappointment, exploitation, illusions or loss of time and efforts....

Often people think of the *tāntrika sādhanās* as some kind of 'black magic' and get attracted towards varieties of superstitions in that illusion. The scientific basis, purpose and other details of this class of *sādhanās* are highlighted in the volume 15 of the series. In the present volume, the focus rests on giving the readers a glimpse of the vast domain of *sādhanās* and introducing the fundamental principles and certainty of enormous attainments through success of righteous *sādhanās*.

The supernormal *siddhis* of *animā*, *mahimā*, *laghimā*, *īshatva*, etc are discussed by Acharya Sharma in a separate chapter of this volume. Here he has deciphered the limitless powers of consciousness indwelling in the subtle layers of human self and explained how the otherwise dormant potentials and talents could be awakened by stepwise consistent progress along the righteous path of *sāadhanā* under the experienced guidance of a *satgurū*.

All of us - including those having blind faith in *siddhis* and those 'rational' thinkers or 'scientific minded' persons who discard the possibilities of *siddhis* as vague imaginations of lunatics - should read this volume to know the facts in the light of reality and understand the meaning, mode of action, scientific basis and relevance of *sāadhanās* and *siddhis* in a truly progressive way of life.....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 5, An Introduction

.... the grace of divine souls is granted only for public good, for the growth of righteous attitudes and tendencies in humanity and it is not showered on anyone who hankers after fame or material prosperity. These enlightened souls have no kith or kin, opponent or rival. The all-pervading Spirit, manifested as Soul of Humanity, is their Deity and they yoke their chosen and beloved souls in the service of the Divine in humanity. In the light of this new insight, I at once recollected the master- disciple relationship of Ramkrishna-Vivekananda, Samarth Ramdas-Shivaji, Chanakya-Chandragupta, Gandhi-Vinoba, Buddha-Ashoka. Where, however, the relationship is based on mere exhibition of funny and frolicsome miracles, it should be construed that a reprehensible tendency like jugglery is going on between the so-called Guru and his disciple.

-- Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

SELF DISCIPLINE : THE SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL TREASURE - 2

(*Sādhanā Se Siddhi*)

If *sādhanā* - determined endeavor of spiritual refinement, and *upāsana* - devotional practice aimed at excelling inner faith in divinity, are performed sincerely while systematically following the associated disciplines, there is no reason why any one should not attain remarkable success. Often people get attracted towards *upāsana* in order to get rid of the adversities or scarcities of life or to get instant peace of mind.... Many people want to perform *sādhanās* to attain supernormal talents and potentials, some also choose this path because of internal urge. However, no one can become a true *sādhaka* (devotee) in a matter of few days, months or even years, unless he has dedication, deep faith and perseverance and has conditioned his body and mind for the specific *sādhanās*.

The class of *sādhanās* of personality development and illumination of talents may be divided into two categories : (i) *Tapa sādhanās* - pertaining to observance of penance, expiation, arduous ascetic practices of internal and external purification and transformation of personality; (ii) *Yoga sādhanās* - intensive training and strengthening of body, mind and inner self by specific practices of *āsanas*, *prāṇāyāmas*, *japa*, *dhyān*, *dhāraṇa*, etc. under prescribed disciplines. Both are mutually complementary and equally important. Gradually higher level *sādhanās* of either type may lead to ultimate success (*siddhi*) if performed with unperturbed devotion, faith, sincerity and disciplines.

"*Tapa*" literally means heating; as gold is purified in fire at extremely high temperatures, the body and mind of a *tapaswi* are also purified by the 'heat' of self-restraint and self-imposed hardships.... A *tapaswi*, because of his excellent control of the activities of the body and mind might develop egotistic attitude unless he is a dedicated

yogi too. A *yogi* has to always maintain a learner's attitude in order to master stepwise procedures of *yoga sādhanās*. In this context, Lord Krishna states in the holy Gita - "*Tapaswibhyoadhiko Yogi*" (meaning: a *yogi* is greater than a *tapaswi*). But he, the greatest *yogi* of all times, has also emphasized that no *yogi* can be successful without *tapa*.

Literally, *yoga* means conjunction, confluence. Its true meaning in the context of *sādhanās* is - unification of the inner self with the supreme divine consciousness. As Lord Krishna has described : *Bhakti* (pure devotion, sacrifice of ego), *Karma* (actions, creative deeds) and *Gyāna* (prudent knowledge), all combined make a complete *yoga*....

The details of different systems of *Tapa* and *yoga sādhanās* , their prerequisites, principles, disciplines, effects, etc are explained by Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya in three volumes of the vangmaya series. Volume no. 5 sets the background highlighting the misconceptions and illusive propaganda spread in the Indian society since the medieval era in the name of *tapa* and *yoga sādhanās*. Rational interpretations of the scriptures are also presented here to elucidate the true meanings and importance of these *sādhanās*. Volume no. 7 presents some higher level *sādhanās* of *tapa* and *yoga* which are harder and of greater importance - in terms of spiritual elevation, than the *sādhanās* described in the present volume.

In the present volume, many scientifically viable *sādhanā* procedures for refinement of talents are described along with those aimed at increasing the vitality and resistance of the body and enhancing mental concentration and inner strength. Some important *prānāyāms* and *mudrās* are introduced with specific details on their need and impact on improvement of mind - body health.

How the devotional practices of *bhajana-kīrtan* and the dedicated attempt of self-analysis and self-realization coupled with focused

thinking and contemplation could be easily performed by every one in an otherwise busy schedule of daily chores - is excellently illustrated by the author leaving no possibility for any confusion or excuse from the reader's end. Several methods of auto-suggestion have been discussed with practical guidance. It is also highlighted how these simple practices could lead to the soul-realization of "*Soham*" or "*Aymātmā Brahm*" - the eternal unity of the soul with the supreme consciousness. This is the ultimate "*siddhis*" and beatitudinous accomplishment of the highest level spiritual *sādhanās*.

The 'most popular but least understood' *yoga* practices of mesmerism, hypnotism, transmigration, etc, are also described here in scientific light. Questions regarding - "What is the truth behind such practices?", "Can anybody hypnotize anyone else at any time?", "How to go about learning these methods?", etc, are answered in a lucid style with scientific justifications so that the 'laymen' as well as those having substantial knowledge and experience in the related fields could benefit from it.

Awakening of the '*ājñā chakra*' or the 'sixth sense' by *trātaka* and *bindu yoga sādhanā* is also discussed in this volume. The interpretation of the allegorical representations in the Puranas - concerning the third eye of lord Shiva, is deciphered here to show how the light of discerning prudence enables one control the downward flow and loss of vital force and helps refinement of sex-element. (The latter aspect is discussed at length in the context of *Kuṇḍalini Sādhanā* in vol. 15 of the *vangmaya* series.)

The different types of *trātakas* and the modes of practising them are discussed in the present volume in detail. Every body can practice these.... Gradual improvement of eyesight, mental concentration and memory indicate proper progress of these *yoga sādhanās*. Ultimate success endows the *sādhaka* with intellectual sagacity, discreet and thorough reasoning and supernormal faculties such as - clairvoyance, premonition, supernormal memory, etc.

The last Chapter is devoted to some special *sādhanās* of *dhyāna - dhāranā* which include *samarpana yoga*; japa with *payapāna*, *prāṇ sanskāra sādhanā*, *savitā-sādhanā*, etc. This volume also introduces the *Anushthāna* based *sādhanās* for elimination of adversities and the *sādhanās* for activation of extrasensory power centers in the human body and refinement of the *Pancha Mahākoshas* (subtle layers of successive evolution of the consciousness). Details of these higher level *sādhanās* are given in the context of *Gāyatrī* and *Sāvitrī* in volume nos. 9 to 15 of the vangmaya series.

It is hoped that the present volume would remove the mists of doubts and misconceptions and guide the illuminated path of *sādhanās* leading to glorious success and divine attainments (*siddhi*).

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 6, An Introduction

A detailed description about my pilgrimage to the Himālayas is given in my book titled "Colleagues in Solitude" (Sunsān-ke-Sahacar). This book is a literary travelogue. One gets a clue from it how desires, fear and adverse circumstances can be overcome through will-power. A person who has to take to the spiritual path has to make his mind and soul strong. I have explained in it why the Himālayas and the banks of the Ganga are most suited for sādhanā. The main factor behind the fear of loneliness is the unstable mind. If the mind is steadfast and strong, there is no need of companions; and man, like animals, need not be afraid of loneliness.

-- Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

FROM IGNORANCE TO WISDOM

(*Prasupti Se Jāgrati Kī Or*)

A *dhyātma* -- the field of knowledge and experiments of spirituality, is a deeper science based on realizations, reasoned thoughts and logically established and verified principles. Though, its principal focus lies in the domains of Cosmic and Individual Consciousness and deeper cores of Human- Psychology, it is as scientific in its methods as Physics or any other branch of material based Natural Sciences.

The philosophy and science of *Adhyātma* was developed by the *rishis* - ancient Indian experts of every aspect of life and nature - with a major objective of deriving practical modes of chiseled refinement and virtuous transformation of personality up to divine heights. This on the one hand teaches the art of living to the masses and helps ideal development of the society and culture and, on the other hand, provides adept guidance and methods of experimentation to the aspirants of awakening the otherwise dormant divine virtues and potentials hidden in the individual self.

The 'edifice' of *Adhyātma* stands on the two strong 'pillars' of *tapa* and *yoga*. Understanding the meaning and adopting the practices of *tapa* and *yoga* in every dimension of life - make possible the transmutation of an ordinary mortal being into an enlightened , glorious, great personality, equivalent to a divine being in human body. *Adhyātma* deals with evolution of consciousness and hence has intimate relationship with inner sentiments and spirituality. It has been the center of attraction of the thinkers of all eras. The scientific approach to spirituality practised and propagated by Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya since past few decades has offered new and comprehensive ways of - (a) in depth understanding of human psychology and culture vis-à-vis the evolution of consciousness; (b) integrating modern sciences with the science of spirituality in a creative manner.

He successfully endeavored eliminate the smudge of doubts, misconceptions, superstitions and fears associated with *Adhyātma* and presented it in new light for enlightenment of the human society today. The present volume is a compilation of his deliberations on the principles and practical implementation of *Adhyātma* derived from his in-depth studies of scriptures and his experiments and experiences with the spiritual endeavors (*sāadhanā*) of *tapa* and *yoga*.

It is said that the *sāadhanā* of *Adhyātma* lead to *Kāyākalpa*. The word "*Kāyākalpa*" literally means - transformation of an old body into a new one.... But, that is only an allegoric description. The true meaning in the context of *Adhyātma* corresponds to - activation and elevation of the vital force, illumination of the intellect and the inner self and hence an overall refinement and sublime transformation of personality.

Tapa sāadhanā deals with ascetic disciplines, penance and determined self-restraint to diminish the influence of existing evil tendencies, habits and the misdeeds of the past. Progress in *tapa* gradually results in purification of the inner self and activation of the intrinsic strength of the soul. *Yoga sāadhanā* plays supportive role in removing the weaknesses and deficiencies of the body and in controlling the agility of mind. Its sincere practice gradually improves one's physical and mental potentials and eventually helps realization of the immense power of consciousness.... If *tapa* is like washing the 'cloth' of the individual self, *yoga* may be likened to 'coloring and ironing' it....

The present volume describes most of the important *sāadhanās* - ranging from *Chāndrāyana Vrata* to *Prāṇa Pratyāhvartana* - which can be performed under adept guidance by every aspirant of righteous development of personality, refinement of talents and overall ent of elevation of life. These *sāadhanās*, if practised sincerely, can effectively materialize into *kāyākalpa*. Increased glow

of the aura around the body, good health, impressive personality and eminence are some of the easily visible attainments of initial success in these *sādhanās*.

The practice of the above *sādhanās* is generally three phased : (i) *saṁyama sādhanā* -- self restrain, self-analysis and healing of past sins; (ii) *arāḍhanā* - altruist service with an optimistic attitude to see the good that dwells everywhere in the world; (iii) *upāsanā* -- self-realization with devotional faith in the divine origin of the soul.... Specific disciplines, modes of purification and methods of practising *saṁyama*, *arāḍhanā* and *upāsanā* associated with the *tapa* and *yoga sādhanās* are devised based on deep realization and understanding of the inner world of activities and subtle variations in the human body and mind. Details of specific *sādhanās* for specific purposes as per the condition of one's physical, mental and spiritual health are also available in this volume.

Experiments on the effects of the special *sādhanā* of *Chāndrāyana Vrata* and *Prān Pratyāvartan* have been conducted on thousands of people since past two decades in the Brahmvarchas research centre of Shantikunj - an institute established by the author in Hardwar, India. Thousands of devotees have also benefited from these *sādhanās* in the spiritual training programs at Shantikunj and at Gayatri Tapobhumi, Mathura - another centre founded by Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya.

Each practice of *Chāndrāyana Vrata* lasts for thirty days. This involves a controlled and orderly pattern of fasting where the *sādhaka* -- the person performing the *sādhanā* is given measured quantities of *kalk* (special food with herbal preparations) once a day in successively reducing and increasing order as per the lunar variation..... Confession, in front of an authentic spiritual master, of the sins and misdeeds committed by the *Sādhaka* and ascetic follow-up of penance and atonement - are also parts of this *sādhanā*. Those who have performed this *Vrata* along with *Gāyatri Anusthāna* under the adept guidance of Acharya Sharma have experienced

immense relief and peace and escalation of vital energy and intellect coupled with remarkable changes in their attitude towards life in a short span of forty days.

The *sāadhanā* of *Prān Pratyāvartan* focuses at transmutation of vital energy and refinement of the subtle body with the help of the spiritual energy - extracted from the cosmic centers of divine powers or transmitted by a *satgurū* (spiritually elevated noble guide). The elementary practices as well as the highest level spiritual endeavors associated with different *sāadhanās* are elucidated in different chapters of this volume. Scientific aspects are also highlighted here in the context of the tests and experiments conducted at Brahmvarchas, Shantikunj, Hardwar.

Shantikunj, Hardwar and Gayatri Tapobhumi, Mathura are spiritually vibrant centres. Regular training programmes for spiritual refinement of personality by specific *Japa*, *Anushthāna* based *sāadhanās* of *Gāyatri* are conducted in Shantikunj. The details of different aspects and modes of practice of the concerned *sāadhanās* are described in volume nos. 12 to 14 of the vangmaya series.

The present volume also introduces some new *yoga sāadhanās* which are not there in Patanjali's *Yoga Sharstra*. These include - the *Atma Jāgarana yoga*, *Samyaktva yoga*, *Ātma vikāsa sāadhanā upwāsa*, *Kriyā yoga* and *Pragyā yoga*. These help past healing, improvement in bodily and mental health and awakening of the inner self. The *sāadhanās*, based on the sublime powers of eternal sound and its manifestations in the 'music' pervaded in the nature and inside the human body...., such as - the *Laya yoga*, *Nada yoga*, *Swara yoga*, *Granthi yoga*, *Sūrya yoga*, *Shakti yoga*, *Vishwa yoga* etc, are also covered here. These *sāadhanās* penetrate the deeper domains of consciousness and lead to the enlightenment of the astral (causal) body too.....

The Indian scriptures emphasize the importance of *Satgurū* in understanding and adoption of the principles of *Adhyātma*. A

Satgurū is the one who has attained real knowledge and beatified success in devout *sādhanās* of spiritual elevation and who has the power to see the inner character and personality of a devotee and provide adept guidance for *sādhanās* suitable to the latter's level. *Shraddhā* and *Vishwāsa* - pure devotion and intrinsic faith in the central theme, ideology and mode of practice of the *sādhanā* are described as essential as the sincerity of endeavor and unperturbed observance of the necessary disciplines for viable success of any experiment in *Adhyātma*. Presence of the three - *Shraddhā*, *Vishwāsa* and *Satgurū* with availability of pure, peaceful and spiritually empowered atmosphere ensures the ultimate success of the dedicated endeavors of the *sādhaka*.

A *Satgurū* guides the righteous path of truth and absolute welfare and helps creative use of the *Sādhaka's Shraddhā* and *Vishwāsa*. It is very difficult to find such an authentic spiritual master these days. Equally difficult is to find a serene, spiritually charged atmosphere. In ancient times, the places of pilgrimage (*tirtha*) used to serve this purpose. The interested readers will find detailed information and examples of *Satgurū* and *Tirthas* of the ancient times in this volume. They will also get a glimpse of how and where these traditions have been or being revived in the present times.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma has made unparalleled contributions to the resurrection of the divine culture of ancient India. Because of his *sādhanās* of the highest kind devoted to the above cause, Shantikunj, Hardwar stands today as a live example of a spiritually vibrant *tirtha*. He has indeed been a *satgurū* who has elevated millions of devotees from the dark 'dens' of ignorance and enlightened their lives with righteous knowledge and wisdom. Millions of people - including modern scientists, rational thinkers and the so called 'atheists' have been inspired by the spiritual glow of his saintly personality and have realized the source of spiritual refinement and evolution of consciousness through the *sādhanās* performed in Shantikunj under his auspicious guidance.

May this volume serve to transmit the divine impulses of the supreme intellect of *Satgurū* Shriram Sharma into the minds and inner-selves of all readers and excel their progress along the glorious path of awakening and attainment of righteous knowledge and pure wisdom.



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 7, An Introduction

..... Explaining the importance and philosophy of upāsana, which is the first essential pre-requisite for spiritual upliftment, **Gurudev** said, "God cannot dance to your tune. You will have to become his devotee and act according to His will. If you are able to do so, you will become identical with God. Fuel has no worth except when it embraces fire and becomes fire itself. Fire does not become fuel. It is fuel which has to be transformed into fire. A drain meets a river and becomes as purifying and great as the river itself. But it never happens that a river flows in reverse, meets the drain and becomes dirty like it. Iron comes in contact with pāras, (the mystical stone which is said to convert iron into gold by mere touch), and turns into gold. It does not become pāras. It is the sādhak who has to dance to the tune of God like a puppet. God does not fulfil the wishes of the sādhak. A sādhak has to surrender himself to God and fulfil His will. A drop of water merges into and becomes one with the ocean. The ocean does not become a drop. This is the philosophy of upāsana. If a person wants to do upāsana, he has to sit near God, do His will and become His follower."

-- **Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya**

IN SEARCH OF GOD..., WHERE AND HOW TO FIND THEE?

(Ishwara Kauna Hai, Kahān Hai, Kaisa Hai ?)

Faith in God forms the very basis of all religious developments and has intimate relationship with Human Psychology. Despite this, nobody, not even the theists and scholars of Theology have been able to define Thy- realization. Each one of us has his or her own imaginations, perceptions and understanding of God. This somewhat depends on our intrinsic make-up, training and environment of life and mental conditioning.... Whatever be our imagination of His 'forms', if our faith is true and piet, our 'God' certainly offers us immense love, courage and motivation to live with moral dignity.....

Understanding and absolute realization of - "Who is God, Where and How is God...?", has been the quest of all spiritual devotees, religious scholars, seekers of Nature, and many others since the origin of mankind.... This type of questions, of fundamental importance in human life, reflecting the eternal inquisitiveness of human self...., have been dealt by Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya in this volume in most non-prejudiced, authentic and universally acceptable manner.

The existence of the cosmic order of the Almighty, the reflections of omnipresent Supreme Consciousness and the scientific roles of faith and devotion, etc. have been excellently discussed by Acharya Sharma. He also analyses ancient scriptures and philosophical transactions on these topics in scientific light with rational logic -- leaving no room for ambiguity, blind faith or misinterpretations. His supramental knowledge and acumen in Human Psychology and his serene love for all beings empower his words with unique personal touch and spiritual force which take his views to the inner cores of our hearts. His writings penetrate far beneath the surface of intellectual deliberations or philosophical expressions and enable us

think, realize and feel through the deeper core of our sentiments, the truth in what he explains.

The word "God" is referred as "*Ishwara*" in Sanskrit language. Literal meaning of this word expresses - " That, whose glory is reflected in every direction, everywhere, in every component of Nature....., within and beyond the limits of the cosmic whole.... That whose piety, power and expansion is unlimited....." . Comprehensive decipheration of "What is God?" - is regarded impossible for human intellect. HE exists every where. Every activity of Nature is governed by HIS universal laws.... HIS discipline makes the existence of every thing possible -- ranging from subtle energy flows to the infinite expansion of the cosmos.... . The eternal order of "Time" originates and ends in Thee. Time, space and subtler as well as higher dimensions of existence are HIS expressions.... The presence of God can be felt in every breath of vital force. The grand unification of all souls, the universal force of ultimate evolution of collective consciousness may be 'defined' as the Supreme Soul - *Paramātmā*.

Because of our extrovert attitude, we usually search for the existence and expression of God in Nature. As the activities of Nature and its visible forms lie within the domain of our perception or have been deciphered through scientific and technological developments, we often tend to seek Thou presence by similar means and try to prove HIS existence by the scientific principles and logic known to us or with the help of some established theories acceptable to most people.... But, such attempts hardly lead us to any conclusion. How could THAT which is - Omnipresent, eternal, beyond the grasp of intellect, source of conscious, unconscious and super-conscious faculties, Self-existing Creator of - Nature, ecosystem, cosmos and all the tangible as well as the extrasensory forms of existence, be realized, explained or analyzed by materialistic means or by using the principles of yet incomplete domains of scientific knowledge...? When we are not sure of the ultimate goal of the 'search of truth' in Science, how can we apply the present developments of Science to elucidate the absolute truth...?

The best way, as discussed by the author here, to search for the existence of God - is to try realizing HIS presence in the deep cores of our own inner selves. In Acharya Sharma's words - "If we ought to assign a definition to God...., we may identify HIM as an absolute ensemble of - preeminent virtues, divine tendencies of serene love, compassion and altruist service...., piet sentiments, pure intellect and divine culmination of inner strength and morality..... As the level and extent of these qualities increases in the individual self, the latter gets more and more illuminated by Godliness and the presence of God in the inner self becomes more real and transparent....." .

The readers would find the devotional sentiments of *rasovaisah* -- reflection of God in everything; Thou love for all beings; everything existing as per thy- will for expansion of eternal light -- being alive in the eloquent expressions of the author. At the same time, they would see that the reflection of the Vedant Philosophy of *Ayamātmā Brahm* - the soul is *Brahm* (the absolute, eternal, omnipresent, supreme consciousness force) -- has also been discussed by him with equal ease and impact.

He emphasizes that the overall refinement of personality - through sincere endeavors, gradually leading to - good conduct, adoption of high human values in day-to-day life, integrity of character, balanced attitude, elimination of ego and selfish desires, rise of righteous intellect and pure sentiments of love and compassion, is the key to spiritual elevation of the self up to levels of "*Parama Hansa , Sthita Pragya*", when, despite being an ordinary and normal person in worldly terms, one lives in the liberated state of absolute peace and beatitude... This is what is described by the author as "meeting God" or "realizing Thee"..... In this divinely refined state of spiritual culmination, one realizes the truth of "*Jīvo Brahmaiva Nāparaḥ*" - the individual soul and the *Brahm* are one originally .

Acharya Sharma has justified the need of faith in God or in the presence of HIS eternal order and disciplines and warned that without its cultivation, the "*Charvaka*" type atheistic philosophy of -

"whatever is present, accessible and usable for selfish motives...is true...", or the so called dogmas of "survival of the fittest...." would lead to social anarchy where "might is right" would be the law of the day and "exploitation of the weaker ones" and "uncontrolled consumption of natural resources...." would become the honored principles of success..... What would then preserve human-values or ensure the survival of humanity and precious life on the earth....? He describes the universal message of Gita - "sincere performance of duties leaving results in God's hands...."- as the source of happy coexistence and ideal progress of all beings in all ages.....

The author's views would inspire the so called atheists or rationalists too to do little introspection and see the linkage of science, psychology, spirituality and theism in the new and truly realistic perspectives realizing the inevitable role of human sentiments in every dimension of life. His critical analysis also takes those people to tough task who spread spiritual misconceptions, emotional corruption, fundamentalism, illusions and superstitions in the name of God and religion. According to him, the path to reach Thee is unique and straight. There is no place for 'short cuts' or 'jumps' there. No ritual or mode of worship can ever lead to HIS realization without the refinement of self at physical (worldly), mental, sentimental and spiritual levels and without dedicating the talents, potentials, resources and sentiments to elevation of others.... He considers the entire world as a manifestation of the existence of God and defines the sincere service and sacrifice for righteous development of the world, of all beings...., as the ideal worship of God.

Acharya Sharma recommends an excellent *yoga sādhanā* for overall refinement, righteous development and spiritual enlightenment of personality which is most suitable in today's circumstances. It can be practised by every body along with daily chores of the duty-bond, busy schedule of life. This "*Pragyā yoga*" is based on practically implementable science of spirituality advocated by the author. It broadly comprises of three phased practice in daily life; viz., *upāsana*- simple spiritual practices of meditation and devotional prayers to adopt the divine virtues, the godliness subtly pervaded

within and around us; *sādhanā* - ascetic attitude of self-restrain and control of thoughts, ambitions and actions to train oneself for an eminent and progressive life free from the vices of ego, anger, lust, and selfish attachments; and *arāadhanā* - creative utilization of at least a fraction of one's time, potentials and resources for altruist service aimed at betterment of the human society.....

Regular contact - through personal interaction or through reading or discussions and contemplation - with the lives and works of great personalities and trenchant thoughts of authentic persons who live(d) for high ideals and welfare of all struggling against the adversities and hardships of life, provides excellent support in conditioning of the mind for the above practices.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma's own life stands as a witness and shining example of how the dedicated adoption of, *upāsanā*, *sādhanā* and *arāadhanā* leads to the arousal of divinity in human self..... His vast knowledge, sagacity, super eloquence, simplicity, spirituality, selfless service of humanity, limitless love for all beings, greatness of character....., do give a glimpse of divine incarnation in human life. The highly esoteric, inexplicable and unlimited topics pertaining to the existence and realization of God have been so perfectly dealt by him that the present volume could also serve as a guiding light and supporting linkage towards connecting the reader's consciousness with pristine reflections of divinity.....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 8, An Introduction

THE TRUE SCIENCE OF GAYATRI MEDITATION

(*Gāyatrī Mahā vidyā Kā Tatva Darśan*)

The self-existent eternal power of Supreme Consciousness - the source of all existence and activity, was realized by the Indian sages of yore as *Gāyatrī*. It is defined as *Vedmātā*- the genesis of all *Vedas*. The four *Vedas* - *Rik*, *Yaju*, *Sāma* and *Atharva* and hence all streams of knowledge are said to have originated from *Gāyatrī*. The absolute knowledge described in the *Vedas* is fundamental to the expression of consciousness, to all activities of living beings and the Nature through the four major components of life pertaining to - *Rik* (religion, spirituality, auspiciousness and peace), *Yaju* (potentials of physical and intellectual progress), *Sāma* (creativity, play and enjoyment) and *Atharva* (materialistic development). The Indian scriptures describe that Lord *Brahma* - the eternal creator, had created the cosmos with the help of the knowledge emanated from *Gāyatrī* in the *Vedas*.

The manifestation of the omnipresent power of *Gāyatrī* in the cosmic expansion of eternal sound was discovered by Maharshi Vishwamitra as the *Gāyatrī Mantra*. This *mantra* is glorified as the smallest and universal religious scripture for all ages. In terms of knowledge, this *mantra* is the root, representing the essence of Indian Philosophy and its divine culture. In terms of acoustic effects and the science of *mantras*, the *Gāyatrī Mantra* is the source of limitless powers of consciousness and a perfect compilation of the cosmic and spiritual reflections of eternal sound.

Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya is recognized as the Vishwamitra of the present era for his dedicated endeavors of eliminating the misconceptions associated, since the medieval times of religious corruption and cultural deformation, with the devotional practices of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* and for his success in reestablishing

the glory of this great knowledge. He propagated the true knowledge of *Gāyatrī* in scientific light and took it to the people across the world without any discrimination of religion, caste, creed, sex, social status, etc....

Acharya Sharma's vast knowledge, life-long devout experiments in spirituality and experiences of ultimate success in realization and divine attainments through the *sāadhanā* - spiritual endeavor under ascetic disciplines and with absolute devotion - of *Gāyatrī* are reflected in the successive volumes written by him on the meaning, philosophy, science, devotional practices and higher level *sāadhanās* of *Gāyatrī* and the miraculous benefits - ranging from those in day-to-day life to supernormal spiritual endowments..., attainable by successful completion of *Gāyatrī sāadhanā*.....

In this volume, he has presented the essence of what had been expressed by the *rishis* in the ancient scriptures on the great knowledge of *Gāyatrī*. Excerpts (in Sanskrit language) from the scriptures are cited here with literal meaning and elaborate explanations. Acharya Sharma has also described the worldly and spiritual powers associated with each of the twenty four syllables of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* and elucidated the presence of corresponding extrasensory energy centers within the human body and brain which are activated by the vibrations generated by rhythmic enunciation (*japa*) of this *mantra*.

How the *rishis* had devised and practised the methods of *Gāyatrī sāadhanā* and what have been the views and experiences of the spiritual saints, eminent scholars and great personalities of the later ages - is also highlighted in this volume. *Gāyatrī* is defined in the *Vedas* as the source of all spiritual powers. It enlightens the soul and educes immense strength in the *sādhaka* (devotee). What makes a person a true devotee? How do ordinary people engaged in worldly chores proceed along the path of self-restrain and spiritual refinement? Detailed answers to such queries and doubts are provided in this volume emphasizing the importance of intrinsic

faith, inner sentiments of devotion, and purity of character and deeds..... Illustrative live examples of people from all walks of the society are presented with authentic information on how they improved their mode of life and attitude and got blessed by performing *Gāyatrī sādhanā* in a duty-bound ordinary life.

The vibrations of *Gāyatrī Mantra* generate physical, mental and spiritual energy in and around the *Sādhaka* who recites this mantra, under proper discipline, with sincere faith and devotional meditation on rising sun..... In the state of deep meditation, the *Sādhaka's* consciousness gets linked to the divine impulses emanated from the subtle body (*Savitā*) of the Sun. At physical level as well, the vital energy of the *Sādhaka* attracts the cosmic energy waves and empowers the *Sādhaka's* body and mind. The readers might also like to know what is the proper mode of recitation (*japa*) of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*, what are the essential disciplines and how to condition the mind for meditation with unperturbed concentration....? This volume together with volume no. 12 of the Vangmaya series would serve the purpose of practical guidance on these issues.

Despite excellent progress in science and technology and progressive experiments on socioeconomic fronts, the state of the world today is far away from being happy and peaceful. Rather, the decline in human values, the suppression of morality by selfishness, ego, thirst for power and the perversion of thoughts and debauch of desires by lust for sensual and materialistic pleasures..., etc, have even put a question mark on the very survival of humanity..... In this period of "crisis of faith", refinement and transmutation of mentality, attitude and intrinsic sentiments of the people seem to be the only hopes for permanent solutions. Spiritual and devotional practices devised by the visionaries of yore offer the key to success in achieving this change in feasible duration of time.

The *sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī* stands atop all spiritual endeavors in above respect as well. Because, it is universal, risk-less and unanimously recommended by all spiritual saints and erudite scholars of Indian

Philosophy as the best *sāadhanā* for total removal of the negative effects and mal-impressions of past sins and simultaneous refinement of the unconscious and conscious mind.... *Gāyatrī* is referred in the scriptures as *amrat, pāras* and *kalpvraksha* because it bestows the nectar of spirituality, illuminates the inner self of every devotee with divine glow and fulfils all righteous desires. A true devotee of *Gāyatrī* does not face any scarcity or danger in life....

Gāyatrī is also the source of all the *parā* - manifested in the tangible world, and *aparā* - subtle, branches of absolute knowledge. The Chhandogya Upanishad states "*Gāyatrī Vā Idam Sarva Bhūtām Yadidam Kincha* " implying that - "the entire universe is a reflection of *Gāyatrī* power...". There is nothing in the world which cannot be accomplished by *Gāyatrī sāadhanā*. The *upāsana* (devotional meditation) of *Gāyatrī* is indeed the simplest and best way of worshipping all divine powers of *Thou*.

The present volume is the first in the set of seven volumes (nos. 9 to 14) - of the Vangmaya series, which are devoted to the great knowledge - encompassing philosophy, science, spiritual experiments, supernatural attainments and boons...., of *Gāyatrī sāadhanā*. The scientific and philosophical aspects are briefly introduced in this volume with greater emphasis on the deliberations on the *Gāyatrī sāadhanā* as glorified in the ancient scriptures. The readers are advised to read all the successive volumes of this set to get maximum details and authentic and convincing answers to their queries. Gurudev Shriram Sharma has gifted this treasure to the modern age. Now, it is up to us how we all benefit from it.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 9, An Introduction

INTENSIVE REVIEW OF GAYATRI MANTRA

(*Gāyatrī Sādhanā Kā Gāhan Vivechana*)

Anyone who has ever had an exposure to the Indian Philosophy and the Science of Spirituality must have heard of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*. That the spiritual endeavors (*sādhanā*) of *Gāyatrī* transmute the personality and awaken divine sentiments and talents - must have been experienced or noticed by every one who has sincerely devoted himself to *Gāyatrī sādhanā* or has had an opportunity to study the life of a true *Sādhaka* (devotee) of this spiritual experiment of the highest kind.....

The *Gāyatrī Mantra* is considered to be a universal prayer. The glory of *Gāyatrī Sādhanā* as elucidated by spiritual masters and scholars of religious philosophy and the science of *mantras* raises a natural question - "what is so special about the *Gāyatrī Mantra*? The secrets are deciphered in the present volume where Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya, an authority on the knowledge and spiritual experiments of *Gāyatrī* meditation, has analyzed the subtle science of this *mantra*, its interpretations, teachings, philosophy and spiritual aspects in detail.

The visible world is said to be created using the five basic elements (the *pancha mahābhūtas*) - *prathvī, jala, agni, vāyu and ākasha*. The *Sāṅkhya Darshan* - one of the six principal schools of ancient Indian Philosophy, affirms the existence of twenty four other 'elements' which constitute the complete expansion of the subtle world and spiritual realization. These twenty four subtle elements are said to be perfectly configured by the Indian *rishis* of yore in the twenty four specific syllables (words) of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*. Each of these twenty four syllables is a seed of a distinct stream of divine power. These twenty four powers are described as twenty four deities in the rhetoric representation of the ancient scriptures.

The harmonic compilation of each of these special syllables in the *Gāyatrī Mantra* has made it extremely powerful in terms of the superimposed vibrations generated by the rhythmic recitation of this *mantra*. The activation of the twenty four subtle elements of consciousness consequently stimulates the otherwise dormant 'currents' of vital force and sublimates the inner strength and sentimental cores.

The scientific aspects - including sonic patterns and impact of the vibrations of this *mantra* on human mind and body have been covered by the author in volume no. 14 of the vangamaya series. The discussions in the present volume pertain to deeper folds of human psychology.

The *Gāyatrī Mantra* - compiled in the script of ancient form of Sanskrit language reads as follows:

*Om || Bhur Bhuvah Svah || Tat Saviturvarenyam,
Bhargo Devasya Dhī mahi, Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayāt ||*

Here "Om" represents the eternal, self-existent, omnipresent sound which is regarded as the realization of the absolute origin and ultimate end of the cosmos. The syllables (sounds) *Bhuh*, *Bhuvah*, *Svah* correspond to the physical, subtle and astral (causal) domains of existence - emanated from the supreme cosmic consciousness of the *Brahma*. The ancient philosophical deliberations, practical implications, spiritual aspects and interpretations associated with human psychology - of each of these syllables as well as the others till the last letter 't' of "*prachodayāt*" have been eloquently analyzed by the author with authentic references and illustrative discussions. The implications of the thousand names of *Gāyatrī* and the nine layers of different reflections of the expansion of the divine powers of *Gāyatrī* are also dealt with excellently.

Understanding of the meanings and teachings of each component of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* strengthens the *sādhaka's* faith and devotion and helps him realize the impact of rhythmic enunciation of the *mantra* at the levels of gross body, mind and the inner self.

For example, the contextual meaning of the Sanskrit word "*prachodayāt*" is - educe and elevate the element "*dhiyaḥ*" (= intellect) towards the righteous path of divine illumination..... Significantly, each letter of this word also offers important guidance to the ideal philosophy of life: "*pra*" implies - be strict to yourself and humble to everyone else; this corresponds to cautious self-analysis, refinement of the self and generous and respectful attitude for the others. The word "*cho*" indicates the importance of friendship and association with morally refined, wise and duty-bond people; in other words it also reflects the importance of moral thoughts and contemplation on the ideologies of great personalities which support high human values.

The syllable "*da*" reminds of self-respect and cautions that integrity of character and virtuous elevation of personality is more important than wealth or power. Here "*yā*" teaches maintains of affectionate and mutually honorable social relationships and appries one of his social responsibilities. The last syllable "*t*" implies the true meaning of religion as - " have love and respect for all beings....; do not treat others in a manner in which you would not like or accept to be treated...". Thus, a single word "*prachodayāt*" itself contains the essence of psychological, social and religious development in a righteous way....

The simplified analysis and explanations of Acharya Sharma make the rather difficult field of literature and philosophy, quite interesting and perspicuous. His expressions seem to carry the force of his inner sentiments for the welfare of every being....and have the power to penetrate our hearts and enlighten our minds with the divine glow of *Gāyatrī*.

Understanding how the twenty four divine powers subtly 'contained' in the *Gāyatrī Mantra* affect the physical, mental and spiritual domains of life and influence the external world around,up to cosmic levels - inspires the *sādhaka* to unite his consciousness with the eternal vibrations of the *mantra*. This in practical terms corresponds to sincere adoption of the teachings implied in the meaning of this *mantra* and cultivation of auspicious progress and peace in life. The philosophy of life shaped according to the universal meaning of this *mantra* is indeed a source of complete success and beatitudeous bliss.

Acharya Sharma has expressed the essence of the meaning of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* as a universal prayer for collective awakening of the consciousness and divine illumination of human intellect towards the righteous path. May all people be enlightened by the knowledge and afflatus of the great *Gāyatrī Mantra* and all witness the revival of the divine culture.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 10, An Introduction

....Accumulation of worldly possessions and riches is automatically reflected in a person's nature attitude and conduct. A healthy person looks strong and beautiful. Affluent persons are full of pomp and show. Intelligence of a man is reflected in his speech, conduct and behaviour. In the same way, when spiritual treasure is amassed, its impact becomes apparent. Sāadhanā is bound to result in siddhi which means extraordinary achievements. Even ordinary persons attain success by dint of their industriousness and resources but the success attained in the spiritual field is exemplary and unique and it cannot be attained by solitary efforts of an ego-centred person.

-- Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

MIRACULOUS ATTAINMENTS THROUGH GAYATRI MEDITATION

(*Gāyatrī Sādhanā Ke Pratyakśa Chamatkār*)

The *Gāyatrī Mantra* inspires righteous intellect and elevates prudence and devotion. It is a universal prayer and the supreme *mantra* of all ages. Chhandogya Upanishada describes the existence, expansion and activities of the world as a reflection of the eternal vibrations of *Gāyatrī (Mantra)*. According to Adi Shankaracharya, "*Gāyatrī* represents the limitless *Brahm* - eternal, omnipresent, absolute existence of *Thy*. Consciousness Force...". As per the Vrahadaranyakopanishada - "One, who realizes and attains the essence of the knowledge of *Gāyatrī* in life, becomes Omniscient and Omnipotent". The *sādhanā* of (grand spiritual endeavor) of realization of *Gāyatrī* bestows immense boons on a true devotee and activates the divine element imbibed in his individual self.

The origin of the divine culture and philosophy of ancient times has been attributed to the *Gāyatrī Mantra*. The Indian *rishis* of yore - who are honored as perfect beings, had devoted their lives to the *sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī Mantra* for the ultimate realization and spiritual refinement of the inner self and attainment of divine potentials. *Gāyatrī sādhanā* has also been an integral part of the lives of the spiritual saints and sages of the later ages.

Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya is known to be the most eminent devotee and spiritual master of *Gāyatrī sādhanā* in the recent times. Every dimension of his life had unified with this sacred spiritual endeavor of the highest kind. The divine sentiments, saintly compassion, sagacious intellect, absolute knowledge, superb eloquence, perfect creativity and enormous altruist services of this great sage appeared to be in tune with the vibrations and inspirations of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*. He dedicated the supernormal attainments of the *Gāyatrī sādhanā* for the welfare and spiritual elevation of millions of other people and pioneered propagating the

knowledge of *Gāyatrī* to enlighten the masses.

That *Gāyatrī sādhanā* indeed bestows miraculous blessings and boons - was authentically advocated by him in scientific light. The present volume is a compilation of his thorough study, experiments, experiences and conclusions on this aspect. In his words - "During my long term efforts of expanding the knowledge of devotional practices (*Upāsana*) of *Gāyatrī sādhanā*, I have had interactions with many great devotees who have been blessed by its divine grace. Thousands of people have been encouraged and guided by me along this path; those who sincerely continued their *sādhanā* with unperturbed devotion and determination have been endowed with miraculous benefits. They regard these as the boons of the divine mother *Gāyatrī*. Although, the positive effects and astonishing attainments by *Gāyatrī sādhanā* occur through the subtle scientific process at deeper domains of consciousness, the devotional sentiments of gratitude towards *Thy* power are advisable in order to maintain humility and dedicated sincerity of mind - which are necessary for the consistent advancement of the *sādhanā*".

Acharya Sharma has cited authentic examples of divine attainments through *Gāyatrī sādhanā* with the help of excerpts from ancient scriptures and by reporting the live experiences - during different time periods of human history, of the spiritual masters, great personalities and many ordinary people from different walks of the society. Incidents of miraculous transmutation of the personalities of Gautam, Dhruva, Mahatma Anand Swami, Kathiyawadi Baba, Siddha Booti Baba, Madhavacharya, etc., by *Gāyatrī sādhanā* and the experiences and views of Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Vivekanand, Ravindra Nath Tagore, Lokamanya Tilaka, Mahatma Gandhi, William Magnere, Arthur Koestler, etc, are worth mentioning in this context. The volume covers all these in detail.

The revered head of the Arya Samaja, Anand Swami has expressed his experiences and accomplishments during *Gāyatrī sādhanā* in a book entitled "Anand Gayatri Katha". Acharya Sharma has elucidated his own experiences and spiritual attainments through

Gāyatrī sādhanā in his autobiography and several of his books on the Super Science and Philosophy of *Gāyatrī Mantra*. Readers would also find the essence of the first-hand experiences of both these great personalities in the present volume.

Immediate effects of *Gāyatrī Upāsana* include - cultivation of self-confidence and fearlessness in the *Sādhaka* (devotee) and gradual illumination of his intellect, power of decision-making and sense of responsibility and purification of the emotional and inner cores of mind. As a result, the devotee's worldly life also begins to progress well at personal, professional and social levels. Further advancement of the *sādhanā* with increasing devotion awakens the hidden talents and divine sentiments and opens the doors for materialistic as well as spiritual development. This implies the eternal validity of the following *vedic* hymn -

Om Stutā Mayā Varazdā, Vedamātā Prachodayantām |
Pāvmanī Dwijānām, Āyuh, Prāṇam, Prajām, Paśum,
Kīrtim, Draviṇam, Brahmvarchasam |
Mahyam Dattvā Brajata Brahmlokam | | "

That "*Gāyatrī* bestows good health, vitality, longevity, wealth with grace, glorious success, co-operation, love, intellectual elevation and divine culmination of the self" - can be verified by everybody by sincerely practicing *Gāyatrī sādhanā* in day-to-day life with intrinsic faith..... Nothing could be more authentic than self-experience.....

The highest level spiritual endowments described as *ashta siddhi* and *nava nidhī* are natural consequences of progress in *Gāyatrī sādhanā*. At initial stage, the righteous progress of this *sādhanā* is reflected in the serene charm, impressive voice, brilliance of eyes, glow of the aura around the face and the body. Clarity of thoughts, trenchancy of wisdom, intellectual talents, creativity and prudence sprout and grow in the *sādhaka* as he (or she) matures in the *sādhanā*. Most importantly, the *sādhaka* (devotee) begins to feel the

presence of divine power in the inner self which educes immense strength and peace in his mind to face all adversities and ups and downs of life with stable faith and patience. His inner voice forcibly cautions him against every immoral activity and thought and guides ideal path in the moment of difficulty and dilemma.

The *japa* (rhythmic enunciation with deep meditation) of *Gāyatrī* Mantra is an integral part of *Gāyatrī sādhanā*. This helps refine the *sādhaka's* voice and leads to its subtle transmutation into the extrasensory divine voice. Boons or curses expressed in this sublime voice indeed come true. Further awakening of the inner potentials gradually bestows the supernormal powers of premonition, afflatus, telepathy, clairvoyance and prophecy. Activation and sublime transformation of unconscious and super conscious minds of such a *sādhaka* links his conscious mind with divine impulses....

In the above state, the *sādhaka* whether awoken, asleep or in trance, can receive cosmic signals and divine messages. Transmission of his vital energy or mental vibrations into other beings becomes as easy for him as if one is handing over some physical items to someone across the table. The atmosphere surrounding these spiritually empowered personalities also becomes serene and remains charged with some kind of divine influence.

Sincere and determined efforts in the appropriate direction take one closer to the goal. Spiritual endeavors are no exceptions. This seems to be more true and certain in case of *Gāyatrī sādhanā*. The present volume serves as an authentic evidence for this cause. This will acquaint the readers with the apparent boons of *Gāyatrī sādhanā* - experienced and acquired by thousands of ordinary persons. The nectar of the eternal divine power of *Gāyatrī* is for every body. Each one of us can be blessed by enormous attainments in materialist, mental, intellectual and spiritual domains of life with the help of devoted *Gāyatrī sādhanā*.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Vangmaya Vol. 11, An Introduction

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES WITH GAYATRI MANTRA

(*Gāyatrī Ki Dainik Evam Viśiṣṭha Anuṣṭhān Paraka
Sādhanāyen*)

The Indian *rishis* - saints, sages and scholars of yore had realized the origin of the presiding power of the universe through absolute devotion and perfect spiritual experiments. They had described the eternal source of time, knowledge, pure intellect, prudence, foresight, creation, welfare and ultimate peace as - the deity, divine mother *Gāyatrī*. The eternal source of omnipresent divinity was discovered by them in the form of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* which is glorified as - the essence of the *Vedas* and the origin of the ancient Indian Philosophy and its divine culture.

The *upāsana* (devotional practice with meditation) and *sādhanā* (spiritual endeavor of self-elevation) of realization of *Gāyatrī* are unanimously attributed by the spiritual masters and great saintly personalities of all ages as the perfect sources of purification, escalation and sublime transformation of personality and life as a whole.

The scriptures describe *Gāyatrī upāsana* as essential for every human being because, it begins the process of refinement at the level of sentiments and cultivation of true virtues of humanity in every dimension of personality. Be that the righteous development in day to day life, illumination of intellect or spiritual transmutation of the highest kind, all can be accomplished by sincere practice of *Gāyatrī Upāsana*. The *sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī* is of utmost importance for spiritual evolution as it burns out the past sins and associated intrinsic infirmities of the *sādhaka* (devotee).

Gāyatrī has been allegorically referred as a "*Kāmadhenu*"² - a divine

'cow', whose 'milk' is a nectar of all spiritual powers which removes all agonies, scarcities and weaknesses of life, eliminates the evil effects of sins and bad omen and induces blissful liveliness and absolute enlightenment.....

Gāyatrī upāsana maintains an ideal balance of the three basic tendencies (*gunas*) of Nature - *sat*, *raj* and *tam* in the *sādhaka*. It gradually enhances the presence of *sat-guna* which educes pure love, compassion, inner strength, eminence and intellectual prosperity and creative talents. It empowers the *raj-guna* to elevate physical and mental potentials ensuring righteous success in the battle of life against all adversities and complexities of the world. The spiritual refinement initiated by this *sāadhanā* diminishes the *tamoguna* and as a result, destroys the ignorance, lethargy and evil tendencies. A true devotee of *Gāyatrī* can never face any scarcity or adversity in life because of his awakened prudence, inner strength and righteous character.

The illusive propagations of the medieval era and the cynical mentality of the so-called masters of religion at that time had brought all kinds of misconceptions in Indian philosophy of yore. Whence the *Gāyatrī Mantra* was being described as an esoteric mantra which can be 'taught' secretly only by some special *gurūs* (spiritual masters) to a special class of 'deserving' devotees.... Similar misinterpretations and distortions had kept the original science and philosophy of *Gāyatrī* beyond sight for a long time.... The dedicated efforts of the great saints, social reformers and sagacious spiritual experts like Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya have brought the true knowledge of *Gāyatrī* in light in the modern age. Acharya Sharma had successfully practised the highest kinds of spiritual endeavors of *Gāyatrī upāsana*. He shared his experiences with millions of devotees and propagated the divine knowledge of *Gāyatrī* in scientific light for the welfare of all beings.

Narrating his own experiences, Acharya Sharma writes that - "the

omnipresent sovereign power of *Gāyatrī* bestows divine grace on every devotee. In no case, its *upāsana* and *sādhanā* can ever be harmful or risky. Every human being is free to perform *Gāyatrī upāsana*. No one should have any suspicion in this regard. Devoted pursuits of spiritual practices always return blessed effects provided associated disciplines are obeyed sincerely. *Gāyatrī sādhanā* is more special in the sense that even in the case of some mistake on part of the devotee, there is no possibility of any negative effect or harm.... The divine mother always looks after all her children with immense love and care".

Commenting on the so-called 'secret initiation' of the *mantra* by the *gurūs*, the author says - "fake *gurūs* simply blow air by chanting *mantra* in the ears of the devotees, while a truly noble *gurū* (*satgurū*) inspires the life force of *Gāyatrī* in the inner self....". The ideal combination of *Gāyatrī*- knowledge and *satgurū* is like a perfect combination of *Savitā* - the subtle body of Sun God, the source of absolute prudence, eminence and energy, and *Brahaspati* - the divine *gurū* who guides all manifestations of God.

The first-hand experiences of Gurudev Shriram Sharma and his erudite deliberations on the vast knowledge of *Gāyatrī* are eloquently penned by him in seven volumes of the Vangmaya series. The present volume describes the objectives, disciplines and methods of performing *Gāyatrī sādhanā* in detail.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma assures that "sincere devotion with purity of sentiments and righteousness of character never goes wrong" quoting Lord Krishna in the holy Gita -

Nehābhikrama Nāshoasti Pratyavāyo Na Vidyate |
Swalpamupyasya Dharmasya Trāyate Mahatobhayāt | |

Meaning: "Dedicated endeavor commenced along the righteous path is never lost; it continues (against all hindrances). It can never bring negative or untoward outcomes. The truth and purity of the

objective, which is inspired by the inner self protects the nobility of the path. Such an endeavor can not end without auspicious success....."

When every effort devoted to truly religious objectives protects the devotee from severe dangers and fears....., then why should there be any doubt about the success of the great *sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī* which is devoted to collective awakening of the intellect of all beings along the righteous path...?

The *upāsanā* of *Gāyatrī* can be performed daily by meditation on rising sun and *japa* (rhythmic enunciation) of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* for a fixed duration of time. Austerity, purity of body, thoughts and sentiments, regularity of time and place, etc., are some simple disciplines required to be followed here. Mental recitation and contemplation on the *Gāyatrī Mantra* can be continued throughout the day whenever and wherever calmness and concentration of mind can be maintained naturally. Practice of the above kind could also be pursued by writing this *mantra* a fixed number of times every day.

The higher level *sādhanā* (called *Anusthāna*) of *Gāyatrī* include - *Laghu anusthāna* of 9 days, *Anusthāna* of 40 days and *Purascharaṇa* of one to several years. These involve specific number of *japas* of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* and gradually higher levels of ascetic disciplines. Details of each type of *upāsanā* and *sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī* are presented in this volume. The prescribed *āsanas* (sitting postures), types of rosaries, number of *japas*, best timings and methods of *upāsanā* and meditation, requirement of noble *gurū*, modes of commencement and completion, observance of essential disciplines of chastity, fasting, altruist service....., etc. - all are explained here in great detail with illustrations leaving no room for any doubt.... Excerpts from ancient scriptures and views of authentic spiritual masters are also cited with elaborate discussions.

The method of *Pragyā yoga*- a special practice of *yoga* and *Gāyatrī*

sādhanā , is also presented in this volume. The method was introduced by Gurudev Shriram Sharma in 1980 for mass implementation - keeping in mind the attitudes and life-styles in the modern times. Every body can practise it without any difficulty or major adjustment in his or her busy routine and can benefit from the boons of *Gāyatrī upāsanā*.

The author's adept guidance offered in this comprehensive volume would teach the readers how to proceed with *Gāyatrī upāsanā* and would also give necessary support at every step in marching towards the ultimate *sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī Purashcharaṇa*.... May this nectar of eternal knowledge inspire all minds and hearts and enlighten every life by the divine blessings of *Gāyatrī*

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 12, An Introduction

The fundamental principles of tapaścaryā are self-restraint (sanyam) and proper utilisation of resources. By observing restraint of sense organs (indriya-sanyam), a man remains healthy and the store of his willpower never gets exhausted. By observing restriction in respect of spending money (artha-sanyam), a man has to lead a simple life of an average citizen and maintain himself on his self-earned, honest earnings. Best utilisation of one's own time is known as samaya-sanyam, in which a set work-routine has to be followed and body and mind are applied to specific useful pursuits. This leaves no time for indulging in evil deeds. By exercising restraint in respect of thoughts (vicār-sanyam) the outlook of a person becomes devout, spiritual and religious and it becomes easy for him to perform sādhanā of Bhakti-yog, Gyān-yog and Karma-yog.

Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

TRANSMUTATION OF THE FIVE SHEATHS OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND DIVINE ATTAINMENTS THROUGH GAYATRI

(*Gāyatrī Kī Pancha Koṣī Sādhanā Evam Uplabdhīyān*)

Gāyatrī - the deity of time, knowledge, pure intellect, prudence foresight, creation, progress, welfare and ultimate evolution is described in the rhetoric representations of the Indian scriptures as having five faces and ten arms. Idols and pictures of *Gāyatrī* also depict the same. This is not a mythological characterization, rather, the five faces of *Gāyatrī* symbolize the *Pancha kosha* (five 'sheaths' of the consciousness force or the five 'realms' of its different manifestations and expansion). The ten arms of the Goddess indicate her powers which can completely destroy and eliminate the ten major causes of the vices, decline and consequent pains and agony of life.

The gross, subtle and astral bodies of individual self are said to be subtly covered by the *Pancha kosha* - *annamaya kosha* (body cell), *prāṇamaya kosha* (life cell), *manomaya kosha* (mind cell), *vigyānamaya kosha* (knowledge cell) and *ānandamaya kosha* (beatitudious bliss cell). These are also described as five doors successive opening of which leads the soul towards absolute liberation from all bonds and ultimate unification with its eternal divine origin.

The word "*kosha*" in Sanskrit and Hindi languages also means treasure. The *pancha kosha* contain five secret treasures of enormous potentials endowed on the human self attainment of which removes all deficiencies, complexities, stresses, worries, sufferings and agonies and successively transmutes human life into divine one. The Bhragu Valli section of Tattiryopanishad and Shatpatha Brahmana (15 | 17 | 31) and Vrhadaranyaka Upanishda mention these aspects in detail.

The knowledge of the *sādhanā* (spiritual endeavors and disciplined practices) of penetration and activation of the *Pancha koshas* lies at the

deepest core of the science of *yoga* and spirituality. Acharya Shriram Sharma's "*Gāyatrī Manjarī*" and "*Gāyatrī Mahāvīgyāna*" present the nectar of the Vedas, Upanishadas and other scriptures on *Gāyatrī Yoga*-describing the *sādhanās* of activation, refinement and evolution of consciousness for opening of the *Pancha koshas* and attainment of supernormal potentials associated with them..... The present volume is based on these books and compilation of his other articles on this topic.

The first in the hierarchical manifold (from gross to successively subtler) of the five 'shells' is the *annamaya kosha*. The state of this *kosha* determines the structure, strength and overall health of the gross (physical) body. The nutritional quality of what we eat affects the development of the gross body. But, the innermost characteristics, subtle properties and purity of the food-intake influences the evolution of the *annamaya kosha*. For example, food prepared with the help of resources earned by unfair means or prepared by hurting some living being in some way would have obnoxious subtle properties and therefore exert negative effects on this *kosha* and hence on the health of the body too. Disorderly, maligned or weak state of this *kosha* is considered to be the root cause of all diseases and deficiencies of the body.

Specific practices of *vrata*, *upawāsa* (fasting), *āsanas* (physical exercises of *yoga*), *tatva shuddhi* and *tapa - tīṭksha* (refinement by penance, self-restrain, endurance and ascetic disciplines) are prescribed for healthy maintenance and purity of this *kosha*. Higher level *sādhanās* of *Gāyatrī* meditation and *yoga* can be practised only in a vigorous state of the *annamaya kosha*. Detailed information and guidance of the day-to-day practices and *sādhanās* of refinement and opening (spiritual activation) of this *kosha* are provided in three chapters of the present volume. Successive refinement of this *kosha* increases the vitality, resistance and charm of the body and brightens the glow of the aura around it. Awakening of this *kosha* opens up the way to enter the next *kosha* - the *prāṇamaya kosha*.

The *prāṇamaya kosha* constitutes what is defined as the 'etheric double' by the Theosophists. It refers to the reservoir of vital energy - the source of liveliness, activity, eminence and inner strength. Disorder,

maligned or deficiencies at this source gives rise to psychosomatic diseases, mental weakness and complexities. This *kosha* is maintained in order by harmonizing the level of *prāṇa* (vital force) by the *yoga* exercises of *prāṇāyāma*.

Several types of *prāṇāyāmas* including those aimed at activation of the *sūrya chakra* and upthrust of *prāṇa* through the *sushumṇā nādi* are described in the volume no. 17 of the Vangmaya series. Details on the higher level *Gāyatrī sādhanā* of arousal and spiritual transmutation of the vital force are present in the volume no. 16. One chapter of the present volume focuses on these in brief. Opening and refinement of this *kosha* gradually increases creativity, enthusiasm, youthfulness - longevity and sharpens mental talents and inner strength too. Its linkage with *Kuṇḍalini* opens up the ways of supernatural attainments.

The *manomaya kosha* enfolds the domain of subtle layers of mind. It governs the intelligence, intrinsic tendencies and continuous activities of the mind at conscious and unconscious levels. The first phase of the *sādhanās* of control and purification of this *kosha* deals with restraining the agility of mind and enhancing mental concentration by meditation.

The *yoga* practices of *japa*, *dhyāna*, *trātaka* and *tanmātrā siddhi* prescribed for this purpose have been discussed in detail in one separate chapter of the present volume along with the higher level *sādhanās* like the *gandha sādhanā* and *swara sādhanā* which unlock the latent treasure of supernormal intellectual and mental potentials. Purity and awakening of the *manomaya kosha* is essential for spiritual sublimation of the individual consciousness.

The fourth *kosha* in the successively subtle domains of human consciousness is the *vigyānamaya kosha* which is the source of ultimate knowledge and self-realization of the soul. The true existence of the self is experienced as different from the body, virtues, intellect and mind in the refined state of this *kosha*. Upon success of the associated *sādhanās*, the soul realizes its eternity and divine nature. These *sādhanās* include *ajapā japa*, *ātmānubhūti yoga* and *soaham sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī*.

Activation of the *vigyānamaya kosha* also helps activation of the supreme vital force (*Kuṇḍalini*) and opening of the extrasensory knots (*granthis*) and hence liberates the self from the thraldoms of ignorance, pains, fears and attachments. One chapter of this volume is devoted to the detailed explanation of these *sāadhanās*. Specific knowledge of the spiritual practices of *ajapā japa* and *soaham sāadhanā* is discussed in-depth in volume no. 19 of the vangmaya series.

The *ānandamaya kosha* contains the source of divine bliss - beatitudinousness experienced after unification of the soul with its eternal origin. The state of absolute trance (*turiyāvasthā*) achieved by *Shabda Brahm sāadhanā*, *Nāda yoga sāadhanā* and *Bindu yoga* etc leads to this ultimate spiritual realization and sublime transformation and divine expansion of the self as unified with the omnipresent impulses of the supreme consciousness. The science, philosophy and methods of practising the *Shabda Brahm* and *Nāda yoga sāadhanās* are described in detailed in volume no. 19 of this series. In the present volume, the reader will find decipheration of what is *ānandamaya kosha* and how this can be awakened by the above *sāadhanās* in day-to-day life.

Details on initiation of *Gāyatrī sāadhanās* and different modes of disciplined practices under adept guidance of a noble spiritual master are also presented here for ready reference. The secretes of the *Pancha Koshī Sāadhanā* of *Gāyatrī* are eloquently deciphered by the author because of his life-long experiences and success with these spiritual endeavors of the highest kind..... It is hoped that the light of his sagacious intellect and knowledge reflected in this volume would inspire readers to march ahead in the direction of spiritual refinement of life.... the readers to march ahead towards spiritual refinement of life.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 13, An Introduction

SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF GAYATRI MEDITATION

(*Gāyatrī Sādhanā Kī Vaigyanika Praṣṭhabhūmi*)

O *amkāra* - the eternal, omnipresent, self-originated sound of "Oam" is said to be the sublime source of existence of the cosmos. The *Gāyatrī Mantra* - the first *Mantra* known since the origin of time and creation of nature, is said to have emanated from this self-existent *nāda* (eternal sound). The essence of the ancient Indian philosophy and its glorious human-values is said to have generated from this *Mantra*. This *Mantra*, a unique compilation of twenty four syllables and vowels in Sanskrit language, is described as the source of creation of the four Vedas and hence of all dimensions and ultimate expansion of knowledge.

Many religious scriptures are compiled by enormous types of *Mantras* each with specific effects and implications but the *Gāyatrī Mantra* stands superior to all. It is a *Mantra* which can also be chanted as a *chanda* (hymn). It is regarded as the sonic representation, a coded formula, of the absolute divine power of Thee. Lord Krishna has also identified Himself as "*Gāyatrī Chandsamham*" in the Bhagvata Gita (Shloka 35, Chapter 10); meaning: "among all the *chandās*, I am *Gāyatrī*".

The knowledge of the *sādhanās* (spiritual endeavors) of realization of the powers of this *Mantra* and its philosophical and scientific decipheration is so vast that seven volumes of the Vangmaya series are devoted to it. The present volume elucidates the scientific aspects of this *Mantra* some of which have been analyzed in the modern research laboratories too.

Mantras are specific configurations of sonic patterns coded as interweaving of syllables and phonetic symbols to produce specific vibrations. At a gross level in general, sound serves as a medium

for communication but, at the subtler and the higher dimensions of its existence, it plays the role of energy. Literally, *Mantra* (= *manan* + *trāna*) means a source of awakening and liberation of mind and therefore has intimate relationship with psychology and spirituality too. Vibrations in the gigantic 'ocean' of consciousness fall in the sublime domains of sound. The cosmic and spiritual dimensions of sound are scientifically deciphered in the context of - ultrasonic and infrasonic applications, origin, expansion and impact of music and the science of *Mantras* and *Oamkāra*, in volume no. 19 of the Vangmaya series. In the present volume, the specific features and significance of *Gāyatrī Mantra* are discussed in detail.

Indian spiritual masters and devotees of all ages have practised the *japa - anushthānas* (spiritual endeavors of meditation and disciplined enunciations) of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*. This *Mantra* has been recited infinitely many times since the time of yore. Its vibrations are pervaded in the subtle world and penetrate the aura of vital energy and the ideosphere of the *sādhaka* (devotee) whenever the latter is engrossed in the *japa* of this *mantra* with deep meditation on the glow of rising sun and having inner faith in its divine origin. These cosmic vibrations influence the *sādhaka's* brain-waves and eliminate the deficiencies and disorder in the mental domains too.

As the *sāadhanā* of the devotee progresses along with corresponding refinement of his personality, the vibrations produced in and around his body due to the *japa* of *Gāyatrī Mantra* begin resembling the pre-existent vibrations of this *Mantra* in the cosmos and generate greater influence and expansion because of superimposition with the latter.

According to the science of acoustics, the patterns of sound waves produced by each of the twenty-four letters of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* are very special and their combined effect is a source of immense energy. Repeated *japa* (rhythmic enunciation) of this *mantra* in multiples of 108 results in cyclic superimposition of the associated vibrations and creates a field of force inside and around the body of the devotee. The continuous movement of the tongue and its impact on the palate during the recitations of this *mantra* produces specific vibrations in the inter-connecting nerves as well.

The connection and movements of specific fingers used for holding and moving the rosary (of 108 beads) for the purpose of counting of *japa* adds to the soothing excitation of the nervous system. Significantly, the nerves connected with the components of vocal cord, tongue, palate and fingers used in the *japa* have more than 60 % representation in the cerebral cortex. The bioelectrical currents generated by the excitation of the nerve cells complete one "neuronal cycle" per recitation and activate the brain with fresh energy. Continuity of *japas* maintains the mind in a totally awakened state charged with vital power of consciousness.

The bioelectrical impulses generated in the neuronal system sensitize the endocrine glands and activate specific neuro-hormonal secretions which play principal role in harmonizing the healthy functions of the body, creativity of mind and emotional peace and cheerfulness. The subtle vibrations generated in the inner core of brain also exert positive effects on the extrasensory power centers in the human body.

Acoustic analysis of the Science of *Mantras* - also known as the "science of harmony of symbols and sounds" shows that the *Gāyatrī Mantra* has been given a 'crown status' because of its unique manifold vibrations and power to influence the physical, subtle and spiritual bodies simultaneously. Because of the impact of these vibrations on the aura (of vital energy) around the body, the surrounding atmosphere also gets affected coherently. The effects in the surroundings are found to be most significant if this *mantra* is chanted mentally or chanted loudly and collectively.

It should be noted that positive effects of any kind would be realized only if the *mantra* is recited with unperturbed mental concentration and serene sentimental conjugation (devotion). Without either of them the "neuronal cycle" will not be complete or would be disturbed by other bioelectrical flows excited by the agile movements of the conscious mind.

The spiritual practises (*sādhanās*) of *Gāyatrī Mantra* have inherent relation with *Yagya*, *shikhā* and *yagyopavita*. The philosophy and science of *Yagya* are discussed in volume nos.25 and 26 of this series. The implications and importance of *shikhā* and *sūtra* are highlighted in the present volume. *Shikhā* refers to the hair knot at the central top of the head at a position regarded important in the central nervous system and for the practices of *yoga*. *Yagyopavita* or *sūtra* is the sacred thread wore on the upper half of the body (its structure symbolizes the philosophy of life the disciplines associated with its use support psychological elevation). *Gāyatrīā*, *Yagya*, *Shikhā* and *Sūtra* are integral parts of the Indian culture which is developed on strong footing of the science of human psychology and spirituality. Pt. Shriram Sharma is honored as an authority on these subjects because of his unparalleled erudite knowledge, his own experiences and successful experiments and *sādhanās* of the highest kind.

Acharya Sharma has discussed each of the above mentioned aspects of *Gāyatrī Mantra* in detail. It is only possible for a super brain like his to present these in a manner which makes the scientific analysis interesting and within the grasp of the readers who might not have any scientific background and at the same time gives directions for innovative research on *Gāyatrī* and unification of Neurosciences and the Science of Spirituality.

The volume would serve as an eminent source of guidance for all - including aspirants of spiritual attainments, devotees of *Gāyatrī sādhanā*, scholars of ancient sciences and scientists and researchers etc. and propagate the fundamental knowledge and immense scope of the science of spirituality in new light promising revival of the divine culture.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 14, An Introduction

SPIRITUAL EXPERIMENTS ON SAVITRI AND TRANSMUTATION OF THE SERPENTINE POWER (*Sāvitṛī, Kuṇḍalini Evam Tantra*)

The ancient Indian scriptures mention that Lord Brahma - the omnipresent supreme creator had attained the supreme knowledge of *Gāyatrī* which is said to be the origin of all the spiritual, conscious, unconscious and super conscious faculties, cosmic energy and material existence. The cosmic power of *Gāyatrī* used for the creation and perceptible realization of this universe is named as *Sāvitṛī*. The philosophy and subtle science of *Gāyatrī* aims at the collective awakening of the righteous intellect, divine sentiments, altruist creativity and eminence. The science of *Sāvitṛī* deals with the origin and proper utilization of matter and energy.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma Acharya had successfully practised the highest kind of spiritual endeavors (*sādhanās*) of *Gāyatrī* and *Sāvitṛī*. He had performed 24 *Mahā Purashcharaṇas* each of 24 hundred thousands *japa - anushthāna* of *Gāyatrī Mantra* while observing ascetic disciplines for twenty four consecutive years. He also endeavored specific spiritual experiments of *Sāvitṛī sādhanā* - involving activation and extraction of the subtle power and vital energy of the Sun God along with the arduous *sādhanās* of *Gāyatrī anushthānas*.

Details of the origin, knowledge and spiritual science of *Gāyatrī* and his *sādhanās* of this unique are presented in the volumes numbered 9 to 14 of the *vāgnmaya* series. Volume 1 of this series presents a sketch of his life, his experiences in the Himalayas and the great mission accomplished by him after successful completion of these *sādhanās* which are defined in the Indian scriptures as the epochal endeavors of spiritual transmutation.

The present volume focuses on Gurudev's *Sāvitrī sādhanā* which also incorporated his unique spiritual experiments on activation and transmutation of the supernormal force -*Kuṇḍalini*, the 'serpentine power'. These *sādhanās*, popularly known as *Kuṇḍalini Jāgarana sādhanās*, correspond to the time-testing, devout spiritual endeavors of successive penetration of the *shat chakras* (extra sensory power nuclei in the endocrine system) and opening of the three *granthis* (sublime knots along the spinal column) to activate the eternal source of immense vital power and pull it upwards to charge the *sahastrāra*. This *sādhanā* is supposed to be risky and is attempted only by experienced *sādhakas* under authentic guidance. The success of *Kuṇḍalini Jāgarana* sublimates the vital force into a source of supernatural potentials and opens up the ways of spiritual culmination of the self up to the highest realms of divinity.

Ancient scriptures of *yoga* describe the *sushumnā nādi* - an extrasensory channel of vital energy which is described to be spread subliminally in the inner core of the spinal column in the shape of a serpent having its 'tail' coiled in three and a half turns of a spiral inside the *mūlādhāra chakra* (the bottom most of the *shat chakras*) and has thousand 'hoods' in the *sahastrāra* (extrasensory region in the reticular activating system of the human brain above the endocrine system). The *idā* and *pinglā nādis* - subtle canals within the sensory and motor control columns lying parallel to the *sushumnā nādi*, along its left and right sides respectively, help harmonize and control the upward flow of the currents of *prāṇa* (life force).

Three latent knots (*granthis*) of supernatural sources of power are also described to exist along the *sushumnā nādi*; these are - *Brahma Granthi* near the *mūlādhāra chakra* (extra sensory power center in the inner region of pelvic plexus); *Vishnu Granthi* near the *sūrya chakra* (extra sensory power center in the middle region, above the navel, of the spinal column); and the *Rudra Granthi* in the inner core of the central region of the brain.

There is also a mention of *pancha mahākoshha* - five extrasensory 'shells' which cover the gross, subtle and astral bodies of an individual and bring the existence of the soul into being.... The six *chakras* (*shata chakras*), three *granthis* and the five (*pancha mahākoshhas*) together are the fourteen eternal sources of the streams of spiritual powers hidden in the gigantic ocean of consciousness; the activation of these is described in the scriptures as the discovery of fourteen eternal pearls after "*Samudra Manthan*" - churning of the self-existing, limitless 'ocean' of absolute divine existence.

The success of *Kuṇḍalini Jāgarana sādhanā* arouses the otherwise dormant source of vital force and also results in unwinding and refinement of the two outermost layers of the *pancha mahākoshhas* namely, the *annamaya kosha* and the *prāṇamaya kosha*. Activation and illumination of the *sahasrāra* by this *sādhanā* followed by specific *sādhanās* of *Gāyatrī* to sublimate the remaining three *koshas* - *manomaya kosha*, *vigyanamaya kosha* and *ānandamaya kosha* virutally transmutes the *sādhaka* (devotee) into an omnipotent, omniscient being and liberates his soul in the ultimate state of beatified eternal bliss.

In this volume, the readers will find authentic information, illustrative explanation and guidance on the serpentine power - *Kuṇḍalini* and on the *yoga sādhanās* of its awakening and consequent sublimation of the vital force, illumination of intellect and empowering of the inner self up to supernatural levels. The details presented here would remove all illusions and misconceptions and provide clear answers to their queries on this 'much heard of but little understood' topic of mystic spiritual knowledge. Scientific interpretations in terms of the association of the *shat chakras* with the endocrine glands; bioelectrical flows and sex-element with *prāṇa shakti* and hypothalamus and reticular activating system with the *sahasrāra* etc, and elucidation of the relevant research works are also presented here. Views and experiences of several great personalities, spiritual masters and modern scientists are cited for ready reference.

The contents of this volume may be broadly classified into three parts. The first few Chapters deal with the knowledge of "*Sāvitrī*" and its relation with "*Gāyatrī*" and the cosmic and spiritual powers of the Sun. The second part deals with "*Kuṇḍalini*". The author, Pt. Shriram Sharma, describes it as a "dynamite of spiritual energy". Physical manifestation of this power is called *prāṇāgni* - vital energy, which makes possible all the activities and sensations of the physical body and the conscious mind. This is what is reflected in the 'aura' around the body and in the varieties of creative talents and enormous potentials of mind..... Volume no. 17 of the Vangmaya series is devoted to the topic of "*Prāṇāgni*".

The serpentine power (*Kuṇḍalini*) of the vital force is described in spiritual literature as a unique 'vital electrical power' of life-source. The hymn "*Tadillatā Samarū- Chirviddullekheva Bhāsvarā*" defines it as "glowing like an electric spark". Sublimated power of *Kuṇḍalini* is said to be the source of the grand vital force which is the medium of expression of the cosmic consciousness in the living being....., the reservoir of spiritual energy..... Excerpts from the treatises of yore and from the scholarly works of the saints and spiritual masters of the later times - e.g., "Saundarya Lahari" of Adi Shankaracharya, are also cited here with excellent deliberations and logical interpretations of the rhetoric representations.

The third and the last part of the volume mentions about the *tāntrika* methods. This branch of spiritual *sādhanās* has been most misleading and ill-understood because of the maligned influences of the medieval era. The *vāma-mārgī* or *tāntrika sādhanās* are short-cut methods like.... 'jumping from the top of the hill in order to come down', or that of 'atomic energy explosion', as compared to the 'slow and time-testing elevation process' of the *dakshina-mārgī* or *māntrika yoga sādhanās*.

The Indian scientists of yore - the *rishis* had conceptualized the spiritual and cosmic dimensions of sound as *Shabda*. They had realized the manifested gigantic expansion of Consciousness Force

and all forms of energies as originated from *Shabda* and hence developed the science of *mantra* and *tantra* to discover and make ideal use of the sublime powers of *Shabda* pervaded in the universe. The relationship between *shabda* and *mantra* or *tantra* can be thought of as that of the soul and the body.... While *mantras* deal with consciousness, sentiments, thoughts and subtle domains of life and nature, the science of *tantras* focuses at activity, motion and forces expressible in the physical world.

Literally, the word "*tantra*" refers to any system which possesses energy and activity. A *tantra* used for specific purpose in the *tāntrika sādhanās* may be described as a system encompassing the specific features and forces via extraction and active representation of the appropriate power currents of *shabda*. Such a *tantra* is represented as a design or sonic tool made up of a combination of certain symbols, schema of planetary arrangements and harsh sounds arranged to attract different streams of natural powers and superimpose different energy currents.

In *tāntrika sādhanās*, the hidden potentials within the living body and matter are awakened forcefully against the normal nature of the latter. Specific *tantras* are used for specific purposes. Almost torturing postures and conditioning of the body are used before practising with a *tantra* This path of *sādhanās* is usually chosen for magic like effects in the physical world or using *tantra* as a tool for selfish gains or demonstration of power.....

The *tāntrika sādhanās* are highly risky like 'using hydrogen bombs' and were therefore kept secrets by its inventors of yore. Only deserving disciples were taught these principles and practices after ensuring that the latter would use these with due care and only for altruist purposes as per the dire needs of time.

The cultural corruption of the medieval era even brought the practices of 'black magic', 'torturous exploitation of the weaker ones', etc, under the banner of *tāntrika* experiments. Such misdeeds and

illusions spread during this dark period of human history had even maligned the image of spiritual sciences and *yoga* at large. In order to eliminate these misconceptions and fears, Acharya Sharma has clearly explained the difference between the *mantra* based *yoga sādhanās* and the *tāntrika sādhanās*.

He has also highlighted the nature, principles and disciplines of the *tāntrika sādhanās* of *Gāyatrī* and *Sāvitrī* to illustrate the vast dimension of research in the Science of Consciousness and Nature carried out in the ancient times. He has cited the excerpts from scriptures like "Sharda Tilaka" on these aspects with scrupulous comments and clear indications of the precautions and moral disciplines associated with the *tāntrika sādhanās*. Disobeying the disciplines or misusing a *tantra* brings back disastrous reactions and severe harms to the user himself which often lead to his tragic sufferings and sinner's death.

Gurudev has clearly warned the eager or impatient aspirants of spiritual attainments that the *tāntrika* way (*vāma-mārga*) is dangerous and should not be pursued without adept and authentic guidance and purity of purpose. He emphasizes that the *māntrika yoga sādhanās* (*dakshina-mārga*) are compatible with nature and are safe and suitable for everyone.

In-depth knowledge of the highest kind of *mantra* based *yoga sādhanās* of spiritual transmutation is presented here by the most authentic and experienced spiritual master, dedicated saint, sagacious scholar and scientifically oriented social reformer of the modern age. His trenchant deliberations in this volume in particular, and the *vangmaya* series in general, also give new directions to experiments and research in the science of spirituality.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 15, An Introduction

LIFE AFTER DEATH - MYTHS AND REALITY

(Maraṇottara Jivana - Tathya Evam Satya)

Indian philosophy and culture is developed around the central idea of continuity of life. Living body is described here as an 'inn' and the soul as a 'voyager'. The gross body made up of physical substances is mortal but the soul - an eternal expression of the absolute supreme consciousness, is immortal. It can never be destroyed, damaged or injured.... The holy Gita quotes (2 | 20) -
*Na Jāyate Mriyate Vā Kadācinnāyam Bhūtvā Bhavitā Vā Na Bhūyah |
Ajo Nityah Shāshvatoayam Purāṇo Na Hanyate Hanyamāne Sharīre | |*

Meaning: The soul is never born nor does it ever die. It does not come into being in any age. It is self-existent and eternal. It does not get hurt or die even after the body, in which it is manifested, dies....

Experiences of the event of death, knowledge of life after death, reality of rebirth or reincarnation, the principle of *karmaphala* - destiny based on deeds, and provisions for atonement, etc form the basis of the edifice of Hindu Philosophy and Culture. Scriptures of yore and saints and visionaries of the later ages too define death as a transition process...; as we replace dirty, old or torn cloths by new ones, similarly, the soul changes old or diseased body and acquires new body after death....

The present volume of Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya elucidates the above issues with reasoned logic, rational arguments and evidential examples and deals with spiritual, psychological and scientific aspects of death and life after death. Specific topics covered here focus at - "What is death?", "Do ghosts exist?", "What is the subtle world of different invisible forms of life after death?" Thorough attempt is made to eliminate misconceptions, superstitions and illusions about the existence of ghosts and experiences of life after death....

The author focuses on the impact of psychological nature, emotional character and intrinsic desires of a person on his subtle body in which the soul resides after departing from the gross body in the event of death. Emotional excitation of unfulfilled desires and impacts of negative thoughts, inhumane deeds and maligned sentiments do not leave the individual self after death and motivate the subtle body to fulfil its desires through the medium of the gross bodies of other people.... Individuals lacking in inner strength may fall 'prayed' to such 'ghostly' influences.

People having the strength of character, strong willpower and self-confidence will never get affected by such 'psychic' disturbances. There also exists a category of people who become 'living ghosts' because of their audacious atrocities or sarcastic and cruel mentality.

The subtle bodies of saintly, altruist, compassionate people carry the influence of their pious sentiments and even after death help the deserving and needy persons by way of - premonition, appearance in dreams,, or, by educating inspiration in the latter's minds. The subtle forms - of life after death - of this category are termed "*pitars*" in the Indian scriptures. The history of the world has witnessed ample examples of the aids and unprecedented guidance of such souls in preventing a disastrous accident, resolving a mystery, materialization of a discovery through flashes of mind or intuitive reflections,.....etc.

The souls of great personalities and spiritually refined saints and sages are always keen to bestow their blessings and help the weaker ones. As clouds shower on a thirsty land, the *pitars* too want to generously offer their guidance and support to all deserving people. As the mode of linkage and communication with them happens to be the subtle body - in the inner core of the mind and the inner self, we must purify our thoughts and sentiments and be devoted to divine virtues in order to be able to receive and understand the messages of the souls of our kind ancestors, the *pitars*... Views and experiences of reputed scientists and scholars of the modern times are also cited in the volume in this context.

The truth and possibilities of reincarnation, transmigration and *yoga* experiments of transmission of vital energy and transfer of individual self in multiple bodies are highlighted here with logical explanation and authentic examples in support. Collections and reports - on verified instances of reincarnation (rebirth) and transmigration, prepared and published by modern researchers are also referred here which show the changing trends of scientific views on these issues. Scientific decipheration of the cycle of Nature with respect to the subtle domains of life has brought the views of modern researchers much closer to the Indian philosophy of continuity of life.

More important and noteworthy is the principle of *karmaphala* because this is the only principle by which the relevance of religion, social ethics and morality in human life could be justified without any ambiguity or prejudice. *Prārabdha* (destiny) is a consolidated 'account' of our deeds conducted in the present and previous lives.... The quote "as you sow, so you must reap" applies to every aspect of life. Every action - be that physical, mental or emotional - has a natural reaction. The duration and extent of the latter depend upon the characteristics of the former and upon the conditions under which either is materialized. How long a pendulum in simple harmonic motion will take to come back to its initial position depends upon its amplitude and air resistance etc. But that, it will come back - is certain like the law of gravity. Same is the case with the results of our actions in the human life.

If the outcome or reaction of every action was instantaneous, e.g., immediate punishment for sins and reward for noble deeds..., there would not have been any need for a system of justice or social order etc.; prudence, reasoning, vision, hope, aspirations, etc too would have lost relevance in such a 'mechanical' life! The complexity of human life, the infinite domains of encounters, interactions and activities at the level of physical body, conscious mind and the inner world of sentiments, and the role of unconscious mind make the consequences of one's actions delayed by even a life-time or more.... Thus, despite its eternal validity, the principle of *karmaphala* often appears to be false or imaginary to most people - especially during

the testing times of adversities or due to excessive ego coupled with successes through immoral means.....

The complexities associated with decipheration and verification of this "law of karma" are clearly stated by Lord Krishna in the holy Gita as - "*Karmanā Gahano Gatih*"; meaning: it is impossible for one to know or analyze his *karmas* (actions) and their impact. This topic is so vast that many erudite scholars of Gita and the philosophy of life have written huge volumes on it. Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya has also written several books explaining this principle. The present volume compiles the essence in the context of continuity of life and how one can shape his present and future life.....

Whatever we do, think, aspire or feel through heart gets recorded in the deeper layers (*chitta*) of the unconscious mind. The *chitta* regulates our destiny accordingly. The effects assimilated since the past birth influence our inherent tendencies and intrinsic character in the present life too. Human life happens to be the rarest opportunity in which the supreme creator has endowed the freedom of action (*karma*). It is only in this life that one can wipe out the malice of sins by expiation (*prāyashchitta*) through appropriate noble actions, altruist service, penance and ascetic endeavors and create his future destiny in the desired way by determined actions in the present.

Acharya Sharma has analyzed the applicability of the provisions of *prāyashchitta* by the spiritual endeavors of *Hemādri Sankalpa*, *Chāndrāyana Vrata*, etc, as advised by the *rishis* - the ancient seers of human life. He has also suggested practical methods which are easy to follow in today's circumstances..... He describes a four step procedure: (i) systematically review the present life by unwinding the memory backwards from today until the childhood and take an unbiased stock of the misdeeds, immoral desires, actions or mistakes committed so far....; also infer the harms caused by these to the others at materialistic, social or emotional levels....; (ii) accept the sins or misdeeds committed so far before an authentic guide or revered well-wisher and pledge with determination - not to repeat those mistakes; implement this healing process in action; (iii) give a

spiritual bath to the inner self by suitable disciplined practices of *yoga* and meditation; observe fasting and other forms of penance and perform, with sincerity, devotion and faith, *anushtāns* and other religious practices which are aimed at emotional purification and internal refinement; and (iv) compensate for the harms or pains given to others; this can be achieved by offering selfless service to help the weaker or needy ones and dedicating creative efforts for altruist endeavors for the welfare of the human society and other living beings. Readers will find more details on each of the above aspects and receive inspiring guidance on how to improve their destiny.

The nature of the *karmas* of the past life and their consequences is unknown.... It is only the present which lies in our hands. Noting the continuity of life and the reality of the principle of *karmaphala*, we must start the process of self-analysis, self-refinement and ideal shaping of our destiny from today instant.

This volume (no. 16) deals with a topic which belongs to the hidden and complex domains of spiritual science and philosophy. Nevertheless, the lucid style of writing and mastery of the author in the subject and his thorough understanding and realization of human psychology through depth has made it an interesting, informative and thought-provoking book for everybody.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 16, An Introduction

VITAL POWER - A DIVINE ENDOWMENT

(*Prāṇa Śakti: Eka Divya Vibhūti*)

P*rāṇa Śakti* (the vital power or source of life-force) is manifested as some kind of bioelectrical energy which is pervaded in the world like air, sky, heat, light, ether and plasma..... Higher amounts of this power in a living being is reflected in greater courage, alacrity, vitality and brilliance. This is a source of vitality and vigor in the body and of sagacity and talents in the mind. It accounts for the *ojas* (splendor or of energy and strength) of the gross body and *tejas* (eminence and creativity) of the subtle body (mind).

The beauty and charm of external appearance, eloquence and melody of voice, artistic talents and mental trenchancy etc are all expressed through the power of *prāṇa*. Eroticism and licentious indulgence are major causes of loss of this vital energy. Excitements triggered by the negative sentiments and pressures of wrath, jealous, ego etc. also amount to disrupting its harmonious flow in the mind and body. Supernatural talents and miraculous potentials may be acquired by protection (conservation), balanced use and spiritual transmutation of this astonishing power.

Five subtle streams (called, *pancha prāṇa*) of *prāṇa śakti* flow in a human being. These are described in the Indian scriptures as five divine powers (*pancha deva*) manifested in the human body. The extrasensory 'serpentine power' center (*Kuṇḍalini*) is said to be subtly containing an unlimited repository of *prāṇa śakti*. The higher level endeavors of *Prāṇa yoga* attempt stimulation, stirring, upthrust and elevation of the flow of *prāṇa*. The success of this spiritual endeavor, called, "*Kuṇḍalini Jāgarana Sādhanā*", is superior to the attainment of all potentials, all talents and prosperity of the world.....

The power of *prāṇa* in a human being is divided into ten categories according to its manifestation in different regulatory and vital activities. Five major types, called *pancha prāṇa* under this classification are - *Apāna*, *Samāna*, *Prāṇa*, *Udāna* and *Vyāna*; the five subtypes (*upa-prāṇas*) are - *Devadatta*, *Vrakala*, *Kūrma*, *Nāga* and *Dhananjaya*.

Each stream of the five major *prāṇas* activate specific physiological and bodily process and is also associated with the extra-sensory centers (ESC) governing the endocrine system. *Apāna* regulates excretion of waste and obnoxious substances from the body. It is linked with the *Mūlādhāra Chakra* (ESC in the pelvic plexus). *Samāna* activates the metabolic process and is regarded as the source of power in the *Manipūrta Chakra* (ESC in the epigastric plexus). *Prāṇa* is the source of respiration and is associated with the *Anāhata Chakra* (ESC in the cardiac plexus). *Udāna* regulates the processes of acceptance and absorption of desired elements in the body and is also used in upward motion. It is the source of activation of the *Vishuddhi Chakra* (ESC in carotid plexus). *Vyāna* regulates blood circulation and is described as the source of power for the *Swādhishthāna Chakra* (ESC in hypogastriac plexus).

Among the *upaprāṇas*, *Devadatta* is a subsidiary of *Udāna*; *Vrakala* is associated with *Samāna*, *Kūrma* with *Apāna* and *Nāga* with *Prāṇa*. Similarly, *Dhananjaya* is linked with *Vyāna* as a sub-component. The *prāṇamaya kosha* (life 'shell'), second in the hierarchy of five successively subtler layers (*Pancha Mahā Koshas*) - of human entity from gross body to the subtle and astral bodies... and to.... the ultimate spiritual self, is the absolute ensemble of the *pancha prāṇas* and the *upa prāṇas*.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma has finely elucidated the complex anatomy and functions of the *Pancha Prāṇas*, *Pancha Devas* and *Pancha Mahā Koshas* and analyzed the corresponding difficult spiritual topics in scientific light. Be that the science of consciousness

discussed in the Upanishadas, that of *Pancha Koshī Gāyatrī sādhanā*,, or, relation of *prāṇa shakti* with energy and quantum mechanism,etc, the author deals with every topic in detail with equal ease and eloquence. His depth of knowledge and excellent command over Hindi language has made the present volume (originally in Hindi), a masterpiece of authentic dissertations on *Prāṇa Vidyā* - deep knowledge of the origin, manifestation and sublime expansion of vital force.

This volume also presents Acharya Sharma's adept guidance on - "How to improve vitality ?" "How to elevate the level of *prāṇa* ?", "What is *Kuṇḍalini Jāgarana*?"etc. The author has cited evidential examples to illustrate how in the extreme cases, the extrasensory power of *prāṇa* results in electrifying the body or inducing magnetic currents in it... He has also presented practically viable methods of harmonizing and exalting the level of *prāṇa shakti* which can be easily practised in day-to-day life.

Revered Acharya Sharma has written several books on bioelectricity, biomagnetism and the secrets of mesmerism, hypnotism and spiritual healing. He explains how the creative linkage of mental concentration and *prāṇa shakti* endows one with such potentials which appear to be extrasensory or supernatural....

Scientific developments on measurement of the levels of *prāṇa* and photo-recording of the "psychic auras" around different parts of the body are also reported in this volume. Author's rational deliberations and detailed analysis give new directions to the aspirants of spiritual development and also show the possibility of innovative scientific research on astonishing powers of subtle energies of human body.

Some people are found to be endowed with supernormal talents or potentials without an apparent spiritual endeavor or practices of *yoga*. This is attributed to the augmented level of their *prāṇas* resulting from the assimilated effects of their virtuous deeds, devotion and disciplined spiritual endeavors of the past lives. These

aspects of the eternal existence and evolution of the subtle body and the *prāṇamaya kosha* are highlighted here with live examples.

The author has brilliantly described the modern scientific and spiritual facets of the supernormal powers of premonition, clairvoyance, prophesy, telepathy, transformation of matter in empty space, discoveries by intuition,etc. Most importantly, he has emphasized that presence of such powers alone is not a sign of greatness of personality. These powers are natural consequence of activation of the otherwise dormant or unused *prāṇa shakti*. In his views, praiseworthy are the sincere endeavors to prevent the onward flow or loss of this power and gravitate it for creative refinement of the self devoted to the altruistic welfare of all. Success of such endeavors may lead to the transmutation of the vital force up to the highest realms of divinity..... Aspirant readers would find practical guidance in this regard as well....



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 17, An Introduction

One thing that I have intensely desired is to be able to give away my all to those who have overwhelmed me with their priceless gifts of love, so that at the time of withdrawal to the invisible astral realm I could put the dust of their foot-prints on my head and say: "This is what has been possible for me to do for you in this life. I wish I am given the opportunity of going through the whole cycle of 84-lakh life-forms again so that I could serve you all to my utmost capacity and thus gladly repay the debts I owe you for the gifts of love and cooperation that you have gratefully and unconditionally showered on me."

ASTONISHING FUNCTIONS OF HUMAN BRAIN AND MIRACLES OF MIND

(Chamatkāri Viśeṣatāon Se Bharā Mānavī Mastiṣka)

Humanbody is the most evolved and marvellous creation of nature. Every component - from organs to nerves, muscles, tissues, cells, molecules and subtler functional units of this living system reflects the limitless excellence and absolute perfection of the Omnipotent eternal creator. The crown organ - brain is the sole regulator of this arcane automatic system. Because of its wonderful memory system, nonstop multiple activities of information processing, learning, computing and decision making, etc. almost instantly, the human brain is often referred as the supreme computer which is the most remarkable 'product' of nature's eternally advanced technology. The intellectual and sentimental domains of consciousness pertain to its subtle counterpart - the mind.

The existence, activity, beauty and evolution of human life emanate from the adept functioning of the brain and righteous creativity of the mind. Strong and trenchant mind enables even the physically handicaps attain significant success in almost every dimension of progressive life. The entire gamut of talents and materialistic, intellectual and spiritual developments depends upon the alacrity, sagacity, innovative creativity, sentimental purity and inner strength of the mind. Human brain (mind) is indeed endowed with immense potentials to fulfil all aspirations and elevate human-life up to divine horizons....

The present volume is devoted to the an in-depth study of the neuroscientific, psychological and spiritual aspects of human brain and mind. Bioelectrical activities of the neuro-synaptic connections between million billions of neurons, information processing through the nervous system and the neuronal network and the mechanism of

storage and retrieval of memory are discussed along with the anatomy of human brain in the first few chapters. Major sections of these deal with detailed analysis of the endocrine system and the interrelationship of hormonal secretions and physiological, biochemical, mental and emotional variations.

Trends and achievements of research in neurosciences are also highlighted with relevant reference to the experimental findings. The subtle connections between the endocrine glands and the extrasensory power centers - described as *shat chakras* and *granthis* in the Indian scriptures - are elucidated and guidance towards spiritual endeavors (*sādhanās*) of activating these centers is highlighted.

Awareness about the immense potentials of brain and miraculous powers of controlled mind and corresponding change in the attitude and mode of living can help escalation of our talents and lead to sublime transformation of the personality as a whole... It is a pity that we use only about 7 percent of the potentials of our mind on an average. The supernatural potentials hidden in the inner cores (*mana, buddhi, chitta* and *ahankāra*) of the conscious and unconscious mind remain dormant and unused. Specific *sādhanās* of *yoga* aim at stimulating the associated functional centers in the brain which activate the otherwise unnoticed powers of the human mind.

Existence of supernatural memory and manifestation of exceptional talents, beyond the barriers of educational qualification, age, biological health and circumstances, is not rare in human society. The author, Gurudev Shriram Sharma Acharya presents authentic examples to illustrate different facets of intelligence and mental talents. He points out the effects of the *sanskāras* (intrinsic tendencies) assimilated in the inner cores of unconscious mind since the earlier lives and emphasizes the possible impact of sincere endeavors of the present life. He argues that the key to self-development lies in one's own mind.

Does our brain possess specific functional regions or centers for memory, reasoning, intellectual sagacity, creative talents, oral and written eloquence, artistic excellence, etc? What is the role of brain in the limitless variations of the sentiments? Can we activate the development of specific talents and sentimental strength or lay the architect of our own destiny? How can one become a living computer or acquire exceptionally sharp memory? Do they exist some natural brain tonics? How to cultivate and improve intellect by simple practices in day-to-day life? Answers to these and similar questions of wider interests are provided by Acharya Sharma in a simple, logical, scientific and comprehensive manner.

Few people seem to know that the left and right components of the human brain largely work independently and complementarily. The principal role of the left side brain consists of motor control and regulations of other bodily activities. The right side brain - also called the "philosophical or religious brain", conducts the sensory functions and the sensitive mental processes pertaining to - thinking, imagination, artistic creativity and the soft sentiments like compassion and devotion, intrinsic faith and emotional inclination etc...

Perfect development of emotionally balanced and intellectually trenchant personality by strengthening and activation of the *corpus callusam* - linking the two halves of the human brain - is achieved by specific *sāadhanās* of *prāṇa yoga*, *japa yoga*, *dhyāna yoga*, etc. If understood and adopted righteously in routine life, the principles and practices of these *sāadhanās* can transform a large number of ordinary people into brilliant citizens of high integrity having altruist and compassionate attitude in every walk of human society and thus illuminate the future of humanity itself.

Study of human mind is incomplete without analyzing the dreams. Reality, origin, reflections and implications of dreams are discussed in great detail in two separate chapters of this volume. The myths and facts about acquisition of extra sensory knowledge, premonition and psychological analysis and study of the unconscious mind and the unknown subtle world of inner self through dreams are

elucidated here along with a review of Freud's and contemporary psychological theories *vis-a-vis* the relevant aspects of the ancient science of spirituality.

It is said that the 'time-capsule' existing in the inner cores of unconscious mind contains the key to realization of supernormal faculties like - clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition, intuition, audio-visual perceptions beyond the constraints of time and space, complete knowledge of the past and future and of the esoteric features of nature....

Gurudev Shriram Sharma's unique acumen, deeper knowledge and first-hand experience of the ultimate expansion and sublime cores of the human mind is clearly reflected in his deliberations on psychological and spiritual aspects of human life. A separate chapter is devoted to discuss the powers of spiritually refined mind. The volume would offer new directions for advanced research in Neurosciences and Gestalt Psychology. It would help the readers realize the enormous capabilities of their brains and give them intimate practical guidance for best use of this boon of Almighty. This volume would also serve as a source of enlightenment to the aspirants of intellectual and spiritual eminence.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 18, An Introduction

My inner being has been moulded in a peculiar mould and I will consciously keep it so moulded. Goodwill, affection, love, universal sense of spiritual affinity, have become the stuff of my cells. This experience is profoundly blissful and nectar-sweet and it is so well-grounded in the deepest depths of my being that there is no question of my slipping down from it.

THE COSMIC AND SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS OF SOUND

(*Śabda Brahm Nāda Brahm*)

The knowledge of *Shabda Brahm Nāda Brahm* is an important branch of the Indian school of spirituality. The science and philosophy of the *Shabda Brahm* encompasses the methodology and effects of *mantra-japa*, prayers, collective chanting and *sādhanās* of the *veda mantras* and that of the *Nāda Brahm* deals with the origin, expansion and influence of music. This is a broad classification. The *sādhanā* of *Shabda Brahm* enables a *sādhaka* (devotee) to send his or her prayers and calls via the medium of *mantras* up to the divine cosmic centers and thereby connect the individual consciousness with *Thee*. The *sādhanās* of *Nāda Brahm* complete the communication cycle by bringing 'cosmic-signals' (divine messages and inspirations) to the *sādhaka* via the realization of the sublime sounds (*anāhata Nāda*) in the inner self.

Mantra is that compilation of sonic patterns - coded in syllables and vowels of ancient Sanskrit language, contemplation on which liberates the mind from ignorance, illusion and evil instincts. The linguistic composition of the Sanskrit word "*mantra*"² = *manana* (contemplation) + *trāna* (liberation), also implies the same meaning. The specific configurations of syllables and the corresponding combinations of phonemes in the *mantras* make the latter powerful 'carriers' of the cosmic energy of sound. The domain of the knowledge of *mantras* is infinite. A wide variety of the methods of rhythmic enunciation (*japa*) and spiritual practices (*sādhanās*) of *mantras* are described in the scriptures. Enormous types of sonic patterns are associated with the *veda-mantras*. At the root of the development and expansion of the science of *mantras* lies the eternal, omnipresent sound of "*Oam*". This *Oamkāra* is indeed the origin of *Shabda Brahm - Nāda Brahm*.

Shabda Brahm forms the basis of the science of *mantras* and the realization of the *Nada Brahm* is the major objective of the *sādhanās* of *Nāda yoga*. The self-existing cosmic vibrations of the subtle sound of *Oamkāra* are regarded to be the eternal source of energy and motion and hence of the creation of the universe and the existence of nature.... *Shabda* and *Nāda* manifested in the cosmic energy of sound give rise to the energies of heat, light and other basic streams of powers existing in the universe. The *Nāda* (cosmic vibration) of the *Shabda* (eternal sound) is the originator of everything that exists in nature. It is indeed the source of the omnipresent manifestation of the supreme consciousness - the *Parabrahm*. Therefore, *Shabda* and *Nāda* are regarded as the reflections of *Brahm*.

Realization of *Shabda Brahm - Nāda Brahm* is the ultimate aim of all the *yogas* and *sādhanās* - it is the source of absolute realization of God and the power of linking the soul with the *Parabrahm*. How to attain this state? What are the scientific and spiritual aspects of the the *sādhanās* of *Shabda Brahm - Nāda Brahm*? What are the deliberations and implications of the ancient Indian scriptures on this gigantic ocean of knowledge? What is its relevance in the modern life? Such issues are thoroughly discussed in a comprehensive and lucid style by revered Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya in this volume entitled "*Shabda Brahm - Nāda Brahm*".

The author has also discussed in detail the deep aspects of the science of *mantras* and the associated *sādhanās*. He describes *mantra yoga* as the endeavor to master the generation and utilization, without any external means or instruments, of the immense power of sound for specific noble purposes. He investigates *Nāda yoga* as a dedicated practice for the inculcation of supernatural faculties of realizing the subtle sounds indwelling in the cosmos and attaining the knowledge of the unknown.

Mantra yoga largely corresponds to the transmission and *Nāda yoga* to the reception of cosmic signals of sound for setting the communication link between the soul and the *Parabrahm*. The

sādhanās of *mantra yoga* and *nāda yoga* together lead to the absolute realization of *Shabda Brahm - Nāda Brahm* and attainment of the ultimate state of beatitude and divinity. *Shabda Brahm* and *Nāda Brahm* are described in the Indian scriptures as the eternal and omnipresent subtle bodies of the *Parabrahm*. The *sādhanās* of *shabda (mantra) yoga* and *nāda yoga* are integral parts of the spiritual experiments on awakening of the *Kuṇḍalini* - the extrasensory 'serpentine power' or the latent 'coil' of vital force existing in every human being. This book also focuses on such high realms of spirituality and presents the relevant information with clarity and necessary guidance.

The author, Pt. Shriram Sharma, has discussed the paramount role of *vāk* (absolute, spiritually refined voice) in *mantra yoga*. He describes the four successively subtler levels of human voice (*vānī*) and presents the methods, for the control and refinement of the *vānī* and normal mental faculties, which can be practised by everybody everyday to gradually lead to the spiritual elevation of the *vānī* up to the highest level - the *vāk*. He further writes on - how the latent power of a *mantra* is activated if it is enunciated through such a refined *vānī* which incorporates the devotees's vital spiritual energy and inner strength.

Immense faith, unperturbed emotions and mental concentration and the power of the inner self associated with the *vāk* energize the sonic vibrations of the recited *mantras* and thus result in sending the latter up to the specific cosmic targets. The materialization of the blessings and curses also becomes possible because of the power of *vāk*. Authentic examples and scientific evidences from the modern times are presented in this book with relevant excerpts from the scriptures to support and illustrate the power of refined *vānī*. The *vāk* is termed by the scholars of yore as - the origin of natural *swaras* and *sāma* (divine musical sounds) and the power of Goddess Saraswati.

When the *baikharī vānī* (ordinary human voice) is refined - along with the awakening of its subtler forms of the *madhyamā, pashyanti*

and *parā vānīs* - up to the sublime level of *vāk*, the fields of its transmission and perception expand far beyond the limits of the audible sound and become cosmic. *Vāk* works like a divine power. Its support in the *sādhanā* of *Shabda Brahm* leads to ultimate success and offers everything that is worth attaining in the highest realms of spirituality.

The *sādhanā* of *Nāda Brahm* is a super level spiritual experiment which, upon success, results in the realization of the eternal sound of *Oamkāra* and sublimates the individual consciousness and enables its confluence with the cosmic impulse of *Brahm*. One complete chapter is devoted to the topic of *Nāda yoga* in this book. The manifestation of *Nāda* in the *swaras* (notes of natural music) and its expansion in the Indian classical music has been a divine boon for the human society. Different effects of the *rāgas* (classical tunes) of music and their applications are presented in the following two chapters.

The applications of music cited here range from those in agricultural production and music therapy to social improvement. Reports on some organizations, across the world, which are contributing to enhance the constructive applications of music in future, are also presented. The readers will find substantial information on the types of *swaras* and *rāgas* and the effects of different compositions of the classical and modern systems of music.

The *hansa yoga* or *soaham sadhana* is discussed in the last chapter in the context of the *ajapā japa* of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* and the *Kuṇḍalini sādhanā*. Meditation on the sounds of "soa" and "ham" produced continuously by the controlled infusion and expulsion of air in each breathing cycle during a *prāṇāyāma* - is practised in the initial phase of the *hansa yoga*. The *hakāra* (sound of "ha") is regarded as a manifestation of God Shiva in the flow of the *prāṇa* and the *sakra* (sound of "sa") represents the existence of His eternal power, *Shakti*, in the conscious energy of *prāṇa*.

The *sūrya swara* is awoken by *hakāra* and the *chandra swara* by *sakāra*. These *swaras* are harmonized in the high level *prānāyāma* of the *hansa yoga*. The contemplation phase of this *sādhanā* deals with total sacrifice of the ego and dissolution of the identity of the individual "Self" in the eternal supreme "Self" -- *Brahm*.

As Pt. Sharma has described here, the *soaham sādhanā* is the simplest kind of *sādhanā* which can be practised by every individual. The effects of this *sādhanā* are equivalent to those of the highest kinds of spiritual practices.

Acharya Sharma's elucidation of the esoteric and complex subject matter of spirituality are presented very clearly in a logical and scientific manner. He has deciphered this knowledge up to the subtlest level and given practical guidance for all aspirants of the realization and transmutation of the individual self. The fundamental importance of the subject and detailed and authentic knowledge presented in a easy-to-grasp language make this volume a precious asset in the scholarly disciplines of spiritual, psychological as well as the biomedical and physical sciences. This would also serve as a source of guidance for the refinement of people's mentality and sentiments for the escalation of the human values.

This volume offers excellent guidance to the readers to attempt realize the subtle sound of "*Oam*" in their inner self and thereby awaken their divine potentials. This is a unique treatise which presents the entire spectrum of the philosophy and science of *Shabda Brahm - Nāda Brahm*.- encompassing the gross perceivable and spiritual realms of sound and music. Reading this volume would open up new dimensions of spiritual knowledge before the readers and also give them practical guidance to illuminate the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual horizons of their lives.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 19, An Introduction

SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOURS FOR SUBLIME TRANSFORMATION OF PERSONALITY

(*Vyaktitva Vikāsa Hetu Uccha Starīya Sādhanāyen*)

Specific ascetic endeavors (*sādhanās*) pertaining to the knowledge, realization and spiritual culmination of life are described in the ancient Indian scriptures in philosophical and subtle scientific terms. Philosophy of spiritual *sādhanās* identifies the demarcation between animals and humans to remind and guide the human beings of the rare opportunity available to them in this life. Even divine powers would aspire to attain human form which is regarded as the best creation of *thee*.

The fundamental knowledge part of philosophy and spirituality deals with the principles and ideologies of refinement of life and adoption of moral ideals. It elucidates the necessity of self-restrain and elevation of intellect in the righteous direction and enlightens the mind with perspicuous guidance on what and how to think and cultivate the high ideals of humanity in present life.

The science of spirituality deals with the vast domain of *yoga sādhanās* which involve vigorous training and disciplined activities at the level of physical body and mind with creative linkage of corresponding sentiments and inner faith and excel human life towards the highest realms of spiritual success. The gamut of experiments of this science was described by Maharshi Patanjali, a great spiritual scientist of yore, as the *ashtānga yoga* consisting of eight branches of *yoga* namely, *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prānāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāranā*, *dhyanā* and *samādhi*.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma Acharya has presented the difficult science of *ashtānga yoga* in a lucid style so that everybody could understand and attempt practising some of these *sādhanās* in day-to-day life as per his or her suitability and spiritual level. The present

volume is a compilation of his deliberations on the elementary and successively higher level *sādhana*s of this field of *yoga*.

The basics of *yama*, *niyama*, *āsanas* with detailed guidance and examples on their practice have been presented in the vol. 4 - entitled "*Sādhana Paddhatiyon Kā Gyāna Vigyāna*" - of the *vangmaya* series. The present volume is the next on this subject. Here, different types and methods of practising *āsanas*, *bandha*, *mudrā*, *prānāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā* and *dhyāna* are presented along with important aspects in scientific light.

The higher level topics of *samādhi* (trance) and *siddhi* (attainment of spiritual success) are also discussed. Emphasis is laid on overall refinement of personality and elevation of divine virtues in the inner self by the *yoga sādhana*s. Sincere adoption of the prescribed disciplines and adept practice of these *sādhana*s gradually endow the *sādhaka* (devotee) with successively greater potentials and lead to the ultimate realization of beatituous blissfulness in the same life.

Āsanas are designed to fine-tune the *sādhaka*'s body. They serve the dual purpose of physical exercise and conditioning the internal components of the body which are associated with the extrasensory power centers (*chakras*) of the endocrine system and specific bundles and knots (*nāḍī gucchaka* and *granthis*) of the nerves. *āsanas* also help focusing the agile mental tendencies and thus condition the mind for greater concentration. *Sukhāsana*, *Vajrāsana*, *Sulabhāsana*, *Padmāsana*, *Siddhāsana* etc are practised in sitting postures.

Some *āsanas*, practised under *Sūrya Namaskāra* and *Pragyā Yoga* and the *āsanas* like *Ardhamatsyendrāsana*, *Pashcimottānāsana*, *Bhujangāsana*, *Mayūrāsana*, *Sarvāṅgāsana*, *Chakrāsana*, *Trikonāsana*, etc, stretch and create pressure on different organs and affect the spinal column and nerve-muscle network and are recommended for specific effects on the intra-body processes. *Shavāsana* is performed after all other *āsanas*, as it offers soothing relaxation to the body and pacifies all stresses.

Different types of *mudrās* and *bandhas* (postures of hand, face etc, and pressure controlling activities) are associated with some *āsanas* to excite specific energy centers or regions within the body which otherwise remain dormant. Of the 84 original *āsanas* the author has focused only on those which can be performed by most people without any difficulty or risk and induce positive effects on the gross (physical), subtle (mental) and astral (spiritual) bodies of the *sādhaka*.

Prāṇāyāma, as the name suggests, is an exercise of enhancing and harmonizing the flow of *prāṇa* (vital energy) within the body. Discussions on deeper aspects of *prāṇāyāma* is given in the context of *prāṇmāyā kosha* in the vol.13 of this series. The present volume deals with the elementary aspects and positive effects of *prāṇāyāma* in *dhyāna yoga*. The author recommends some *prāṇāyāmas* such as - *prāṇākāshana*, *loma-viloma*, *sūrya-vedhana*, *nāḍī shodhana*, etc, in modified form so that even the beginners could easily practise and benefit from these *yogic* exercises.

Pratyāhāra implies requital of evil tendencies. It deals with continuous watch and struggle in the battlefield of mind to prevent untoward thoughts and check out immoral instincts. Purity and strength of the inner self and strong will power are key factors for success in this endeavor. *Dhāraṇā* corresponds to refinement of conviction and faith and linking them with the deeper layers of pure sentiments. Belief in the eternal power and absolute justice of God and deep devotion for His presence in every living being, every thing.... lay the foundation for the progress of *dhāraṇā* followed by *dhyāna* (meditation).

Dhyāna is some kind of spiritual bath in the ocean of divinely pure thoughts by way of - meditation on serene and edifying objects or conceptualization of pious sentiments. Objects like rising sun, idol or picture of a God or divine character, bright flame of a candle or lamp, ocean, glowing mountain, etc are usually recommended in the initial practices of meditation. *Dhyāna* can also be performed through subtle perceptions or realization of the deeper domains of the inner self. The *nāḍa bindu yoga* falls in the latter category of *dhyāna*.

Controlling the agility of mind and concentrating it on the focused idea or object is the most arduous phase of the above *sāadhanā*. It calls for immense patience and unperturbed faith in oneself. Practices of self-restrain and orientation towards adoption of ascetic tendencies are found to be most supportive in training of mind for this purpose. *Japa* (rhythmic enunciation of *mantras* in specific order) and *dhyāna* are mutually complementary; this combination is an integral part of many *sāadhanās* of spiritual refinement. Purity of the inner self and nobility of character are essential for success of these endeavors.

Samādhi (trance) is the successful state of deep meditation in which the existence of conscious mind is completely unified with its absolute origin - the soul. Pt. Shriram Sharma's sagacity and spiritual attainments of the highest kind have made his descriptions of the difficult facets - including those pertaining to the subtle and transcendental realizations more authentic, clear, logical and realistic.

Bioelectrical, physiological, psychological and other scientific aspects of the *sāadhanās* of *ashtānga yoga* are presented in this volume as effectively as those associated with the sublime domains of spirituality. There is also a mention of the research projects on scientific study of the effects of these *sāadhanās* undertaken by Brahmavarchas - research wing of Shantikunj, an institution established by the author at Hardwar in India.

It is hoped that this volume would wane out all apprehensions and misconceptions and myths about *yoga sāadhanās* and educe self-confidence in the readers to realize their own potentials and dignity as human beings and come forward to refine and elevate their personalities accordingly. Aspirants of demonstrative practical guidance and training are welcome to the *sāadhanā* camps of Shantikunj, Hardwar.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 20, An Introduction

UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES OF EVOLUTION OF PERSONALITY

(*Aparimita Sambhāvanāon Kā Ādhāra Mānavīya Vayktitva*)

Gurudev Shriram Sharma Acharya considers that a human being is an astray child of God who has lost his identity. If awakened and activated, the divine powers existing in his inner self in a dormant state, can indeed lead to his sublime transmutation into an omniscient and omnipotent person. It is a pity that unaware of his divine origin and astonishing potentials, he lives in a state of ignorance and hunts for progress, peace and happiness only in the external means.

Gurudev accepts the principle of evolution but not the theories of Darwin and others which affirm a human being as an animal - a highly evolved descendent of apes or monkeys. According to him - "evolution is an expression of the higher levels of *cetanā* (consciousness); the evolution in the physical bodies or faculties of the living beings is a manifestation of the evolution of consciousness. The original nature of every human being is spiritual. Higher dimensions of human consciousness emanate from the culminated layers of divinity....". He established the principle of evolution of consciousness on the grounds of the Science of Spirituality.

Every human being is a descendent of divinity but, has forgotten his righteous path. Human life is bestowed on the individual self after a long journey of over 84 lakhs birth cycles so that - he could rectify the mistakes and remove the vices of the past lives by noble, altruistic deeds in the present life, realize the ultimate goal and attain his divine originality by sincere endeavors. In concordance with the Indian Philosophy - which describes human life as a *Kalpa Vraksha* (a 'heavenly tree' of boons which can fulfil all wishes), Acharya Sharma reminds us in this volume of our hidden potentials and

talents. He advocates the power of thoughts and sentiments as superior to any other power existing in this world.

Thoughts and sentiments are the means by which the individual consciousness gets linked with the sublime waves of cosmic consciousness. The nature of one's inner sentiments and thoughts shapes his character. Positive thinking - unalloyed, optimistic and creative thoughts, play a major role in progressive development of personality. Negative thinking or perversion of ideology may convert a sagacious intellectual into a disgraced character and gradually malign and weaken his talents too. Consistent positive thinking and the creative endeavors triggered by it, on the contrary, can endow an ordinary, helpless person with excellent personality and bestow immense success in the successive stages of his life.

Today, when the world is facing the severest crisis of faith and falling moral values, the creative ideology and edifying deliberations of Pt. Sharma inspire optimism and offer viable solutions towards happy and graceful survival of humanity. His first book entitled "*Main Kyā Hūn?*" ("What am I?") was published in 1940. This book was written in the self-analyzing style of the *ātmopanishad* and makes the readers realize why and what to know about themselves. It was sold in record number and several editions were brought out till 1948. It was reprinted in 1989-90 and is in constant demand and circulation since then. Translations in English and several Indian languages are also published and have guided thousands of people towards righteous development of personality together with a progressive and happy life.

Every matured person certainly asks this question - "what am I?" to himself at some point of time in his life when circumstances compel him to introspect himself. Knowing "what am I?" is the main goal of the aspirants of spiritual development....The present volume offers detailed answers to everybody and also educes motivating force and gives adept guidance for knowledge of the self and chiseled refinement of personality.

The author emphasizes the need of giving greater importance to the soul and the inner self than to the extrovert mind. He teaches the art of living a fulfilling life by understanding the "Science of Thoughts and Sentiments". In his views, the inner sentiments and intrinsic faith inspire the thought process. The sentiments associated with the purity of soul would certainly educe eminent thoughts which will illuminate the intellect and lead to the creative endeavors of the righteous transmutation of the individual self and his world. We should therefore listen to the voice of our soul. This will strengthen our inner self and maintain our faith in morality, humanity and divine values alive and thus keep the source of precious thoughts enriched and active. Positive thoughts generated thereby would inspire our mind and deeds towards the noble direction of ascent and dignity of life.

The author also provides practical methods which can be adopted in daily life without any difficulty for consistent development of personality. He cites the live examples, works and teachings of the great personalities of all times and also describes the methods of self-management with respect to personal, social and professional life as well. Highlighting the fact that - "man is an architect of his own destiny", he mentions that - if human mind is trained to face the ups and downs of life with stable and balanced attitude and is kept away from negative thoughts and sentiments of despair, it would never fail in accomplishing what it resolves to do.

In his views, all adversities of the world could be eliminated if every individual determines and sincerely attempts discarding his own vices and untoward tendencies and begins improving his own personality. Refinement of individuals leads to consequent upliftment of the families, societies, nations and brightens the environment of life favorably to shape an era of peace, progress and happiness.

It should be recalled that human life is a boon of the Supreme Creator which is bestowed upon us for a noble purpose. We should realize this fact and pay attention to elevate and channelize the unlimited potentials of our inner self. Acharya Sharma's great mission of

'architecturing a new era...., a bright future in the 21st century....' - is based on the central theme of enlightening the thoughts of people and edifying their faith....

This spiritual saint, sagacious scholar and dedicated social reformer devoted his life for this noble mission. His glorious endeavors have brought revolutionary changes in the mentality of millions and transformed them into better human beings in all respects.... May every reader be inspired by the driving force of his spiritually radiating thoughts and motivating guidance and contribute to transform this world - into a paradise where humanity would smile with its eternal divine glow.....



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 21, An Introduction

Sādhanā which leads to siddhi, means undertaking specific tasks which are related to the overall welfare of mankind and which are so great and extensive that a person cannot accomplish them single-handed through his own strength and efforts. Still, there are people who have enough courage, who go ahead and ultimately accomplish aims which initially appeared to be unattainable. In due course they get people's participation also. Spiritually awakened souls move ahead even in the absence of resources and cooperation and believe in rowing alone their boat across the river with the help of self-confidence and faith in God.

Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

CONSCIOUS, SUBCONSCIOUS AND SUPERCONSCIOUS LAYERS OF HUMAN MIND

(*Chetana, Achetana Evam Supara Chetana Mana*)

In its living state, the human body is said to be a miniature of the universe. It is an ensemble of astonishing powers. Decipheration of the mysterious activities of consciousness in this marvellous creation and adoption of the philosophy and concurrent mode of life lead to supernatural attainments in physical, mental and spiritual dimensions of life. Understanding the Anatomy and Physiology of the human body and activities of the brain - has been an active area of research in the modern age. It has now been realized that elucidation of the brain functions and mind-body relationships is not possible without deeper research in human psychology.

A thorough study of all aspects of human psychology - in particular, and human life - in general, becomes feasible by a comprehensive study of the interrelationship between the human mind, Nature and the Omnipresent Consciousness. A quest for revealing this relationship has been the center of attraction for the great thinkers of all eras. The dedicated scientific approach to spirituality, pioneered by Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya, has offered new directions for comprehensive and practically implementable research in this area and for the realization and elevation of collective consciousness.

The state of mind directs the thoughts and actions and thus determines, in a major way, the course of the life of an individual. Everybody experiences the immense power of mind in day-to-day life. It is indeed the mind, which, depending upon its *sanskāras* (inherent tendencies), leads the individual self towards a life bonded by the materialistic attachments and agony of unlimited desires or towards a liberated life glowing with divine blissfulness....

Be that the vices of animosity, anger or jealousy, or the soothing

sentiments of love and compassion, the origin and growth of all is manifested in the domain of mind. The inherent qualities and tendencies of the mind are indeed reflected in the character of a person and make it agreeable or disdainful as per their original instincts. Nothing could be analyzed or edjudged about the human personality without deciphering the human mind and elucidating its latent science. Intensive research into different aspects of this science is essential for an in-depth understanding and glorious ascent of life. The present volume is an excellent contribution in this regard.

It is said that the *jīvā* (soul in the astral body) manifests itself in human form through the subtle layers of innerself - *mana* (conscious mind), *buddhi* (intellect), *chitta* (unconscious mind) and *ahankāra* (sense of self existence). Whatever we feel and think, so we express in our behavior through our speech and deeds. Impressions of the nature of our deeds are continuously assimilated in the *chitta* - as *sanskāras*. The *sanskāras* (inherent tendencies) accumulated since the earlier lives and the past phase of the current life shape one's intrinsic character. The conscious mind and intellect are transcendently directed by the unconscious mind. It is this sublime core of mind - *chitta*, that needs to be refined for successive progress in elevation from ordinary mortal being to great personalities, from conscious to para-conscious, super-conscious and angelic levels....

Ancient developments in psychology had emerged from the realization of the innerself and spirituality was the principal focus there. After several centuries, the subject matter of soul was discarded as being a part of religious philosophy alone. Then onwards, psychology became a science of behavioral activities of mind alone without any basis or comprehensive idea of the origin and the evolution of mind.

Amongst the external - dealing with the physical world, and the internal - pertaining to emotions, inner convictions and latent tendencies - domains of human life, the ancient Indian experts of psychology had given importance mainly to the internal ones.

Whereas the western psychologists had concentrated on the external - behavioral part, alone. Acharya Sharma has recognized the relevance of both.

He always considered philosophy as a field of realization and attainment of spirituality in all walks of life rather than just a subject matter of intellectual deliberations. Adoption of ideal behavior and altruistic deeds in day-to-day life are given equal importance by him as compared to the spiritual experiences of self realization and awakening of inner powers... etc. He has shown that as the inner self of a person gets pious, balanced and uplifted, so does his external life, reflected in his dedicated generous contributions for the progressive welfare of the family, society and the world as a whole....

Gurudev Shriram Sharma had acquired the true knowledge and experience of even the subtlest aspects of human consciousness through his dedicated and absolute *sadhanās* (experiments in spirituality) throughout his life and had successfully awakened the divine potentials of the eternal component of life. The present volume compiles his intriguing analysis of the origin, anatomy and expansion of the conscious and the unconscious mind. Rational arguments and illustrations are available here to avoid illusions and to provide logical and practical guidance for the benefit of the readers.

The sublime core of unconscious mind is described by the author as an ensemble of assimilated *sanskāras* of the egotist instincts of the *jīvā* and of the divine sentiments inspired by the eternal purity of the soul. The flow of emotional thought process of either kind in the background is reflected via dreams or extrasensory experiences from time to time. Conscious mind is an ocean of the continuous currents of those thoughts and mental expressions that are motivated by intellect and ego.

Introvert study of the self and critical analysis of our own behavior, habits and aspirations give us an idea of our inherent nature. Determined endeavors to eliminate the weaknesses and enhance the piety of sentiments and thoughts begins the process of refinement of

the unconscious mind too. Ascetic practices of self-restrain and earnest desire for improvement of the self provide necessary courage and strength to fight the age-old tendencies of mind.

Altruist service with compassion and love indicates righteous progress towards sublime transformation of the individual self. Lives and works of the great personalities stand witness to this fact. Every one who realizes the need of enlightening the inner self and who is confident of self development can proceed along this path of spiritual transmutation of the unconscious and conscious faculties of mind.

Acharya Sharma opined that the original nature of every human being is spiritual and that the higher dimension of evolution of consciousness begins at the level of divine humanity. In order to keep pace with this natural evolution, the human society today will have to adopt those value-systems, ideals and deeds in life which would suit the dignity of divine children.

Escalation and sublimation of the individual consciousness links it with the cosmic consciousness and makes possible its evolution into what is described by Sri Aurbindo as - the grand descent of Super Divine Mind. This super mind guides the human intellect towards the righteous path and elevates the individual self up to its ultimate goal of slavation and unification with the Omnipresent Supreme Consciousness.

Every human being is endowed with immense power in the inner self to awaken his super-conscious mind... Comprehensive knowledge and authentic deliberations and guidance presented in this volume should inspire every reader to think, realize and march towards the ultimate evolution of his mental powers.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 22, An Introduction

COMPLEMENTARITY OF SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY

(Vigyāna Aur ādhyātma, Paraspara Pūraka)

The misconception that 'science and spirituality are mutually exclusive' - has been prevailing in the minds of many people since long.... At a superficial level, the two streams of knowledge aimed at decipheration of the ultimate truth appear to be contradicting and nullifying each other's principles. The early period of modern scientific development cultivated a visible or tangible evidence driven reasoning and logic. This advocated a general belief that all progress and intellectual civilization of mankind has been possible only because of the material based scientific investigations and developments.

The misdeeds of the medieval era in the name of religion and the misinterpretation of the ancient sciences of spirituality fueled the simultaneous propagation of the so called rational thinkers and modern scientists that - "religion and spiritual philosophy are tools of the dull day-dreamers which drive people's credulous minds into an 'intoxicated state' of hallucination and superstitions and thereby revert the direction of intellectual progress...". Nevertheless, saintly scholars and sages of human psychology and spirituality of all ages have shown disagreement with such superficial and prejudiced conclusions. Same have been the views of the founder fathers of the modern science who had the acumen to see the facts beyond the perceivable existence of the world.

Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya happens to be among the great thinkers of the modern times who elucidated multiple dimensions of Science, Spirituality and Religion *vis-a-vis* the limitless expansion of nature and endless depth of human life. He defined spirituality as the source of -- expansion of the individual self into cosmic self; immersion of ego and selfishness into selflessness, altruism and

unalloyed love for all . For him, the science of spirituality is that of ultimate evolution of human psychology and absolute knowledge. The material based modern science and the science of consciousness were described by him as the two sides of the same coin. Both are mutually complementary. The existence of either is incomplete without the other. The edifice of a truly progressive and happy world would rest on the strong foundation of these two pillars. In his views, if science is the mind then spirituality is the heart of human life.

Acharya Sharma has presented detailed analysis, rational arguments and evidential examples in support of his views. Present volume is a collection of his related writings. He has elucidated multifaceted aspects of - deep ecology, cosmic order, esoteric events and yet unresolved secrets of Nature, existence of extraterrestrial life, scientific basis of astrology, etc and eventually proved how every activity and every form of existence - from microsubtler to cosmic levels and the eternal cycle of Nature reflect the order of an omnipresent sole controlling power - the invisible Supreme Consciousness which manifests itself in every vibration of energy and impulse of life.....

He has also cited authentic reviews and scientific studies which illustrate that - as modern science is advancing from subatomic to subtler forms of matter and venturing into gigantic expansion of cosmic energy, it is becoming clearer that the existence of universe and orderly activities of nature is not a mere coincidence rather, it appears to be planned under the control of a super intelligent, self-existing, eternal 'regulatory mechanism'.

Starting from our solar system to its surrounding clusters and the ensemble of their respective galaxies, the author gives a glimpse of orderly movements in the cosmos. Emissions of the energy radiations from the sun - the center of our solar system and the appropriately controlled reception of the same by the earth make life on this planet possible. Similar perfection of gravitational balance and mutual transmissions exist among other stars, planets and planetary systems in the universe. By giving reviews of the scientific

research findings, it is shown here - in an easy-to-grasp style that the cosmic expansion is neither disorderly nor an outcome of totally random phenomena.

More arcane are the functions of the cellular, molecular, atomic and smaller entities - each of which contains an orderly 'universe' of its enormous components at gradually subtler levels. These also demonstrate the marvellous self-organizing eternal system of the supreme, self-existing power. We all live in the limitless ocean of consciousness.... The same Consciousness Force is vibrating within us, within every being, every component of life.... The difficult subject matter of (bio)physical sciences and the fields of consciousness in above context are dealt with excellent clarity and continuity by the author. This ease with in-depth analysis of complex topics and lucid style of presentation is indeed rare to find. It makes the present volume unique in many respects.

Mysterious manifestations of Nature in different parts of the world are also described here highlighting the recent investigations and challenges posed before the scientific researchers in terms of identification of causes and justification for how such things happen in the visible three dimensional world against the yet established laws of science....? Inquisitiveness of the readers will also get enlightened on the ever exciting issues of - "Are we alone in the cosmos? Is there existence of life on any other planet? How are the extraterrestrial living beings? UFOs - Facts and myths....?"

The reviews of Vedic spiritual literature show that the science of spirituality begins where the advancement of material based scientific investigations ends.... As the science of spirituality deals with consciousness and its manifestation in visible forms and also in the intrinsic domains of thoughts, emotions and deeper sentiments ..., it can decipher everything which is within or beyond the reach of any other branch of science. We can peep into the depths of cosmic consciousness by creative integration of modern sciences with the ancient science of spirituality.

One of the chapters of this volume is focused on the scientific basis of Astrology and the effects of planetary movements on human psychology. It points out the causes of mistakes and misleading trends of practices in this mathematically derived field of knowledge and offers new directions for collaborative research - in Astronomy and Astrology and other branches of (bio)physical sciences - which would offer superb benefits as were acquired and used by the Indian *rishis* ages ago for the absolute welfare, progress and peace of the entire world.

Integration of the science of spirituality with the modern sciences would help elimination of misconceptions and illusions attached with the former and liberate it from the clutches of superstitions and blind faith in the name of religion. The necessity of adoption of the principles of spirituality would on the other hand serve the noble purpose of orienting scientific developments towards the path of true welfare and happiness and prevent the destructive and suppressive use of science and technology - by selfish and aristocratic intellectuals and 'rulers of world economy' - in the name of technological advancement. This will also save the glory of humanity which appears to be lying at an edge of extinction in today's consumerized and commercialized world.

The central theme of the author is to guide mutually co-operating development of natural and social sciences and spirituality and related domains of human life so that the complementarity of the two would lead to viable ascent in the righteous direction. Hope the present volume would serve this purpose to make "21st century - bright future" a reality in all respects.....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 23, An Introduction

SCIENTIFIC RELIGION ETHOS OF FUTURE

(*Bhaviṣya Kā Dharma Vaigyanika Dharma*)

Most of us know only what is perceivable through the physical senses. Though some information about the subtle activities of the invisible world is available from the scriptures and deliberations on the experiences of spiritual saints, many people refuse to accept its truth because it is not visible or provable by modern scientific methods.... Little do they know that their perception of science - limited to tangible experiences or mathematically derivable logic, narrows down the very definition of science. If the true meaning of science is understood - as search of truth beyond any barriers of matter and visible world, there would be no difficulty in accepting the fact that spirituality also falls in its periphery which pertains to sublime domains of realizations.... This attitude widens the scope of knowledge and search of ultimate truth through perfect integration of modern sciences and the ancient science of spirituality and religion. Why it should and how it can be achieved is the central theme of this volume....

Scriptures describe even the visible world as '*māyā*' - illusion, then what exactly is true? How to know it? Do modern sciences and religious philosophies contradict each other with respect to the definition of truth? What are the spiritual realizations and what are mythological and allegoric representations in the gamut of ancient treatises and philosophical teachings? These queries and doubts are responded in the present volume with rational discussions and authentic evidences.

The author, Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya emphasizes the need for reviewing the present form of religious philosophies and practices in scientific light with prudent acumen to eliminate baseless, preposterous convictions, blind faith, superstitions and mindless rituals/customs. As far as possible, the commonality between scientific and religious approaches to social upliftment and welfare and the similarities and mutual complementarity of the findings of

the two streams should be presented jointly. This would remove the prejudices from each sides and accelerate healthy progress of both.

Acharya Sharma cites the views and conclusions of the experts of different disciplines of natural and social sciences to indicate the untoward outcomes of scientific developments without the control of ethics - principles of morality, peaceful co-existence and altruistic welfare.... Scientific and technological advances without humane values would not be able to restrain destructive developments that might prove to be disastrous in the end and devastate the grand civilization and expression of life on our beautiful planet. Blind race for technological advancement triggered by passion for more comforts and more power - which is seen across the globe today makes his views more relevant and worth pursuing in reality.

Intrinsic faith in high ideals of humanity and serene sentiments of love and compassion are perennial constituents of the core of all religious philosophies. These are also essential for awakening of spirituality in the inner self.... Before venturing into the 21st century, we will have to review the status of spirituality in human society today with respect to the convictions, ideologies and purity and depth of emotional character of the people in general....

Gurudev Shriram Sharma conceptualizes God as - an ensemble of the highest and purest realm of ideal virtues; an eternal discipline, driving force of cosmic order; and the omnipresent Consciousness Force. He defines the science of spirituality as that of divine transmutation of the inner self. He discusses the origin and expansion of religions in these respects as the basis for continuous refinement and escalation of human self. In this volume, he also considers the topics of cosmic creation and life in the universe and presents evidential examples to prove the scientific validity of the manifestation of omnipresent cosmic consciousness in every form of existence and every kind of activity within and beyond the dimensions of space and time.... Readers would find an essence of deliberations from large number of scriptures and authentic writings on different aspects of religion in the above context.

Author's eloquence and erudite explanations on spirituality make deep impact up to the inner core of our sentiments and educe the inner self for realization of the soul and its eternal origin - the Omnipresent Supreme Consciousness.... The gamut of topics ranging from humane sentiments to the liberated state of ultimate beatitudinousness are smoothly covered by him without any break in the continuity of the flow of thoughts. The principles of linkage of the apparently limited peripheries of individual life with the unbounded collective consciousness are specificified here on scientifically justified grounds, leaving no place for confusion, illusion or doubt.

Modern scientific research on microsubtler forms of matter and energy has reached a state where further advancement in the righteous direction of search for absolute truth would translate its fields of investigation from that of matter and energy to the vast domains of consciousness. This will set an active connection between science and philosophy of spirituality and hence between science and religion. Research areas of neurosciences and human psychology have a more natural relation with the science of spirituality.

Religion would not serve its real purpose unless naturally adopted as an integral part of human life. This will be possible only if its authentic and rational relevance is proved in true scientific light with an open mind considering all aspects of human life - ranging from social to psychological and developmental to ecological...etc. Consistent control of universal ethics or religion is necessary to maintain moral values and healthy and happy survival of the world.

The present volume gives comprehensive guidance for review of the religious and scientific disciplines and for the unification of both in refined form. It declares the scientific religion thus formed as the foundation of bright future in the new millenium....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 24, An Introduction

INTEGRATED PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE OF YAGYA (*Yagya Kā Gyān Aur Vigyāna*)

All activities in the limitless expansion of the universe are said to have generated from a grand eternal *yajna* (*Yagya*). Atharva Veda (9.15.14) describes *Yagya* as: "*Ayam Yajna Vishvasya Bhuvanasya Nābhih*" - implying *Yagya* as the fundamental process of manifestation of nature. Lord Krishna quotes in the holy Gita (3|10)

*Sahayajnāḥ Prajāḥ Sraṣṭā Purovācha Prajā patih |
Anena Prasaviṣyadhvameṣa Voastviṣṭa Kāmadhuk | |*

Meaning: Before the existence of the cosmos, Prajapati Brahma - the Supreme Creator, the eternal source of existence, had originated *Yagya* and commenced the process of generation and growth of cosmic powers and their unlimited expressions resulting in the creation of Nature.....

The YajurVeda contains the knowledge of the principles and methods of performing *Yagyas* as part of spiritual and scientific experiments for global welfare. The SāmaVeda focuses on the musical chanting patterns of the *mantras* and deals with the subtle form of *Yagya* by defining the latter as the process of mental oblation on the surface of emotions....

Literally speaking *Yagya* means - selfless sacrificing for noble purposes. In physical terms, *Yagya* (*homam, havan or agnihotra*) is a process of herbal sacrifices in holy fire aimed at the finest utilization of the subtle properties of sacrificed matter with the help of the thermal energy of fire and the sound energy of the *mantras*.

The knowledge of *Yagya* as realized and deciphered by the Indian *rishis* is indeed a boon bestowed on mankind which encompasses all dimensions of divine human culture. The methods of performing

Yagyas as experimented and propagated by these ancient scientists and seers contain the key to ideal maintenance of the ecosystem and the environment of life....

The science and philosophy of *Gāyatrī* and *Yagya* were thoroughly practised and propagated by the saints and sages of yore. Because of their direct impact on the physical, mental and spiritual development of human life, the principles and practices of these fundamental components of the Vedic Indian culture have relevance in the modern times as well. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of some sacred souls and eminent scholars like Guru Gorakshnath and Swami Dayanand Saraswati, that the glory of the ancient knowledge of *Yagya* has not lost its glow despite traversing through the dark period of misinterpretations, aberrations and maligning during the medieval era.

The noble contributions of Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya have been most significant in reinvestigating Indian cultural values and implementing the practices of *Gāyatrī* and *Yagya* as scientific experiments aimed at the welfare of all living beings. This spiritual saint, social reformer, scholar and scientist par excellence is renowned as an authority on the in-depth knowledge of *Gāyatrī* and *Yagya*. His inspirations have revived the tradition of *Gāyatrī* - *Yagyas* among the masses as part of his great *Yug Nirmāṇ* mission of revival of divine culture on this globe.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma conveyed that adoption of the philosophy of *Yagya* - sublimation of creative potentials, knowledge, pious virtues, intellect and strength and limitless expansion of altruist service with eminence - in every walk of life is a true *Yagya*. In concordance with the quote (from Gita) - "*Yajñārthā Karmaṇo anyatra Loko yam Karmabandhanah*", he viewed that only those actions (*karmas*) are noble which are performed with heartiest sentiments inspired by the philosophy of *Yagya*. Other actions become the cause of thraldoms preventing the awakening of the soul and retarding its march towards unification with its divine origin.

He gave logical explanation of the implication of the rituals associated with the process of performing *Yagya* (*havan* or *homam*) in the sacrificial hloy fire: each step of this process corresponds to refinement, sublimation and expansion.... In his views, true worship of divinity is that which results in gradual refinement and virtuous elevation of personality and rise of associated divine qualities in the inner self.

Manusmriti defines - "*Mahāyajnaiścha Yajnaiścha Brāhmīyam Kriyate Tanuḥ*", meaning, "Best *Yagya* is that in which one lives a serene, altruist life devoted to continuous refinement of the body, mind and the inner self up to divine levels". Acharya Sharma lived an ideal life as per this philosophy of *Yagya* and offered practical guidance in this regard which is most suitable in today's circumstances. He propagated the eternal philosophy of *Yagya* by organizing *Gāyatrī Havanas* and inspiring collective participation of large number of people from all walks of the society without any barrier of caste, creed or gender, etc.....

Ancient scriptures of Hindu philosophy affirm *Yagya* as one of the twenty-four divine incarnations. Performing *Yagya* on small scale as *homam*, *agnihotra* or *havan* is an integral part of every religious ritual and social rite of auspicious nature. Acharya Sharma studied the scientific basis and reasoning behind performing the ritual of *Yagya* in sacrificial fire and explained how this simple experiment is useful for maintaining the ecosystem.

The sacrifices of herbal preparations, cow-dunk and healthy products of cow-milk made in the *Yagya* -fire in the names of different gods correspond to enriching the natural powers which balance cosmic order. These sacrifices are like paying 'taxes' or offering acknowledgement in return of the enormous boons bestowed by the divine powers in the form of natural resources, energies and environment of life. Excessive and unbalanced consumption of natural resources and powers disturbs the harmonious order in Nature and results in occurrence of natural calamities, obnoxious diseases, etc. - this is what is termed as the "punishment of Gods against negligence of regular sacrifices made to them...."

The Indian tradition of performing *homam* (*Yagya* at a small scale) every day in every house is an excellent and most natural way of upkeeping pure and healthy environment of life. The collective chanting of *mantras* during *Yagya* has soothing impact on psychological and spiritual health. Acharya Shriram Sharma has given substantial evidences in support of such effects along with detailed interpretations and references on what is said about *Yagya* in the *Vedas*, *Upnishadas*, *Gita*, *Ramayana*, *Shrimad Bhagwata*, *Mahabharata*, *Puranas*, *Guru Grantha Sahiba* and authentic treatises of many ancient and modern scholars of the philosophy of *Yagya*.

Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya had also suggested modern scientific investigation on - (i) effects of fumigation of specific herbal preparation in the sacrificial fire of *Yagya* along with collective recitation (chanting) of *mantras* and (ii) the interrelationship between *Gāyatrī Mantra*, *Yagya* and the cosmic radiation - especially from the rising Sun. The research laboratory of Brahmvarchas established by him at Shantikunj, Hardwar (India) has given pioneering direction to research in *Yagyopathy*. The present volume gives a comprehensive view of his interpretations and analysis of ancient scriptures on philosophy of *Yagya* along with his ideas and deliberations on the need and possibilities of scientific research. Details on the scientific methods and experiments in *Yagyopathy* are compiled in volume number 26 of this Vangmaya series.

Yagya is also glorified as "*Yajñoayam Sarvakāmdhuk*" meaning, "*Yagya* is the source of fulfilling all desires". This appears to be true in view of the positive effects, at physical, mental and spiritual levels, of performing *Yagya* and ideal elevation of life by adopting the universal philosophy of *Yagya* in action. The present volume proposes to offer extensive knowledge and guidance on the philosophy of *Yagya* so that the entire human society could be blessed by this nectar of divine culture.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 25, An Introduction

TOTAL CURE THROUGH YAGYA

(*Yajna - Eka Samagra Upchāra Prakriyā*)

The first hymn - "*Agni Mīde Purohitam*" of RigVeda generated in Thy-voice is said to have given knowledge of kindling fire to the first man on the earth. The knowledge of other powers of Nature is said to have descended afterwards. Fire and thermal energy are also the key sources of materialistic development. "Fire worship" is prevalent in one form or the other in almost every religion or cult. In Hindu religion and Indian culture, the sacrificial fire of *Yagya* is of auspicious importance. The philosophy of *Yagya*, its implications in human life and scientific and logical perspectives are discussed in volume number 25 of Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya series. The present volume is devoted to the scientifically viable aspects of *Yagya* - especially the effects of *Yagya* on mental and physical health and environment.

Acharya Sharma had initiated pioneering research on medical applications of *Yagya* and brought into light *Yagyopathy*, as a new branch of alternate system of medical therapies which is widely applicable and promising as an important therapy of future. The types and combinations of herbs used in the preparation of the material (*havan sāmāgrī*) to be fumigated in the sacrificial fire of *Yagya*, the types of woods used in this fire, the selection of *mantras*, the timings of *Yagya*,etc. are specific for specific effects. Detailed study of these is a complete science in itself.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma writes that - among the five basic elements (*pancha mahābhūta*), which constitute the gross world and the gross and the subtle bodies of living beings, the *prathvī tatva* (substances and properties of earth) is most prominent in perceivable Nature. Absorption of different odors from the atmosphere affects the subtle properties of this element. Combustion of *havan sāmāgrī* in *Yagya* produces soothing odors inhalation of which energizes the *prathvī tatva* in the bodies of the *sādhakas* (*yājakas*) who perform

the *Yagya*. The fumes and vapors of the herbs fumigated in *Yagya* are absorbed by the skin-pores and the entire body. This removes the impurities and deficiencies, if any, of the natural substances of earth which are essential for health and vigor of the body. Inhalation of the herbs and other nourishing substances of the *havan sāmagrī* which are subtilized and sublimated in *Yagya*-fire takes them directly into the blood stream and reaches every component, every corner of the body and thereby improves the body's resistance and vitality.

Yagya generates special energy fields and also increases the amount of negative ions and ozone in the surrounding atmosphere and thus activates the flow of vital energy in the *yājakas*. Understanding the interrelationship between the *Yagyāgni* (fire and energy field of *Yagya*) and the power of *prāṇa* - vital energy, is fundamental to understanding the principle of total natural cure by *Yagya*. The Brahmvarchas research institute founded by Acharya Sharma has taken up pioneering research projects on scientific study and applications of *Yagya* based therapies - *Yagyopathy*.

Because of the harmonious sonic waves generated by the rhythmic chanting of *mantras*, the effects of *Yagya* reach the endocrine glands and subtle power centers in the body and help soothing the mental and emotional conditions also. This is why *Yagyopathy* is regarded as most promising in the cure of psychosomatic diseases and improvement of human psychology in general. How and why this happens and how to perform scientific experiments on *Yagya* - study, analysis and implementation of these issues would open up a new branch of research for modern scientists. The present volume would provide necessary inputs and guidelines in this regard in a simple, illustrative manner within the grasp of all readers including those without scientific educational background.

Yagya is defined as a mechanism of maintaining the health of the cosmic body - ecosystem. The positive effects of *Yagya* on environment at physical and spiritual levels are also discussed in this volume.

It is stated in the holy Gita (3 | 14) that -

*Annādbhavanti Bhūtāni Parjanyaḍanna Sambhavah |
Yajñādbhavati Parjanya Yajñah Karma Samudbhavah | |*

Meaning: All creature survive on food produced by food-crops and vegetation; *Yagyas* performed and practised by prescribed methods bring rainfall and hence the source of existence of life.... Lord Krishna further states that - the absolute vital force of *thee* is pervaded in *Yagya*....

The above aspects of *Yagya*-philosophy are elucidated here. The present volume also introduces the major programmes on *Yagya* propagated at large scale by the Gayatri Pariwar mission established by Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya at Shantikunj, Hardwar. These include - (i) *Agnihotras* for daily practice to revive the tradition of sacrificing a part of our food back to Nature with deep gratitude; (ii) *Dipa Yagya* - which is a simplified process of *Yagya* especially suited for creating general awareness and enlightening people's thought process according to the basic philosophy of *Yagya*; and (iii) *Ashwamedha Yagyas* - grand *Yagyas* performed globally to initiate elimination of evil tendencies, purification of the environment of life and cultivation of divine values for brightening the future of humanity and life on the earth.

Special spiritual experiments are conducted during the *Ashwamedha Yagyas* for activating and extracting the cosmic energy of the subtle body of the Sun and for attracting the beatitudinous divine power of Lord Shiva. Over twenty-seven such *Yagyas* were organized in different parts of the world during 1992-1995 followed by hundreds of other grand *yagyas*.

Excerpts from ancient scriptures and scientific aspects of the *Ashwamedha Yagyas* are described in this volume along with details of their organization and associated effects of social uplifting and

mental refinement of masses. Detailed reports on such programmes conducted and ongoing under the mission's banner are available in the mission's center - Shantikunj, Hardwar.

Readers would find innovative information and scientifically justified explanations on why *Yagyas* are considered as effective means of excelling total health of everyone, every natural system, ranging from individual to cosmic levels. They are invited to come forward to perform and participate in the *Yagyas* and related research experiments.



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 26, An Introduction

I had to go to the Himalayās a number of times in the past on the direction of my Gurudev for performing sādhanā in solitude. People link these journeys with something miraculous. They believe that the Himalayās are the abode of miracle-performing beings and realised souls. In fact, I had to go to the Himalayās to become more introvert. The exterior life of a person is dominated by outer events but his inner life is influenced by feelings and sentiments. An illumined mind and a loving heart constitute spirituality. The rat-race for gratification of desires and amassing of material objects is materialism. Since I have dedicated my whole life to demonstrate life-affirming spirituality, while outwardly leading a normal worldly life, it became essential for me to occasionally retire into solitude with a view to nullify any influence of materialism on the exterior life. An effort was made during my agyātvās (living in solitude in an unknown place) in the Himalayās to bring the soul as close to God as possible.

Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

CHANGE OF WORLD ORDER - HOW AND WHEN ?

(*Yug Parivartan : Kaise Aur Kaba?*)

The present period of change of a millenium is also a special juncture of great transition. Prophecies of the seers of the ancient and the modern times share common views about the critical circumstances before the dawn of a new era.... The world today is apparently passing through the most arduous and challenging phase of crises and calamities. Under the threats of nuclear and star wars, the existence of life on the earth seems to be lying at an edge of extinction today... The possibilities of brighter era appear to be realizable by nothing less than a miracle... Perhaps these are the moments for which Lord Krishna has assured in the holy Gita as - "Age after age....., I come into being....., to protect the pious life along the righteous path of truth and to devastate the evil tendencies, terrors and disorders.....".

The ancient Indian scriptures on Astrology describe the present era - from 1850 A.D. to 2000 A.D. approximately - as the period of great change, of transition from *Kaliyug* (teh Age of moral decline and darkness of ignorance and evil influences) to *Satyug* (the Age of divine values and culmination of human dignity). The *Kaliyug* is in its last phase at present and the dawn of *Satyug* is in the offing.... That is why the present time is also referred as the *yug sandhi kāla* - junction of two eras.

Although some fundamentalists and orthodox religious masters consider that the beginning of *Satyug* is still away by more than several million years, this claim appears to be a misconception in view of the scientifically justified, thoughtful arguments and authentic references cited by Gurudeva Shriram Sharma Acharya in the present volume. Excerpts from the scriptures ranging from - Bhavishya Purana, Harivansha Puran to Shrimad Bhagawat and

Gita are also given here along with the proofs on correct methods of computation of planetary time according to the ancient Indian Science of Astrology.

The author, Gurudev Shriram Sharma has described the past twenty to twenty-five years (1980 to 2005 A.D. approximately) of *yug sandhi* as the anti-climax of the darkness of *Kaliyug* which ought to end with the glow of the dawn of *Satyug*.... This period has and will witness severe destruction, disorder, anarchy, natural calamities, wars, explosive situations, terror, hunger, epidemics, large scale disturbance and decline of human values.... Apart from the poisonous pollution of the atmosphere and disruption of the ecosystem, the unprecedented occurrences of tragic incidents, steep rise in aggressive tendencies, massacres, rapes, psychological disorders, frequency of suicides, ever new diseases..... etc have also dangerously polluted the environment of life in this transition phase.....

Today, every body seems to be somewhat suspicious about his own health and survival.... But, this allround 'threat' to happy and peaceful life on the earth also appears to be a part of the 'warnings' of mother Nature and its divine creator to mankind. The attacks of sufferings and agonies are bound to induce the sentiments of compassion and force the comfort-hungry minds of today to rectify their selfish attitude and change the way of life according to the crying call of humanity. This is also a time of final and decisive struggle between the divine and the devil powers. It is a testing time for the saintly ideologies and virtuous tendencies. Their miraculous strength is going to arouse and manifest itself on multiple fronts after this phase of emergency....

The remarkable progress of scientific and technological advancement has virtually conquered the Nature and made today's man 'omnipotent' in terms of materialistic wealth and power.... The ultra fast air-crafts and speedy automobiles on the one hand, and rapid communication links through man-made satellite networks have shrunk the peripheries of the world and brought the people across the globe in closed contact.... Howbeit, the blind race for

technological innovations and luxury-oriented and commercialized development has led to excessive exploitation of the natural resources and has disturbed the natural harmony of the ecosystem too. The consumerization based and power-hungry policies of the so called rational thinkers have converted the boons of science into curses in more than one respect.

Increasing level of poisonous gases in the atmosphere and the alarming disruption of the ozone layer - are the best known negative effects of modern 'developments' which have invited harmful radiations and dreaded diseases in return.... The radiance of sun, which sends huge stock of energy - of the order of that of seven hundred thousands megawatt bombs - everyday on our planet is also disturbed these days... The large number of solar eclipses and sharp increase in the appearance of the black spots on the sun is going to have exceptional effects on geo-magnetism, biomagnetism and the environment of life by the end of 2015 AD... The one-sided developments - neglecting the social and psychological dimensions of human life - has been the worst of the curses of the modern civilization as it has threatened to uproot the very basis of humanity by 'evaporating' the streams of human sentiments in the 'heat' of sensual pleasure, ego and selfish intellect.....

Acharya Sharma was a saintly social reformer and a sagacious seer; whatever he predicted from time to time about the major events in the global scenario since 1940 have come true.... He never declared these predictions as prophecies... Rather, he presented his views in a convincing manner with authenticity. Readers will get the flavor of his great vision, wisdom and modesty in this volume..... While mentioning about the current period of *yug sandhi* and bright future ahead in the 21st century, he also cites and explains the foresighted experiences and prophecies of the august yogi Sri Aurobindo, celebrity palmist and prophet Cairo, great thinker Romain Rolland and renowned astrologers and clairvoyant foreseers like Nostradamus, Shri Gopinath Sharstri, yogi Anandacharya, Madame Boriska, Jean Dixon, Anderson Gerard Kreisel, Charlse Clark, Prof. Hatar, George Bavery.... etc.

Be that the excerpts form ancient scriptures - including the holy Bible, Kalki Purana, Bhavishya Purana etc., or the published utopia based hypotheses of the thinkers like Alvin Toffler, Fritjof Capra, Prof. Hamische McRae etc, all have been analyzed thoroughly in this volume in the context of the future of the world in this new millenium.

Gurudev Sharma also elucidates the possibilities of bright future stating that the supreme source of divinity exists in universal beauty and order.... He reminds us that even in the critical period of adversities today, we should not lose faith in *thy* protection because, the eternal creator would never allow HIS marvellous creation - the gigantic world, the enormous variety of living beings and limitless prosperity of the nature.... - to be ruined in dearth.... *Thy* powers or divine incarnations, appear at the right moment as per the need of the critical time periods and control the circumstances in order to save the universal order and existence of life and serene flow of beauty and love in HIS creations....

The inspiring words of Gurudev go deep down in the reader's mind and heart and the light of his acumen and foresight makes it clear that *thy* grace has appeared in the present era as "*Pragyāvatāra*" - incarnation of divine intellect to educe upright change in the attitude and mentality of the masses, illuminate human-intellect in the righteous direction and awaken the inner sentiments of pure love and boundless compassion....

In Acharya Sharma's words - "Divine incarnations come into being in the critical moments like the present ones.... In all Ages, the incarnations of God awaken collective consciousness and raise the inner strength of people. The life-force and enthusiasm thus inspired indeed conquers all vices and adversities and eventually transforms the 'impossibility' into a visible reality..... Those having a foresight can clearly visualize the descent of the holy 'Ganges' of the divine consciousness (of *Pragyāvatāra*) which is going to purify the minds and intrinsic sentiments of the people and cultivate the serene environment for the advent of a bright era....".

The author has initiated a great spiritual experiment of "*Yug Sandhi Mahāpurashcharana*" since 1980 to help proper conditioning of the subtle environment for the manifestation and expansion of the divine inspirations of *Pragyāvatāra*. This experiment involves collective participation of billions of people across the globe. Details are available in the present volume and some earlier volumes (on *Gāyatrī sādhanā*) of this series. Acharya Sharma had also conducted unique experiments on sublime expansion of his own vital spiritual force. These are covered in the volume nos. 28 and 29.

In his special address entitled "*Mahākala Kā Sandesha*" (Divine Message of Eternity), delivered in January 1990, he had authentically warned that refinement of conduct and adoption of virtuous and altruistic mode of life is essential for everyone for surviving the test of the present times.... Those who follow the righteous path of divine disciplines by inculcating the pure sentiments of love, compassion and mutual respect and by devoting their potentials for the high ideals of truth and collective welfare would acquire the orgulous honor of being associated with the divine force of *Pragyāvatāra*. They would indeed cooperate in making the 21st century a bright era for all.....

The present volume would acquaint the readers with the gamut of authentic predictions about the future of the world in the new millenium. It will also warn about the disastrous end of the misdeeds of today and provide detailed guidance on -"How to go about...?", "What to do....?",..... in order to march towards the glorious future.

The emblem of "21st Century - Bright Future" is inviting us to rise, join hands and come forward to revive the dignity of humanity and make this world a better place to live...

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 27, An Introduction

ENDEAVORS OF SPIRITUAL SUBLIMATION TOWARDS ENTELECHY OF BRIGHT FUTURE - Part I

(*Sūkśmīkaraṇa Evam Ujjawala Bhaviṣya Kā Avataraṇa-1*)

The present volume is an authentic document on the rapidly changing circumstances at the critical junction of two milleniums.... It elucidates the nature of the divine force of spiritual energy working behind the transmutation of the environment of life.... to venture into a newer and brighter era..... Until the past several decades, the possibilities of happy future were dimmed by the thick smog of the apprehension and despair caused by the threat of nuclear wars, unabated pollution of environment, population explosion and the likelihood of natural calamities because of disruption of the harmony of the ecosystem.... It was impossible to imagine how the course of events of would ever be diverted well in advance before the 'dead-end'. But, soon there appeared a silver line of the promising hopes affirmed by Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya, who, because of his clairvoyance, could see the nature of activities of the sublime world.....

Gurudev Shriram Sharma is among the most revered spiritual masters of the modern age whose sagacious intellect represented a marvellous combination of a scientist, philosopher and writer of eminent calibre.... The power of his saintly sentiments and spirituality could educe the impulses of divinity in the hearts of millions of people who came in his contact.... He endeavored *Sūkśhmīkaraṇa Sādhanā*-spiritual experiments of subtlimation and expansion of life-force...., to inspire the awaken souls around the globe and attempt enlightening the minds and hearts of the architects of the world today and help create righteous environment for the dawn of a bright future....

This volume gives the background of his *Sūkśhmīkaraṇa sādhanā* and highlights the major objectives, relevance and creative

programmes of his *Yug Nirmāṇ* mission. Details on the yoga-disciplines and spiritual experiments of *Sūkshṃikaraṇa* are given in the next volume of the Vangmaya series.

While taking stock of the untoward situations prevailing currently in almost every domain of life owing to the misdeeds of human society at large, Acharya Sharma had declared about three decades ago that all anomalies and evils of the present era will be soon fought by the omnipotent *Mahākāla* - the cause of eternity, the invisible, omnipresent, savior of cosmic order, the original source of creation, welfare and ultimate transmutation.....

Call it the influence of divine incarnation or the universal discipline of *thy* nature, the power of *Mahākāla* has begun to manifest its activities in the subtle world....; the waves of divine energy generated thereby will stir the gigantic ocean of consciousness with grand force resulting in astonishing effects on the visible world and on the human mind.... "How and when this will take place? What is our duty in these moments of great change....?" These and similar queries are answered here with substantial guidance.

Lord *Shiva*, one of the trinity Gods, is revered in the scriptures of Hindu religion as the eternal power of *thee* which controls cosmic change and thus generates absolute purification before the next phase of novel creations in the cyclic order of natural existence..... The allegorical descriptions of the Puranas state that - the majestic sound of the *damarū* of *Shiva* generates vibrations in all directions of the universe and churns the limitless reservoir of cosmic energy.....; the impact of the *tāndava* dance of Shiva shakes the entire universe and every form of evil or untoward existence is destroyed in the devastating flames produced by the infinite purifying force so generated....

The author's decipheration of this rhetoric description is indeed an eye-opener. It tells us how the misdeeds and vices spreading the world today are going to face disastrous consequences because of the ultimate discipline of *Shiva* (divine tendencies). Those engaged in

inhumane activities and those influenced by the vices of evil instincts are given clear warning to divert their chosen path of life towards morality and thus protect themselves from absolute destruction....

Those feeling the pains of the ailing state of humanity today will get, from the author's words, the courage and practical guidance for elevation of the righteous sentiments and for participation in the creative programmes of welcoming the new era.... "How the collective power of divinely pure souls is going to be awakened and organized to prevent total disaster and instead revive human dignity with divine glory?" - is also discussed here in detail.

The author has targeted the roots of evil tendencies - viz., ego, avarice and selfish attachments, which are the basic causes of the crisis of faith and the maligning of the religious philosophies. In his views, the 'incarnation of Lord *Shiva*' implies inculcation of the pure sentiments of true welfare.... which would 'burn out' the *Tripurāsura* (group of three devil powers) of ego, avarice and selfishness.... His deliberations in the present volume offer adept information on how this can be realized in ordinary life? How we can purify ourselves from the evil tendencies and experience the afflatus educed by the 'incarnation' of *Shiva* in our own hearts....?

Based on his life-time experiences and successful accomplishment of the spiritual endeavors of the highest kind, Gurudev Shriram Sharma had guided the disciplined practice of *Gāyatrī Anushthāna* as ideal for the mental and spiritual refinement of all men and women. The Gayatri Pariwar mission and the institutions - Shantikunj, Hardwar and its branches, founded by him conduct regular training programmes throughout the year to enable beginners as well as the experienced devotees perform *Gāyatrī Anushthānas* in an ideal environment under expert guidance. The welfare programmes of this mission serve the complementary purpose of creative use of refined talents in altruist activities and collective endeavors of social upliftment. The details presented in this volume will be informative in this regard as well.

Gurudev lived a life of a true saint according to the ideal philosophy of *Yagya* - devoting all his resources, potentials and supernormal talents for the escalation of human values and progressive welfare of all beings..... He envisaged a three fold mode of evolution for architecturing the bright era (*yug nirmāṇ*) via refinement and elevation at the personal, familial and social levels. If every individual is inspired to progress with righteous conduct and with the altruistic sentiments of sharing and caring, the families, societies, nations and eventually the whole world is naturally going to become good in all respects.

Acharya Sharma has affirmed the purity of intellect and refinement of talents as an urgent need of the present era. He has invited talents and expertise from the fields of art, culture, literature, education, politics, finance and social, physical and biological sciences and technology, etc and called for the leaders, professionals, experts, scholars, authorities and potential architects of the human society and the future of the world - to come out of the shells of narrow interests and 'prejudiced' inclinations and realize their greater responsibilities in this critical period... Those who will join hands in this unique venture of "*yug nirmāṇ*" would be worthy of the immortal glory of being the associates of *Mahākāla*.... The radiance of their dedicated endeavors would brighten up the dawn of the divine era in the 21st century.

This volume contains a grand repository of knowledge of the power of sentiments and inner inspirations of spirituality hidden in each one of us. Considering the limitless expansion of the domain of sentiments, thorough study and analysis of the implications of every section of this volume would also give rise to scholarly theses of great values in shaping the course of developments in the new era.

It is hoped that the call of *Mahākāla* compiled in this volume will carry the impulses of the pains and compassion of the author's saintly heart into the receptive cores of the sentiments of all those who (still) hold the imprints of humanity alive and growing there.....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 28, An Introduction

ENDEAVORS OF SPIRITUAL SUBLIMATION TOWARDS ENTELECHY OF BRIGHT FUTURE - Part I I

(*Sūkśmīkaraṇa Evam Ujjawala Bhaviṣya Kā Avataraṇa-2*)

An august spiritual saint can vibrate the whole world by the power of his thought waves and the force of his sentiments without even moving out of his chamber or cave... While sitting in his closed room in any corner of the earth, the charge of his spirituality can storm the grand expansion of the subtle world and transmute evil instincts into good will and divine sentiments.... There is no exaggeration or illusive imagination in these expressions. This possibility has indeed been realized several times in the history of mankind. The endeavors (*sāadhanās*) of Sri Aurobindo and Maharshi Raman have set evidential examples in this context only a few decades ago.

Maharshi Aurobindo had performed higher level *yoga sāadhanās* silently in his lonely chamber in Pandichery. As per his resolution, his spiritual energy had subliminally charged the entire Indian territory with patriotic sentiments.... This charge was manifested in the enthusiasm and excitement of millions of freedom fighters in the movement of the independence of India. What the revolutionary Aurobindo Ghosh would have only dreamt was easily materialized by his spiritual transformation after self-realization.....

The endeavors of Maharshi Raman, Madame Blawetski and Ledbeater also fall in the above category of spiritual experiments. In this sequence, *Yugrishi* Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya had successfully performed the highest kinds of *sāadhanās*; this included twenty-four *Mahāpurashcharanas* of *Gāyatrī* continued for twenty-four years. Details on these *sāadhanās* are covered in volume nos. 9 to 14 of the Vangmaya series. The present volume focuses on his very special *sāadhanā* of *sūkśmīkaraṇa* - sublization and

sublimation of the life-force. Much before the commencement of this unique spiritual experiment he had hinted about this venture through his writings....

In his words - "the last twenty years of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century constitute the period of *yug sandhi* - junction between two eras. It is an emergency period when we will have to dedicate our endeavors to serve the dual purpose of preventing the decline and destruction of human dignity and simultaneously establishing the righteous trends of elevation and development in multiple dimensions of life. We all will have to play our roles with due responsibility during this critical phase. I will continue to devote every second of my life, every impulse of my vital energy without pause until the dawn of the divine era becomes visible....."

Gurudev Shriram Sharma had described his *sūkshṃikaraṇa sādhanā* as unique spiritual endeavor to set the foundation of the edifice of the new and bright era. During the two years period (1984-1986) of this epochal *sādhanā* he had remained all alone and observed absolute silence with arduous ascetic disciplines. This was equivalent to the esoteric experiments carried out by the ancient *rishis* in the caves in the thick forests on the Himalayas. In the present volume Gurudev has highlighted the devout disciplines and the practices of *yoga* and *samādhi* (trance) associated with this *sādhanā* in which the vital force from every cell, every molecule of the body is extracted and concentrated for sublime transformation of the individual self into what is termed in the spiritual literature as the *chhāyā purūsha* or the etheric double. He has also described the subtle experiences of support received from the invisible beings in higher realms.... Readers will get to know how the great souls receive the inspirations and guidance from the subtle world as help in their noble endeavors.

The *sūkshṃikaraṇa sādhanā* of revered Gurudev also incorporated the *Sāvitrī sādhanā* of *pancha kosha jāgarana* in which the five gradually subtler layers of manifestation of consciousness force -

namely, the *annamaya kosha* (gross body sheath), *prāṇamaya kosha* (vital-body or energy-body sheath), *manomaya kosha* (mind sheath), *vigyānamaya kosha* (knowledge sheath) and *ānandamaya kosha* (beatitudoous bliss sheath) - are activated and spiritually transmuted in five different streams of power which can virtually be like five divine associates.... In simple terms, this would correspond to a sublime transformation of the individual self into five subtle beings. Gurudev refers these divine associates as "*vīrabhadras*".

The authentic information given here on above mentioned occult aspects of polymerization of the individual consciousness is truly rare to find. The scientific eloquence of the author and his ease with balanced decipheration of his extrasensory experiences indeed make this volume a precious treatise of the mystic science of spirituality.

Acharya Sharma had written from time to time that even after he leaves the gross body in 1990, his subtle body will continue to work at a greater pace and in global domains during the next 15 years of *yug-sandhi* and in the astral body for 100 more years. He had disclosed the divine purpose of his life in his autobiography which came out in 1984 after the commencement of his *sūkshṃikaraṇa sādhanā*. He writes about this spiritual experiment at one place in his autobiography as -" My *sūkshṃikaraṇa sādhanā*, ongoing these days, is in the process of creating five subtle beings of supernormal potentials. These will latently enter the inner cores of the minds and hearts of uncountable number of people and replace the smog of evil instincts and immorality existing there, by a divine treasure of ideal thoughts and sentiments which will enrich the awaken souls by greater potentials and enable accomplishment of the arduous task of 'changing an era.....' with glorious success....".

It would be a thrilling experience to read about his *sūkshṃikaraṇa sādhanā* and get a glimpse of the activities of his *vīrbhadras* in the present volume.

Acharya Sharma had also inspired the *yug sandhi mahāpurashcharaṇas* of collective *japa* (rhythmic enunciation) of

2400 crores *Gāyatrī Mantras* by millions of people across the globe. This *Brahmāstra Anushtāna* - a super spiritual experiment, the success of which is eternal and has the potential to create a new world order - has begun in 1989 and will continue in gross form till 2000 and subliminally for few more decades. This is a unique experiment of subtilization of the cosmic and spiritual power of *shabda* (eternal sound) contained in the *Gāyatrī Mantra*. This is aimed at awakening the collective consciousness, elimination of evil tendencies and emergence of divinity which subtly exists in every living being but usually remains dormant in most.....

By inviting their participation in the *yug sandhi mahāpurashcharaṇa*, Gurudev had bestowed the opportunity on people across the globe to associate their inner selves with his spiritual energy and experience the beatifying effects.... How his arduous *sādhanās* of *Gāyatrī* and *Sāvitrī* would contribute in realization of this collective endeavor is also described in the present volume.

The "*vichāra krānti abhiyāna*" has been the core of the "*yug nirmāṇa*" mission of Acharya Sharma initiated in 1947. This aims at refining and bringing revolutionary changes in the attitude and conduct of the people and illuminating their ideologies. Acharya Sharma had written thousands of books (in Hindi) for enlightening the masses and orienting people's mentality and faith in the righteous direction of human dignity. His versatility in all dimensions of knowledge and his sagacity and acumen in the deepest depth of human life and psychology had helped his thoughts reach people from different walks of society with positive impact. His speeches and writings became the medium of expansion of his mission into a global family - the Gayatri Pariwar.

Realizing the key role of sentiments and intrinsic faith, he also devised and propagated the methods of refinement at the level of inner self as part of his "*vichār krānti abhiyān*". He re-investigated the ancient science of spirituality for this purpose and instituted special *sādhanā* procedures and training programs most suitable for

day-to-day practice by most of us in our modern life-style..... The details of the personality development, mass education and social upliftment programmes under the "*vichār krānti abhiyān*" are given in the other volumes of the Vangmaya series. The present volume refers to the very special spiritual experiments of utmost importance in the present moments of transition of world order.

The readers would be convinced about the descent of a divine era in the 21st century after reading about the *sūkshmīkaraṇa sādhanā* and *yug sandhi mahāpurashcharaṇa* in this volume. They would also feel the unique force of the author's subtle inspirations and would themselves visualize the advent of bright future by participating in the history-making experiment of "*yug sandhi mahāpurashcharaṇa*".

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 29, An Introduction

In the history of spiritual sciences, tapaścaryā and sādhanā have been regarded as the only means for higher attainments. This cannot be done by clinging to a luxurious, comfortable life style. It needs single-pointed concentration towards the achievement of the noble aim. At the time of writing eighteen Purāṇas, Vyas retired to a cave near Vasodhara in Uttarakhand. Ganesh undertook to help him as his scribe on the condition that he will not interrupt and will keep totally silent. Such an important work could not have been accomplished without this uninterrupted concentration.

Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

LORD RAM - ETERNAL SYMBOL OF HUMAN IDEALS

(*Maryāda Purūṣottama Rāma*)

The holy Ramayana is a unique pearl in the unlimited treasure of Indian culture which has been lighting the hearts of billions of people from different parts of this society since ages. This religious scripture has also been a center of attraction for erudite studies in Literature and Social Philosophy. It describes the divine life and ideal character of Lord Ram who is regarded as an incarnation of God Vishnu - the second of the trinity Gods, who had appeared in human form in the *Tretā Yug* (ancient era after the Vedic Age) to protect the earth from devil threats and suppressions and to create heavenly environment of life on this planet.

The "Valmikiya Ramayana" written in ancient Sanskrit verse by Maharshi Valmiki and the "Ram Charita Manasa" written in a popular dialect of Hindi by Goswami Tulasidas are regarded as the most original and complete versions of Ramayana. Every direction of the righteous human life is covered in these great treatises on the character and life of Lord Shriram. God's manifestation in human form as Shriram is a symbol of culmination of human glory. That is why the character of Lord Shriram is remarked as that of "*maryāda purūshottama*" - a symbol of supreme glory of mankind.

The lives and works of great personalities, angels or divine incarnations are described, studied, read and discussed again and again.... to disseminate the reflection of their virtues and teachings in more and more people with greater impact. "Shriram Charita Manasa" or "Tulasi Ramayana", as it is sometimes called, serves this purpose remarkably. The attribution of the divine image of Lord Ram, the simplicity of Tulasi's language and the lucid style and rhythmic arrangement of his words is so beautifully conjuncted here that it becomes more and more interesting and closer to the heart, as one repeatedly reads it or listens to its discourses....

The Tulasi Ramayana is perhaps the most read and well received book in India. Almost every Indian has read or heard it in some form. It can indeed be an excellent mode of teaching moral conduct and social and civic responsibilities to the masses in a country like India. Pt. Shriram Sharma's acumen had realized this fact with an objective of enlightenment of people in the modern times. He therefore had made it an integral part of the "*vichār krānti*" project of his *Yug Nirmāṇ* mission - which aims at cultivating suitable environment of life and culture in today's society by way of refining and elevating people's thinking and awakening the pure sentiments of humanity in their hearts.

Acharya Sharma had incorporated the implications and teachings of "Ram Charita Manasa" in the public-awareness programs of his mission and elucidated specific qualities and incidents of the ideal life of Lord Ram in order to set the background for moral education and social uplifting under the *vichāra krānti* programme. The present volume of Vangmaya series discusses important aspects of Ramayana and character of Lord Ram in new light, emphasizing the points which are most relevant for the human society today.

The central theme of Ramayana as projected via selected stanzas called "*chaupāis*" (metre or verse of four lines) in the "Ram Charita Manasa" - has also been elaborated here perspicuously.... Lord Ram's divine personality is that of a true hero, affectionately honored by the masses through the depth of their hearts. His appearance as a prince, a citizen, a son, a brother, a husband, a friend, a warrior or a king,..... etc, is indeed ideal. His serene love and generosity for all beings, his pains for the downtroddens, his piety, naturally make him an ideal hero whose duty-bond life and virtuous character leaves remarkable impressions on the human mind. This along with the impact of religious faith of people in the holy Ramayana makes Lord Ram's life as the best example for teaching - what is an ideal conduct at personal, familial and social levels.... His life is therefore the best theme for Acharya Sharma's mission - of evolution via development and elevation at the grass root - which emphasizes righteous and natural progress of the personal, familial and social spheres of life.

In the present volume, specific pieces of the "Rama Charita Manasa" are presented along with literal meaning, implications and detailed explanations. Emphasis is laid on the aspects pertaining to our day-to-day life..... Interesting stories and illustrative examples are also cited to make the reading more lucid and comprehensible.

A significant number of scholars and saints have written or preached on Ramayana from different angles. Ramayana is like an ocean of knowledge encompassing the expansion of almost all tendencies and all varieties of emotions and aspirations of human life although, in the context of the times of yore. Bringing out real 'pearls' from the abyssal of this ocean is an arduous task demanding in-depth study of the earlier works and research to extract the nectar for the benefit of the world today. More important is the eloquent style of presentation of this essence to make it useful for all men and women - including the illiterates and the erudite scholars as well. The present volume has the confluence of all - the essence of Ramayana and excellence of expression and the power of engrossing and inspiring people's mind and heart.

Despite being a divine incarnation, Lord Ram lived like an ordinary human being and faced the ups and downs of life..... His pious personality and unperturbed devotion to the highest ideals of humanity reflect how an ordinary human could rise up to higher realms of humane glory and eventually awaken the source of divinity existing in himself. The truth of "*Jīvo Brahmaiva Nāparah*" (the individual and the Supreme *Thy* souls are one and the same in the origin.....) - becomes alive in the life of Lord Ram as a human being.....

Different chapters and sections of the present volume focus at different aspects of the life of - *Maryāda Purūshottam* Shriram. How he sets examples of ideal conduct and ideal behavior in his interactions with his parents, wife, brothers, sisters, children, fellow beings, teachers, subordinates, etc, is elucidated here giving details and practical guidance in the context of the circumstance and mode of living in the present times..... Importantly, the topics of hygiene, health, education, family planning, financial self-reliance, etc, are

also covered here with other important facets of personal and familial life. Social issues, of special relevance to the Indian society are also discussed. These include - the need for equality of man and woman, ideal system of marriages, eradication of castism and religious anomalies...., etc.

Explanations along with citations from the "Ram Charita Manas" are made to enable the reader get a glimpse of the true implications and impact of the philosophy and religion in original social system of India. For example, in the context of the topics of Shabari and Kevata, it is highlighted that - Lord Ram believed in equal respect for all; he established a happy and progressive social system free from discriminations due to caste, creed, religion, community, gender or social status etc..... The prudence, integrity, valor, patience, fairness, altruism and virtuous deeds of Lord Ram as a king are analyzed here to highlight what makes one a successful leader, a perfect hero of a nation.....

The topics of religion, devotion and God too are focused here in the context of the life of Lord Ram and associated teachings of the Ramayana with a major objective to eliminate the misconceptions and illuminate the readers' minds with the correct meanings and importance of - the philosophy of religion, impact of devotion on human psychology and the *bhakti yoga* for realization of God.....

Those who have not read anything on Ramayana as well as those who know it by heart all should read this volume to find the solutions to the problems of their own lives and to the problems faced by the society at large.... Knowing about *Maryāda Purūshottama* Lord Shriram, from the author Pt. Shriram (Sharma), who not only shared the name but also the divine virtues of the former - is indeed a rare opportunity bestowed by this volume.....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 30, An Introduction

GITA -THE FOUNDATION OF IDEAL CULTURE

(*Sanskriti - Sanjivani: Shrimadbhāgawat Evam Gītā*)

Shrimadbhāgawat and Shrimadbhāgawat Gītā - popularly known as Bhāgawat and Gītā stand as monuments of the Indian spiritual philosophy. These ancient scriptures are crowns of the glorious cultural heritage of the human society.... Study, discussions and contemplation of Bhāgawat and adoption of its teachings in day-to-day life is supposed to be of significant importance in the present era (*kaliyug*) of adversities, cultural darkness, and bathos of morality.... The basic inspiration of this scripture aims at awakening of purity and virtues in the devotees. Gītā on the other hand has been attributed the honor of being the essence of all religious scriptures of the world. The knowledge and guidance contained in this great scripture of all ages educe afflatus for sublime transformation of the soul, all round elevation of intellect and development of personality as a whole.... It also offers practical solutions to the multifaceted problems and complexities of human life....

Acharya Shriram Sharma had presented the knowledge of ancient Indian scriptures in scientific light with a progressive attitude to inspire the people of Modern Age by constructive guidance on deeper understanding and viable adoption of the principles of spirituality and righteous way of life..... He had devoted his intellectual sagacity, acumen, adept knowledge and supernormal spiritual attainments for the revival of divine culture.... He endeavored towards the multiple goals of: (i) elimination of blind faith, superstitions and misconceptions associated with religious practices in the Indian society; (ii) simultaneous establishment of people's righteous faith in divine nature of the soul; and (iii) creative implementation of the high ideals of the eternal religion by analyzing the scriptures and spiritual philosophy in scientific light and by adopting a rational approach based on thorough study and experiments on the implications of the original texts and commentaries of the scriptures.

adoption of righteous disciplines through heart and not meant only for rituals or for intellectual (philosophical) discussions and discourses At one place he says - "Listening to the story of *Bhāgawat* or any portion of a scripture without contemplation and creative adherence to its teachings with prudence.... - is nothing better than passing time in listening a speech from one ear and throwing out from the other....". This is indeed true. Because, we also see that although, year after year, hundreds of programs of fluent discourses on *Bhāgawat* etc are arranged in crowded halls in India and abroad and thousands of people attend them repeatedly, there practically appears no improvement in the convictions, behavior and deeds of most participants. We hardly see truly religious life in the places within and outside India where number of 'expert orators' of "*Bhāgawat Kathā*" have been giving frequent discourses. Listening to "*Bhāgawat Kathā*" is like a get-together or entertainment for some and is an 'obligation' because of personal (blind) faith for some others...

In fact, the true manifestation of one's faith in religion or in the philosophy of a religious scripture is reflected in the way one adopts it in his character and deeds.... For example, *Bhāgawat Kathā* is not only a collection of stories of allegorical or mythological characters which any good orator may present in very interesting way.... This type of *Bhāgawat Kathā* won't serve any purpose unless the deeper meaning and implications relevant to human life are explained perspicuously. Acharya Shriram Sharma had cautiously taken care of this aspect. His spiritual power, in-depth study of the scriptures and excellent hold on human psychology had made his writings and explanations of the formers as unique and perfect in terms of educative effects.

The present volume would clarify the doubts of the readers about '*Mahārāsa*' and similar allegorically representation of the activities and phases of the life of the divine incarnation of Krishna in human form - as described in the *Bhāgawat*.... Readers would find authentic references and analysis of the important issues and facts such as - the words "*Brāhmin*" and "*Shūdra*" do not correspond to

one's birth, caste or creed, rather, it depends on one's attitude, qualities and deeds, which of the two 'classes' one belongs.... The author gives convincing explanations in simple but effective language and also cites excerpts from scriptures and scholarly works of the ancient and modern experts in the related areas. Eminent scholars of Sanskrit language as well as the illiterates would receive creative guidance and inspiration by reading or listening to his presentations here.

While there have been misconceptions and illusive propaganda of the *Bhāgwat* because of the 'stories' in it, similar misinterpretations have been associated with the *Gītā* because of the highly 'abstract' nature of the knowledge assimilated in it. Though many volumes have been written on *Gītā* in prominent languages of the world and thousands of scholars have been enlightened by its great inspirations, its message has not reached the masses in a constructive way. It often remains at the periphery of intellectual discussions and even the scholars of *Gītā* often find it difficult to apply this knowledge in practice.... Howbeit, for a spiritual scientist, saint, altruist thinker, social reformer and sagacious authority on Indian philosophy and culture, like Acharya Sharma, there were no limitations of power of expression and inspiration. He could achieve the deepest depth of this vast ocean of absolute knowledge and explain it eloquently for the benefit of all....

It is said that - "*Gītā Sugītā Karttavayā Kimanyai Shāstra*"; meaning - "why should there be any need for reading the expansion of other scriptures, if such a great source of divine guidance on righteous, duty-bound life is available through the *Gītā*?" The holy *Gītā* is said to be the essence of all Vedas and Upanishadas. It is a confluence of three streams of knowledge and practices of *yoga*- viz., the *Bhakti yoga*, *Karma yoga* and the *Gyāna yoga*. Most importantly, it does not contain any mythological or figurative description of worldly affairs. Rather, every sentence enunciated from the divine voice of the absolute *yogi* Lord Krishna is recorded here. Whence the eternal importance of this scripture. In simple terms, it is a treatise of intensive guidance on perfect management of life. Men and women

of every age-group, under all circumstances, can obtain immense courage and moral enlightenment from it along the righteous path of progressive life.

Acharya Sharma had propounded the compilation of "*Gītā Vishwakosha*" - an encyclopedia and comprehensive treatise of works on *Gītā* under the research programs of his *Yug Nirmāṇ* mission. The present volume is a prerequisite to that. He has analyzed important aspects of *Gītā* in an illustrative style. Examples from the lives and works of great personalities of the world are quoted to explain how the teachings of *Gītā* could be inculcated in every phase and type of human life. The author has excellently discussed the combination of the *sāṅkhya yoga* and the *karma yoga* in this volume which is of significant importance in the modern times.

The implications of the *shlokas* like - "*Karmanyānyāśah Iti Karma Sanyāśah*" as presented here give practical guidance on correct attitude and behavior in day-to-day life taking into account the varieties of circumstances and complexities of the personal, social and professional domains..... Higher dimensions of human sentiments are touched while elucidating different facets of devotion through the quotes (of *Gītā*) such as - "*Mayyeva Mana ādhastwa Mayi Buddhim Niveshaya Nivasishyasi Mayyeva Atūrdhvam Na Sansāyah*", or, "*Sarva Dharmān Parityajya, Māmekam Śaraṇa Braja*" etc. The literal meanings of these *shlokas* is quite transparent - indicating total surrender to God..... But, what does that mean in reality? How can one accomplish that in normal life, where one has to fulfill the familial and social responsibilities too? Adept guidance of practical use on such natural questions is also available in this volume....

The grand war of *Mahābhārata* is indeed the war of the evil tendencies and the divine instincts of our own selves..... The dilemma and difficulties faced by Arjuna also happen to be those of our own minds. The perfect preaching of *Gītā* by Lord Krishna to

Arjuna during *Mahābhārata* - is the voice of the eternal core of our souls. It guides us to refine our convictions and faiths and illuminates our minds by a divine glow to culminate our character and virtues in ideal direction and help us live a blissful life like a true *yogi*.

Our extrovert attitude, ignorance and stresses of life do not let our minds listen to the voice of the soul. The force of our inner voice has also become meek because of the pressure of our mistakes and vices of thoughts.... The present volume of the vangmaya series has brought this voice endowed with a unique force to penetrate our minds and hearts through the pen of someone who had lived every moment of his life creatively in perfect consonance with the divine philosophy of *Gītā*.



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 31, An Introduction

Rest assured that the debt that I owe to my parijans will be repaid. I do not desire either Heaven or liberation. I ardently pray to God that I may be again put through the whole cycle of 84-lakh life-forms as a blade of grass, a blooming flower, a tree, a sheep, a cow etc., so that I am able to amply discharge the debts I owe to my parijans, who have showered on me their gifts of love, affection, reverence, faith, goodwill and understanding. Sometimes, I wish I become a heavy-laden cloud and could repay each drop of these gifts with showerful of rain. I do not know whether, and if so how far, these ardent aspirations of mine will be fulfilled. I can only assure my parijans that their love will never be forgotten.

USEFUL LESSONS FROM RAMAYANA

(*Rāmāyaṇa Kī Pragatiśīla Preraṇāyen*)

This volume is an extension of the volume no. 30 of the Vangmaya series. The latter presents selected excerpts from the "Ram Charita Manas" of Goswami Tulasidas with detailed explanations on the topics of relevance to the awakening and rise at the personal, familial and social levels as part of the "*vichār krānti*" programme of the *Yug Nirmāṇ* mission established by Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya. This programme aims at the refinement and righteous orientation of people's thinking, value system and sentimental makeup to architect a new environment of bright and blissful life for everyone.....

Ramayana is the heart of the body of the Indian scriptures on the lives and works of divine incarnations. Apart from the original Sanskrit version of the Ramayana by Maharshi Valmiki and the most popular "Ram Charita Manasa" by Goswami Tulasidas, many other versions and commentaries on this holy scripture - describing the life of the 10th divine incarnation of God Vishnu, have been produced by several scholars of the ancient and modern times. Several saints have devoted their lives in propagating the teachings of Ramayana through "*Rāma Kathā*" (discourses). Reading the "Ram Charita Manas" as it is - is also quite common part of the religious activities of an average Indian....

However, there also have been misinterpretations of the rhetoric representation in the *chaupāis* (metre or verse of four lines) of the "Ram Charita Manasa" at some places, which has brought criticism from those who have not read this scripture thoroughly. A little careful look makes it clear that at many places the figurative descriptions or rhetoric reference of one *chaupāi* are explained in the other, etc.... In fact every character of Ramayana, every incident presented in it, teaches us what is righteous and what is not in the gamut of activities associated with human life.

The present volume cites rare combinations of important excerpts from the Valmikiya Ramayana and the Tulasi Ramayana. Introduction of the successive sections (*kāndas*) of Ramayana is presented in chapter 1 of this volume along with original texts and meanings with brief explanations. Detailed implications and interpretations in terms of relevance and use in the present circumstances of the world are given in the remaining chapters.

The *Bāla Kāṇḍa* and *Ayodhya Kāṇḍa* highlight the fundamental principles of happy family life.... Divinely pure souls are born only to deserving parents whose life is pious and devoted to altruist service under ascetic disciplines..... The kingdom of Ayodhya was a symbol of heavenly conditions that prevailed in India during those days..... The serenity and sincerity of every citizen had contributed as much to the materialization of this as that of the king and the royal family.

The *Aranya Kāṇḍa* describes how Lord Ram and his brother Lakshaman ruined the devil giants during the period of exile in the forests and saved the saints and sages and protected the very basis of religious system and the glory of humanity. It teaches us how the endurance, stability, vision, vigor, prudence and determination can help accomplish what in normal course would be considered impossible for human-endeavors.

How the collective endeavors of the most ordinary and helpless people could also overcome the mighty terrors, evil influences and adversities - is taught in the *Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa* and *Lankā Kāṇḍa* of the Ramayana. The dedicated and organized efforts of the apes and monkeys who joined hands with Lord Ram in the historical battle between him and the Giant Ravana brought immortal glory to them as contributors to the eternal victory of divinity over the devil tendencies.

The *Sunder Kāṇḍa* is devoted to the immortal glory of Hanuman whose thought itself inspires immense courage and inner strength.

This divine character of Ramayana has been the ever eminent symbol of the highest realms of intellect, sagacity, valor, devotion and selfless sacrifice for righteous goals and ideals.....

The resurrection of *Rāma Rājya* after the grand war of Lanka, the sacrifices of King Ram for the people of Ayodhya and poetic description of his divine rule - constitute the *Uttara Kāṇḍa*. This last portion of Ramayana depicts the necessity and importance of creative endeavors for reconstruction and reestablishment of righteous environment for progressive and peaceful life at global level after the devastation of evil tendencies, animosity and adverse influences of audacious might.....

The definitions and practicalities of the philosophies of divine brotherhood and ideal marriage institution become alive in the detailed analysis of the "*chaupāis*" of Ramayana which focus at the lives of the four brothers - Ram, Lakshman, Bharat and Shartughn and their respective wives. This volume will make it clear why there is no exaggeration in the assertion that - " People's faith and intimacy with the holy Ramayana has contributed a lot in sustaining the prestige, serenity and credibility of the marriage institution and the glory of family system in India despite all diversities and cultural disturbances.... "

The divine images of Ram and Sita exist in the inner cores of the minds of most Indians as inspiring source of guidance on righteous conduct. Their characters in Ramayana are those of ideal man and woman whose memories educe our intrinsic faith in the dignity of being born as humans..... Reading about their virtuous lives inspires our conscience to refine and elevate our own selves..... The renouncement, surrender and sacrifices made by Bharat and Lakshman for noble causes remain unparalleled in human history and stand as milestones along the path of the evolution of humanity.....

The present volume is a comprehensive compilation of the best that could be taught and learnt - for practical implementation in today's

society, from the ever grand treatise of Ramayana..... It would also serve the purpose of a complete text for those interested in deliberating *Rāma Kathā*.

The author, Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya, had found the teaching based on Ramayana as the best mode for moral education and social reform of the large number of illiterate and backward people living in the villages of India. He had advocated that the preaching of Ramayana is as important for ideal social development as the disciplined practices of *Gāyatrī Mantra*, *Yagya* and *yoga* for spiritual illumination and divine culmination of human life. The concerning two volumes (the present and the volume no. 30) of the Vangmaya series illustrate this view point with good effect.

The readers would gain the joy and inspirations of "*Rāma Kathā*" in this volume, eloquently penned by Acharya Sharma who had creatively adopted the ideals of Ramayana in his own life and extracted the nectar of the lessons from "Ram Charita Manasa" for the moral enlightenment, guidance and welfare of people across the globe.....



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. No. 32, An Introduction

If one could delve deep into my inner being, encased in this physical frame, he will find nothing but a gushing fount of limitless love and compassion for all creation. I have relished only one flavour that of Love. I have amassed only one treasure that of inexhaustible Love. I see and feel the same Spirit that dwells in me, indwelling all. However, I find myself spiritually related in a very special bond of kinship with those who have been living and working with me for the fulfilment of the Divine Mission bequeathed to me by my Gurudev.

THE SIXTEEN SACRAMENTS

(*Śodaṣa Samskāra Vivechana*)

The ancient Indian *rishis* were scientists of spirituality, consciousness and Nature. Their acumen into the deepest depth of human mind had enabled them to develop a perfect science of systematic refinement and escalation of intrinsic faith and inherent tendencies of human self.... They had developed the system of *shodash samskāras* sixteen sacraments in this regard for the benefit of the masses. These sixteen sacraments are methods of conditioning /training or specific experiments of purification of accumulated instincts and inculcation of virtuous tendencies, performed during specific transitional phases of life. The combination of powerful mantras and procedures of *Yagya* associated with each of these rituals had resulted from long-term dedicated research conducted by the *rishis*. This system of *shodash samskāras* was devised to affect the subtle levels of human consciousness and hence had an impact on the psychology, endocrine system and genetic machinery too. The *shodash samskāras* are integral part of the Indian culture and philosophy of life.

The high ideals of humanity were evolved and glorified in the ancient Indian society where the system of *shodash samskāras* was implemented and followed in its original form. This had helped maintain the mode of life in total harmony with nature and healthy development of personality of every individual..... Prosperity had blossomed in all walks of life because of the original talents and righteous deeds of the people.... However, in the later years, as the edifice of divine culture was shaken along with the large scale devastation of ancient civilization during the disastrous war of *Mahābhārata*, the global influence of this original system was waned and got practically lost in the materialistic comfort oriented dormant phase of Indian history in the medieval era.

The modern age saw a deformed 'short-cut' version of the *shodash samskāras* propagated and performed by the so-called Hindu 'priests' professionally in the name of religious rituals. Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya a sagacious spiritual scholar, devoted saint and social reformer had pioneered revival of the original tradition of *shodash samskāras* along with elucidation of different facets of Indian philosophy in scientific light.

Considering the mode of living, attitude towards life and spiritual level of an average person in today's society, Acharya Sharma had found that six out of the sixteen (*shodash*) *samskāras* cannot be performed in present circumstances. As would be expected from a foresighted inventor, he, rather than sticking to rigid traditions, modified the list of *shodash samskāras* to serve the basic purpose effectively in modern conditions. He added four new methods and disciplines to this system which are most relevant in the modern age and which are to be performed regularly throughout the span of one's life. These new *samskāras* are *janma-diwasa*, *vivāha-diwasa*, *dīkshā* and *shikhā*. The ten *samskāras* of the ancient system which were retained by him with their original teachings are *punsavana*, *nāmakaran*, *annaprāshana*, *mundana*, *vidyārambha*, *yagyopavīta*, *vivāha*, *vānaprastha*, *antyeshti* and *shrāddha-tarpana*. He had analyzed the scientific foundation and effects of each of them in detail and had explained them in simple language for educating the masses.

The *punsavan samskāra* of an individual is performed when he or she is in the form of a foetus three months old in the mother's womb. Specific herbal preparations energized in the sacrificial fire of *Yagya* are given to the mother to reach the foetus. This special 'treatment' performed with chanting of *mantras* during a *Yagya* strengthens healthy development of the gross (physical), subtle (mental) and astral (conscious) body of the child.... The team of scientists at Brahmvarchas research centre established by Acharya Sharma at Shantikunj, Haridwar in India has conducted research experiments

in its *yagyopathy*, haemetology, biochemistry and psychometry laboratories on the effects of different *sanskāras*.

The experiments on the *punsavan samskāra* have revealed startling results: the mothers, who were prone to abortion or whose earlier issues were subjected to metabolic system's deficiencies or to some genetic disorders since birth, had delivered healthy babies after this *samskāra*. Further findings indicate that the *charū* or *purodashu* (herbal preparation) processed under the vitally charged vapors of *Yagya* would affect the cellular and molecular systems too.

The *nāmakarana samskāra* (naming ceremony) and the *annaprāshan*, *mundana* and *vidyārambha samskāra* are performed successively after the birth of the child from the age of few days till 3 to 6 years. Each of these is performed with a *Gāyatrī Yagya* and specific *mantras* are chanted during the sacrifices of specific herbal preparations in the sacred fire of *Yagya*. The vibrations of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* purify the child's subtle and astral bodies and effects of this and the other *mantras* and the inhalation of the vapors of the sublimated herbs soothingly condition his brain and body too. This is an excellent pre-school training procedure established by the *rishis* for cultivation of ideal tendencies in the children.

The *annaprāshan samskāra* is performed for healthy growth and strength of the body; *mundana* is aimed at harmonious titillation of the nerves and proper development of the brain. The *vidyārambha samskāra* is indeed the righteous initiation of knowledge.... School and college teaching may make a child 'learned' but true knowledge comes through the awakening and refinement of the sentimental core, righteous orientation of thoughts and appraisal and aspiration of the divine purpose of life attainment of *vidyā* meets these objectives in a natural way.

The Indian sages of yore and many great personalities of the modern times had, without having any formal education, generated vast

amounts of trenchant knowledge, grasping and studying which had remained a symbol of honor for the erudite scholars of the later ages..... Pt. Shriram Sharma had himself written on almost all aspects of human life. His eminence and depth of knowledge is perfect like that of an absolute expert in the associated topics or disciplines. Though he had not undergone any formal training or education in a school, his comprehensive *vidyā* has made him an eminent writer and revered thinker of the present times.

The *dīkshā samskāra* is coupled with initiation of creative use of *vidyā* by afflatus and under auspicious guidance of a spiritually elevated master. This *samskāra* is essential for the awakening of intrinsic faith and devotion which are necessary for spiritual refinement and experiments with *mantras*.

The *yagyopavīta samskāra* (thread ceremony) performed before teenage indeed gives 'new birth' to a person. Although each one of us is born as human being, but that is true only biologically or in terms of the gross body. The development of personality coherent with the dignity of humanness begins only after one adopts certain moral values and disciplines of humanity and enlightens his mind and inner self for progressive march towards ideal goals in life.... The *yagyopavīta samskāra* is performed to channelize this development. The initiation of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* and *sādhanā* experiments of spiritual development is associated with this *samskāra*.

Acharya Sharma had eliminated all misconceptions and illusions associated with *yagyopavīta* and *Gāyatrī*. He had revived the methods of performing this *samskāra* without elaborate rituals and ceremonies. He propagated the universalities of *yagyopavīta* and *Gāyatrī* and made their knowledge available and attainable for all humans without any discrimination of sex, caste, religion, creed or social status..... He also invoked the discipline of maintaining *shikhā* (hair-knot) on head along with wearing of *yagyopavīta* (sacred thread) both of which stand as symbols of adoption of divine

principles of Indian Philosophy.

On the scientific front, wearing *yagyopavīta* has excellent association with psychological evolution. This *shikhā* is placed at a point which is very important for positive impact of *yoga* and meditation; it lies at a special junction of many nerves which are linked with intellectual processing and memory registration in the brain and is found to have controlling effect on harmonious functioning of the endocrine system.

The *vivāha samskāra* is not only a social function or religious celebration of marriage; rather, it aims at spiritual confluence of the souls of the individuals who are getting married. The fire in a furnace helps welding of two metal pieces. The subtle effects of the sacrificial fire of *Yagya* performed during *vivāha samskāra* with collective chanting of special mantras serves the purpose of joining the lives of the two individuals. The piety and disciplines associated with ideal marriage institution are effectively initiated via this *sanskāra*. Marriages performed with this *sanskāra* stand on the strong foundation of faith and religious inspirations associated with the former and are therefore never broken or subject to untoward tensions.

If what the couple pledges during the *vivāha sanskāra* is sincerely followed by the husband and the wife, the two would rise together and multiply each other's capabilities and virtues several times and also cooperatively contribute like 'one and one eleven' to the development of the society. Today, when 'marriage' for many people has become a license for sexual pleasure..., a contract for sharing each other's support and resources..., or a source for collecting dowry and exploiting the 'weaker' gender, the campaign of ideal marriages performed without any dowry and without gorgeous celebrations, and revival of *vivāha sanskāra* by the mission of Acharya Sharma is a great social service indeed.

The *janma-diwās* and *vivāha-diwās samskāras* as propagated by Acharya Sharma correspond to ideal celebration of the birthday and

wedding anniversary. Rather than spending time and money in expensive parties and mindless activities in the name of 'fun and entertainment', one should consider these days as most auspicious occasions and look at them as milestones of the journey of life. Thorough review of the achievements and failures, in terms of one's own deeds and level of refinement of personality, *vis-a-vis* what was resolved for the past year should be given due attention and time on these days. Feasible resolution for improvement and greater progress should be pledged for the next year while performing these *samskāras* with *dīpa Yagya*.

Acharya Sharma preached what he sincerely adopted and implemented in his own life too. He had set live example of how a married couple can, along with happily bearing the responsibilities of the family, be dedicated to altruist service of the society and the world at large.... He brought into light the true meaning of *vānaprastha* after completion of the phase of duties towards the dependents in the family, the later phase of life should be spent for selfless service of others, for the upliftment and welfare of the deprived and the backward ones..... He inspired thousands of people towards *vānaprastha* and enabled them live a more creative and meaningful life for the ideal cause of resurrection of divine culture.....

The *antyeshti samskāra* is performed during the funeral of the body after death. This is a great *Yagya* in which Nature's invaluable gift the gross body, is sacrificed back to the nature in original forms of its basic constituents.... The *shrāddha-tarpana samskāra* is performed for the peace of the departed souls. It is also a ritual for expressing the sentiments of affection and paying homage to the ancestors and to the great souls of people who had worked for others' welfare with compassion and sincerity. This *samskāra* is supposed to set the subtle linkage between our sentiments and the higher domains of consciousness... and bestows the blessings of kind souls....

The scientific, psychological and spiritual implications of all the above mentioned *samskāras* were also reviewed by Acharya

Sharma.... These are taught by his disciples during the training programs (at Shantikunj, Hardwar) on how to conduct the *Yagya* procedures and the rituals associated with the *shodash sanskāras*. The present volume gives substantial information on each aspect of these *sanskāras*. The topics covered here also include the original texts from the scriptures, methods and materials for herbal preparations and *Yagya* procedures for different *sanskāras*, reports on scientific experiments and directions for future research and social impact....., etc.

The system of *shodash sanaskāras* as presented and used in practice by the author offers the key to ideal development of the personality and progress of the successive generation of the human society. Revival of this integral component of the ancient Indian culture promises resurrection of the divine era in the years to come in the new millenium..... This volume will then be regarded as a monument of "eternal secrets of glorious ascent and ultimate evolution of life and culture.....".

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 33, An Introduction

Love, Love, Love is my Mantra. Soul-kinship, affection, loving kindness and unshakable faith constitute my 'upasana'. In future, I will not only share my insights and thoughts with parijans, but will shower my deep, heart-moving affection on them. May be, they will then feel a sense of sublime joy and rapture within themselves.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS OF INDIAN CULTURE

(*Bhāratīya Sanskrati Ke Ādhārabhūta Tatva*)

The Indian culture is described as "*Sā Prathamā Sanskrati Vishvavārā*" - the first and the supreme culture in the world. It is honored as a divine culture. Today, when the country is undergoing haywire transformations on cultural front and facing cultural diversion and adulteration - the influence of occidental civilization and commercialization has over shadowed the way of life of even those who vaunt for the great cultural heritage of India...., it has become more important to review the original form and expansion of the Indian culture, analyze its foundational principles in scientific light and present in detail its different aspects which deal with the day to day life of people and are useful for the righteous progress of the world.....

The global expansion of ancient Indian culture and its contributions to human civilization and evolution of intellect are discussed in the next volume of this series. The present volume focuses at the basic philosophy, original structure, value system, traditions and modes of practices of *upāsana* associated with psychological and spiritual refinement. Social aspects and relevance of this culture in the modern circumstances is also highlighted in these two volumes. Both the volumes together make comprehensive treatise on the Indian Culture.

This volume describes in detail, the divine elements of the Indian cultural values and its linkage with human psychology and spirituality. The philosophical and scientific foundation of this culture set the basis of culmination of human life and ultimate evolution of the conscious faculties of human self..... It encompasses all possibilities of global welfare and healthy progress of the entire world - of all beings and everything existing on this earth. The central theme behind the development of Indian Culture as shaped by the

revered *rishis* was - "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*", treating the entire world as our own family - reflecting universality of serene love, altruism, sharing of responsibilities and caring for all beings.....

The central theme of Indian cultural development has evolved from the Indian philosophy of continuity of life and realization of the soul as a manifestation of the divine impulse of *Brahm* -- the eternal, omnipresent Consciousness Force. Successive refinement of human consciousness by elimination of animal instincts and evil tendencies of the mind and enlightenment of its inner cores was therefore given maximum importance by the *rishis*. The system of *shodash samskāras* was devised by them for this purpose.

The *shodash samskāras*, performed at different stages of human life, aim at continuous refinement and escalation of the individual self. The methods of performing these *samskāras* and adoption of associated disciplines in personal and social life constitute an important component of Indian cultural system. Comprehensive description of the philosophy, scientific basis, methods and positive effects - especially in the present state of the world, of the *shodash samskāras* is given in the previous volume (no. 33) of this series. The present volume would focus them in contextual reference to the eternal conjunction of Indian cultural philosophy with human life.

It is a culture of this type which produces true saints, altruist social reformers, martyrs, great personalities, intellectuals, scientists and spiritual masters of the kinds of the *rishis*, who, like angels, bestow the world with divine grace through their noble deeds and virtuous characters..... The purity of intrinsic faith and illumination of inner sentiments are regarded most important for the realization of divinity indwelling in the inner self. The methods of *upāsana* prescribed under the Indian cultural principles lend excellent support in this direction. The source of aspirations and happiness and the ultimate core of sentiments - the inner self too gets refined and charged by the devotional practices of *upāsana* and it experiences absolute peace and blissfulness.

The principles pertaining to - ascetic control of mental tendencies and adoption of honesty, generosity, mutual trust, healthy cooperation, morality, integrity of character and deeds, altruist service, sincere fulfilment of moral and social responsibilities towards the family, society, nation and the world, courageous attitude and endeavors to fight against injustice, immorality, exploitation, superstition, communalism, castism and similar tendencies and effects in the personal and social domains, constructive efforts for healthy maintenance of ecosystem and purification of the environment of life, etc - are fundamental to the creative practices propagated under the banner of Indian Culture.

How the above mentioned 'virtual idealism' could be naturally assimilated in the activities and behavioral transactions of daily life? This has been the focus of what constitutes the 'traditions' of the Indian culture. In the present volume, Acharya Sharma has eloquently guided the practicalities of the above disciplines and traditions. He has also described the scientifically viable methods of suitable conditioning of mind for this purpose.

The word "culture" is a literal translation of the word "*sanskрати*" in Sanskrit language. According to Sanskrit grammar, the word "*sanskрати*" means - that action, method or system which has (or which pertains to) virtuous tendencies.... Restraining of the agile mind and cultivation of virtuous tendencies in it is emphasized in the *Bhārtīya Sanskrati* (Indian Culture) because mind is the sole source of orientation of one's attitude, deeds and character. The subtle vibrations of consciousness are expressed in the intellect, thoughts and sentiments via the medium of the four inner layers of mind - namely, *mana*, *buddhi*, *chitta* and *ahamkāra*.

Because of its sound footing on the in-depth knowledge of human psychology and science of spirituality, the Indian philosophy adequately deals with unlimited expansion of different aspects of human life - including those at the most personal to those at the global levels..... Because, Nature and every form of existence has also been treated here as a manifestation of *Brahm*; the material existence of the world and the Nature, functions and activities of the gross

body too fall within the consideration of this philosophy. The original structure and relevance of the Indian Culture is therefore regarded as universal at all times....

The logic behind the traditions of - multiple manifestations of God, worshiping of idols, wearing sacred thread (*yagyopavīt*), keeping hair knot (*shikhā*), putting a *tilaka* (sacred mark on the forehead), using a rosary while chanting *mantras*, etc, is discussed in the present volume perspicuously and with the information on the purpose and educational and social implications of - celebrating different festivals, fasting, pilgrimages, performing the rituals of *shrāddha - tarpana* for the dead members of the family, etc.

It is possible only for the trenchant intellect of a spiritual saint and eminent scholar like Acharya Sharma, to present the vast expansion of the principles and practices of Indian Culture so precisely and completely in a compact volume. Most importantly, the scientific basis and nature of above practices and other components of Indian cultural system are also deciphered here to enable the reader distinguish between superstitions and devotion and between the deformed traditions and the original nature of the Indian Culture...; and help him follow the righteous and scientifically justified mode of life accordingly.

The systems of *varṇa* and *āshram* prescribed by the *rishis* are often subjected to the criticism of rational thinkers and intellectuals of the modern age. This is because, the popular interpretations and the information available on these aspects of Indian culture indicates them as nurturing castism, social discrimination, evasion from responsibilities, etc.... Acharya Sharma has paid special attention to these important issues. He has cited excerpts from the original scriptures and given authentic references and explanation of what is exactly meant by the terms *Brāhmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* and *Shūdra* described as the four *varnas*. The fundamentalists, the orthodox scholars and the advocates of castism will not find any reasonable counter-argument to reject his unbiased interpretations and adept analysis.

Acharya Sharma has clearly pointed out that the classification of the *varnas* has no connection with one's birth, creed, caste, religion or social status. He has given adept guidance together with live examples from the ancient as well as the modern history of the world to elucidate - "How the *varnas* are associated with one's attitude, character and deeds?", "How anyone can become a true Brahmin?" ..., etc.

How the division of average span of life in different *āshramas* can be modified to have creative implications in the modern way of life - has been impressively guided by the author. After reading his authentic and reasonable interpretations of the terms *vānprastha* and *sanyāsa*, it will become clear to the readers that these *āshramas* have nothing to do with escaping from the world or evasion of social responsibilities. On the contrary, these imply expansion of the interests and efforts beyond the peripheries of selfish attachments to the wider domains of noble service and welfare; the creative use of one's knowledge, experience, talents and resources is emphasized during these later phases of life.

After going through the deliberations of Acharya Sharma, one would also realize the scientific basis of natural maintenance of bodily, mental and spiritual health and excellent development of personality by proper observance of *Brahmacharya Āshrama*. The life and works of the author and his wife Smt. Bhagawati Devi Sharma illustrate that *Grahashta Āshrama* is the best phase of life for ascetic training, testing self-restraint, endurance, hard work along with happy sharing of sentiments and responsibilities in married life and contributing towards progressive elevation of the family and the society. Who else could then give a better guidance on righteous traversal through this phase of life where one gets a rare opportunity of enjoying serene love and cooperation of the life partner, fulfilment of worldly duties and simultaneously refining and escalating the personality at the sentimental and spiritual levels as well.

Gurū - spiritual mentor, *Gāyatrī* - the *Gāyatrī Mantra*, origin of all Vedas, *Gangā* - the Ganges, *Gau* (cow) and the holy scripture *Gītā*, are the five fundamental elements which lie at the core of the development and practices of the Indian culture. It is through these roots that the stout tree of divine Indian culture had blossomed in the Vedic times and has maintained its 'enliven spring' Age after Age in spite of vicissitudinous tides in people's faith, convictions, cultural values and modes of living..... Adoption of the divine cultural principles becomes possible in every dimension of life with the support of *Gurū*, *Gāyatrī*, *Gītā*, *Gau* and *Gangā* at the spiritual, philosophical and worldly levels. Focused discussions on these aspects in prudent light - keeping in mind the intimate relationship of the above elements with human life, and the description of the enormous boons bestowed by them on the world - are other significant features of this volume.

This volume also gives information on the constructive efforts inspired by the author for the revival of the divine culture of the Vedic Age... The programs of his mission for this purpose are being implemented within and outside India by the members of Gayatri Pariwar under the auspices of Shantikunj, Hardwar. This volume together with the volume nos. 33 and 35 would serve as an encyclopedia of detailed knowledge and a precious treatise for the researchers of Indian Culture. It should be read by those who care to know why the Indian culture was attributed such a great honor and also those who are looking for viable solutions for happy survival and glorious progress of humanity for ever....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 34, An Introduction

CONTRIBUTIONS OF INDIA TO THE WORLD : COMPENDIOUS REVIEW

(*Samasta Viśwa Ko Bhārata Ke Ajastra Anudāna*)

Once upon a time India was described as a land of heavenly life...; every man and woman who lived here was equivalent to divine beings. The mention of 33 billion manifestations of Gods in the Indian scriptures refers to these inhabitants of ancient India. It is a country of golden heritage and glorious past. All branches of knowledge and civilization are said to have emanated from the Indian Philosophy and Culture which were disseminated across the globe through the dedicated altruist endeavors of the *rishis*. India was supposed to be the eminent guide of the entire world in pre and post vedic age. The scientific and socio-economic development here was so advanced those days that India was often referred as a "Dimond Bird" - a symbol of immense prosperity. The periphery of the Indian culture was so vast that practically the whole world was lying in its domain of influence until several thousands years ago.....

A large number of scholars and researchers of world-history, oriental culture and intellectual evolution have elucidated different aspects of ancient India from time to time... Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya had reviewed the foundation and expansion of the culture and civilization of India and had prepared a comprehensive research document on contributions of India to the entire world. The authentic information compiled by him in 1972-73 during a voyage overseas is like a concise encyclopedia which is presented in this volume along with some of his other writings on the topic....

The fundamental elements, principles and practices of the divine Indian culture are presented in the volume nos. 33 and 34 of the Vangmaya series. The present volume gives details with evidential information and references on the global expansion and historical contributions of this most ancient culture to the civilization and cultural development of the rest of the world. While talking about the

grand glorious past of this orgulous culture, one often wonders - why then a country like India lost its divine values and is virtually facing a melange of cultural pollution and rigid traditions coupled with all round decline of moral tendencies?

This volume does throw light on the past two thousands odd years of cultural darkness and crises of value system. It decipheres the course of events in the distant past history which led to practical devastation of the edifice of the divine culture followed by rapid decline in the moral values and propagation of misconceptions and misinterpretations of the philosophy, religion and the science of spirituality.

Study and evaluation of culture as a whole cannot be completed without taking into account the psychological makeup of the concerned societies. Attitudes, convictions and faiths of people play a crucial role in shaping of cultural developments. The author has also paid due attention to these aspects.

Because religion deals with intrinsic faith and deeper sentiments of a person, Acharya Sharma regards revival of human-religion in the light of wisdom as the best mode of resurrection of divine cultural values. His trenchant knowledge, authenticity, non-prejudiced progressive attitude and rational thinking with scientific delineation and open-mindedness are transparent in his writings on eternal necessity and impact of religion in human life..... He points out how the deviation of religious system from its ideal path leads to cultural devolution and damage.... He also analyzes the state and nature of religion in ancient India in this context.

The author describes the discerning nature and universality of the religious principles emerged from the vedas and shows how the associated establishment of cultural system is also scientific and useful for the righteous progress of life in the modern age.... Details on the fundamental elements, disciplines and different methods of practical implementation of the former in human life are given in volume nos. 33 and 34. Scientific validity - including information on research in modern laboratories, of these practices is also discussed

in the above volumes.

The blind followers of any culture as well as those who are charmed by the occidental culture because of the technologically advanced civilization and public awareness in the west..., should read these volumes thoroughly to evaluate what is best and most suitable for healthy survival with long lasting peace, happiness and consistent progress of the individuals and the world as a whole in present circumstances.

The present volume sketches history of cultural civilization with respect to the enormous contributions of India to the rest of the world. Be that religion, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, archeology, sociology, art, architecture, science, technology or any other horizon of civilization and culture, the seers and sages of India had generously bestowed their knowledge, guidance and creative help to the rest of the world. In fact many of them had gone to remote corners of the earth to elevate the status of life and culture there... In this effort, many of them had eventually resided in the foreign lands for ever...

Authentic proofs and references available in the above regard are cited in this volume with respect to India's contributions in different countries ranging from - North America (USA), Latin America, Mexico, Germany, Egypt....etc to South Africa..., Kampuchia, Laos, China, Japan, Russia and Australia... Similar details are cited here for small countries like Nepal, Bhutan, Mauritius, Indonesia, Fiji, Korea, Mongolia, Burma, etc, where the influence of Indian Culture is quite evident even today.

The present volume also gives information on some major cultural organizations of the people of Indian origin living abroad. It describes the mode of living of these people some of whom have been away from their roots since several generations. The author has vividly depicted the warm sentiments of these people for the country of their origin. Apart from several non resident Indians, some foreigners who have visited and resided in India have also played the role of a 'bridge' in linking the oriental and western cultures in more

than one respect. Interesting information and events of history are cited here along with constructive suggestions on improving this linkage in a creative way and reviving the propagation of ideal cultural values....

The author describes the Indians living abroad who have warm respect and feelings for their *alma matre* as 'cultural ambassadors' and reminds them of their distinct responsibilities in this connection. Ages ago, the seeds and saplings of the Indian Culture were carried over by their ancestors to different parts of the world. History is waiting to see the tree of such efforts blossom again....

Once again, the revival of the glorious era of Indian cultural values and philosophy of life would be seen across the globe through the creative endeavors of those who have realized the divine origin and worth of the Indian Culture - including ancient religion, science and philosophy. This volume will boost their morals and offer substantial guidance on how to proceed in this direction.

Often people tend to confine the domain of culture to music, dance, art and literature. This volume together with volume nos. 33 and 34 would be an eye-opener for them too. They would get a glimpse of the unbounded gamut of culture..... and see that it virtually encompasses every dimension of human life including the subtle reflections of liberal thinking, inner sentiments and beliefs. The present volume will of special use to those engaged in research in the history of cultural civilization. References given here on archeological monuments would be of interest to the researchers in the associated fields.

It is hoped that after reading this volume, some members of the scientific community would also come forward to study the ancient Indian scriptures to rediscover the knowledge of the absolute science enfolded there and use it for the creative welfare of all living beings as was accomplished by the *rishis* - the Indian scientists of yore. The younger generation should also see the silver line of hope inspired here and get motivated to find a definite way to come out of the smog of confusion, tension and depression and come forward to

change the adverse circumstances prevailing in the world today.

Today when the very survival of the human race appears to be facing the unprecedented risk of extinction, the danger of suicidal end of the 'advanced' civilization cannot be avoided without empowering the force of humanity. Refinement of the value system and purification of the external and internal environment of life have therefore become necessary..... The Indian cultural system has all elements required for the sustenance of progressive life and rise and culmination of human values up to divine heights. Its resurrection therefore appears to be the best option in the current scenario. Great visionaries see this as a certainty.... This volume promises substantial contribution towards materialization of this vision into a feasible reality.....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 35, An Introduction

Leaving apart vicious persons who apply their intellect in acts like theft, dacoity, cheating etc. persons full of noble emotions and sentiments can do a lot in changing the era by their heroic efforts, courage and industriousness. Swami Dayananda, Sharddhananda, Ramteerth etc. were capable of changing the course of life of innumerable persons.

Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

MASS EDUCATION FROM RELIGIOUS PLATFORM

(Dharma Chakra Pravartan Evam Lokamānas Kā Śikṣaṇa)

Religion has an intimate relationship with human sentiments and hence has prominent impact on the course of life.... It deals with intrinsic faith, inner aspirations, deep psychology, philosophical intuitions and realizations in the inner world of consciousness. The basic purpose of religion is arousal of people's faith in divine values and inculcation of the divine sentiments existing in the deepest core of their minds and hearts....

Religion, in principle, may be defined as an ensemble of harmonious combination of spirituality, ethics and metaphysics of collective consciousness. Religion is not a set of rigid principles or dogmatic doctrines. Rather, it is a continuous flow of the nectar of ethical values and spiritual qualities, adoption of which helps keep alive the linkage of individual consciousness with the omnipresent supreme consciousness and Nature. Any religious system or school of religious philosophy which emanates from the springs of this natural flow must be free from the bonds of rigid traditions, superstitions, prejudiced principles and narrow outlooks....

Liberal thinking coupled with the eternal sentiments of love, compassion and service - is essential for sustenance of the roots of religion in any system. Such a system not only supports the coexistence and welfare of all living beings, it also possesses the potential to guide and evolve the future development of the society, nation and the world as a whole....

Today, when the 'crisis of faith' and the 'epidemic' of declining moral values have emerged from all directions of life, the need for the refinement and revival of originality of religion has become all the more necessary. Realizing this and envisaging the impact of religion in the human society, Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya had endeavored both - refinement of the religious system and enlightenment of masses through this medium. His efforts in this regard remind one of

the *vedic* era when the eminent scholars (the *rishis*) of yore had guided absolute education in the schools of life and Nature through the system of global religion.

This volume presents a sketch of Acharya Sharma's thorough reviews of the different disciplines and modes of practices as taught by the *rishis* vis-à-vis their status and relevance in today's society. His deliberations include wide ranging topics covering the purpose and original forms of the practices of pilgrimage, the festivals and fasts, the grand religious congregations like *Kumbha*, etc. Here, Acharya Sharma has also offered adept guidance on how these 'customs and traditions' could be modified and made useful for the purpose of progressive management, refinement, education and elevation on the personal and social fronts.

The *Sādhus* and *Brāhmins* (sages and saintly scholars) of the ancient Indian society used to constantly tour around different parts of the country for the noble purpose of social welfare and development via educating the people through the multi-disciplinary system of religion. Acharya Sharma has highlighted the importance of altruist service of this kind and emphasized the need of revival of this tradition. He considers this service as an excellent type of *sanyāsa* (literally meaning renunciation of worldly attachments for holy purposes) that could be easily adopted by people who have fulfilled their responsibilities towards their dependents. He advises all those in the category or age-group of "grand parents" to come out of the thraldoms of excessive attachment with their grand children and also pay attention to the other needy children and people whose status of life might be improved with the help of their knowledge and experience....

Elimination of blind faith and superstition from the minds of the so called 'religious' people is itself a great social and religious service which the scientifically educated and liberal minded people could easily offer.... Prudent decipheration of the original purpose and forms of religious teachings is also essential for meaningful value-education from the platform of religion.

Acharya Sharma's call for people's participation in the above kind of noble mission was heard by many awakened souls and his own life had motivated many of the educated and talented people from different walks of society to join hands with him in this important task initiated by him some times in the early 1940s. The number of such dedicated members of his "Gayatri Pariwar" mission has been increasing constantly since then. These disciples of Acharya Sharma have indeed become the *Purohits* (guiding lights for the welfare and progress of the society) who have contributed towards the revival of the ideal traditions of the *Sādhus* and *Brāhmins*.

It was for the first time in the post medieval era that the teachings of *Yagya* and *Gāyatrī* - the foundational elements of the Indian Philosophy and Religion - were reviewed in scientific light. It was Acharya Sharma's original thinking and vision that made it possible. The "*purohits*" trained by him perform *GāyatrīYagya* and *Shodash Samskāras* (c.f. vols. 25 and 33 of the vangmaya series) in ideal manner free of cost and without imposing any restrictions of creed, caste, community, gender or social status for participation of the masses in these religious programmes. Through these programmes they also teach the philosophy of ideal life and the art of refinement and escalation of physical, mental and spiritual potentials and talents.

The creative programmes of mass education aimed at intensive training for the refinement and development of personality, progressive management of family and upliftment of the social system can be successfully implemented from the platform of a comprehensive religious system. Because, true religion, by its very nature has the power to reach and enlighten the inner domains of mind with divine glow and thereby awaken one's inner strength and potentials in the righteous direction....

Other modes of teaching may serve the purpose of cultivation and development of specialized skills or talents and expansion of knowledge in the external domains of life. But, none can reach the inner world of individual self. Therefore such modes cannot exert the kind of simultaneous impact in all dimensions of life which religion

can. No system of law, education or externally imposed disciplines can awaken one's conscience and mold his convictions, attitudes and mode of life unless an urge of this is educed from his own inner self. Religion certainly, if propogated and inculcated in its pure divine form can help ideal culmination of mankind.

Acharya Sharma writes -"In the ancient times, the *Sādhus* and *Brāhmīns* used to devote their lives for selfless service of the society. Whole world was like a family for them. Every living being was dear to them.... Such was the influence of religious inspirations that the *Grihasthas* - married couples engaged in the transaction of worldly duties, too used to dedicate precious amount of their time and material resources for altruist purposes and used to participate in the mass education programmes. Materialistic, mental and spiritual progress of the fellow beings was desired by every citizen of India.... Selfishness and possessive mentality had no place in the society those days.... This marvellous inculcation of religious disciplines in people's minds and sentimental cores had bestowed the honor of "better than heavens..." on the Indian society of the Vedic Age. This was the time when every inhabitant of this land was endowed with divine qualities. Which is why India was described in the scriptures as the land where 33 billion manifestations of God came into existence....."

It is a pity that a sizable fraction of the Indian society today is still living in the state of ignorance and religious misconceptions influenced in the medieval era. Over eight million fake '*Sādhus*' and '*Swāmīs*' are flourishing on the alms offered by such people in the name of religion. The word '*Brāhmin*' has become a symbol of castism... The '*Sādhus*' have exploited people's faith and abandoned the liberation and rise of the present state of Indian society from the sorry state of cultural slavery and religious corruption.... Even many of the learned and materialistically progressive and forward looking people are seen wandering around some of the rich and mighty '*Sādhus*' of this category....

The above scenario of bankruptcy, communalism and commercialization of religion had deeply agonized the saintly heart of Acharya Sharma.... He therefore had decided to create an 'army' of dedicated volunteers of high integrity and moral character who would set the live examples of what are true *Sādhus* and *Brāhmīns*.... Thousands of men and women - most of whom are married and are also fulfilling their commitments towards their own families, have been trained under his mission.

The mass education programme undertaken as part of the "Pragya Abhiyana" of his mission include ideal celebrations of popular festivals with emphasis on public awareness on - the purpose of these festivals, teachings of the symbolic rituals performed with them and overall benefits of fasting, alms, *Yagya* and prayers etc associated with them. Sincere devotion of a small fraction of one's time, resources and talents for the welfare and enlightenment of others is propagated as the best charitable contribution here. Elimination of the weaknesses of one's own character or vices of thoughts and sentiments and sincere adoption of a virtue - is described as the best kinds of offerings that should be made during the rituals of worshipping the God. Detailed analysis of authentic quotes and excerpts from the religious scriptures are also presented in the discourses or workshops organized along with above kinds of religious programmes.

The sessions of public awareness on health, hygiene, literacy, removal of superstitions, avoidance of social anomalies like castism, dowry, feasts for the peace of dead relatives, etc, and discussions on relevant co-operative projects for the concerned village or society, etc, - are auxiliary to above programmes as part of the social reforms pursued by Acharya Sharma's mission. Arranging for good books within the reach of the masses and inspiring them to read the same to know themselves and the world in scientific and liberal light is also propagated during the *Yagya* programmes as part of the "*Vichār Krānti Abhiyān*" of this mission.

How the visibly small efforts pertaining to the day-to-day life of people can lead to creative implementation of revolutionary changes in the society and lay the foundation of resurrection of human religion and divine culture - is guided in the present volume along with details on different aspects of the above programmes of mass education from the religious platform. It is an open invitation for all of us to come orward and participate in this great endeavor of the millenium and thus contribute our level best in the annals of human history.



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 36 , An Introduction

Most of the souls living in astral bodies have been described as malevolent or of a lower order of creation. It is likely that in those days warriors with unfulfilled desires at the time of their violent death became such low-level astral souls. But, side by side, ancient scriptures are full of descriptions about Devarṣis living in astral bodies. Rajarṣis and Brahmarṣis were those who lived in physical body; but those amongst them who had the capacity to work in astral bodies also were known as Devarṣis. They could assume ethereal forms and roam in space and other lokas (subtle cosmic worlds). They could suddenly appear at any place to give guidance to the devotees and seekers.

-- Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

PILGRIMAGE : WHY AND HOW ?

(*Tīrtha Sevan : Kyon Aur Kaise ?*)

The Indian system of religion as established by the *rishis* - the scientists and spiritual saints of yore - used to operate through *Devālayas* (temples), *Āshramas* (hermitages), *Āraṇyaks* and *Gurukuls* (school and laboratories along the traditions of *Vedic* Age), and *Tīrthas* (sacred places of pilgrimage). These five types of centres of excellence spread across the globe in the ancient times were the major sources of expansion of Indian cultural values and the divine philosophy of life.... Though a large number of temples and *Tīrthas* do exist in India even today and the total number of *Āshramas* and *Gurukuls* also is not insignificant, one hardly sees the reminiscence of the glorious heritage of divine culture and religion in them.

Today, the centres of above kinds have practically become nothing more than places of symbolic religious activities. Moreover, many of these even appear as the asylums of orthodox customs and prejudiced practices in the name of religion.... Why this decline? Why have these building blocks of most ancient system of education lost their original purpose? What is their relevance today? Why shouldn't their activities be creatively reoriented in the righteous direction; but how? Search for detailed answers to these and related queries is the focus of the present volume. Sociological and psychological importance of temples, *Tīrthas*, *Āshramas* and *Gurukuls* and scientific aspects associated with the effects of the spiritually charged atmosphere of the *Tīrthas* have also been discussed with specific details. The basic purpose and role of each of the above mentioned establishments is analyzed here in separate Chapters.

It is a common belief that pilgrimage is a great religious endeavor and is essential for the true devotees of God and that it helps liberation of the soul from the past sins. In fact the original purpose of pilgrimage was - to live in the spiritually refined and sacred environment of the places where great *rishis* and saints had

performed long term ascetic *sādhanās* (spiritual endeavors) of the highest kind and to awaken the divine sentiments in the inner self.... Such places were termed *Tīrthas*.

Pilgrimage at spiritually energized *Tīrthas* educes the desire for spiritual elevation and helps one know the eternal purpose of life.... The temples, *Āshramas*, *Gurukuls* and *Āraṇyaks* were originally established to successively escalate worldly people along the path of religion. *Tīrthas* were endowed with highest glory in this sequence and were supposed to be reached only by spiritually refined, truly religious persons..... Local temples (shrines) used to serve this purpose for the masses, at initial stages.

Apart from being the places of worship, temples are supposed to be the centres for collective prayers and religious discussions. Once upon a time these used to be the places for generating public awareness and disseminating mass education. Several revered saints and sages of India had advocated construction of temples in every locality of the villages and towns - within the reach of every inhabitant there, to meet this objective. The religious atmosphere in and around a temple naturally soothes the minds and hearts and nurtures devotional sentiments. As Acharya Sharma has suggested, millions of small or big temples in India could be used as community centres for social reforms, literacy and education from religious platform.

Addressing the mighty trustees and chief priests of grand temples and the fake '*sadhus*' who have converted temples into 'professional institutions' of religion....., Acharya Sharma warns them of their duties towards the society and the mankind. Religion and temples both would lose their identity if the present practice of symbolic 'worship' and professional ceremonies of need-based 'devotion' is continued without any introspection... He had set a live example of how the dedicated endeavors of true saints can re-establish the glory of religion and faith in *thy* disciplines in the scientifically liberated minds and also show them the righteous path of progress....

In ancient India, *Gurukuls* used to be schools of complete education and personality development for the children and the youths. The *Āraṇyaks* were run for training the elders. Aspirants of spiritual evolution as well as those desirous of learning the art of living a fulfilling life - all used to get rigorous training at these places. The *Āshramas* originally were designed as residential training schools for the teachers who used to assist in running of the *Gurukuls* or *Āraṇyaks* after successful completion of the training under the adept guidance of the *rishis*. The class of noble teachers produced here was indeed the spine of the system of ideal education and social developments.

The *Āshramas*, *Gurukuls* and *Āraṇyaks* were usually located in the forests at the banks of rivers surrounded by the excellent natural beauty of the mountains. The reminiscence of several of these ancient schools have become monuments of pilgrimage today.... The natural beauty and holy atmosphere of these places still attracts thousands of devotees and tourists every year. Readers will find in this volume a rare collection of information on the history and creative activities of many of the *Āshramas*, *Gurukuls* and *Āraṇyaks* and get to know of the centres which are currently working towards the revival of the prestige of these landmarks of Indian religious and cultural history....

Pilgrimage today has been more like a touristic activity or a religious obligation for most people. Misinterpretation of the scriptures and superstition has given rise to many laughable customs associated with pilgrimage. For instance, the quote advising -"Bathing in the springs of spirituality pervaded in the *Tirthas* and consequent removal of the vices of sinful tendencies..." , has been misinterpreted by most people as bathing in the 'sacred' rivers and springs near the *Tirthas*. Thousands of pilgrims can therefore be seen crowding on the banks of holy rivers of the *Tirthas* and hurrying to somehow take a dip into it in order to 'magically cleanse' all the dirt of the sins of past and present lives.....

Acharya Sharma has highlighted several interesting facts about the

visits paid to thousands of such small or big 'recognized' places of tourism-cum-pilgrimage in India these days. The total of what the rest of the world would spend in terms of money and man-hours in different activities pertaining to religion there is much lesser than what the people of India - especially the Hindus spend on 'pilgrimage'. A significant amount of government machinery, resources and manpower is also engaged in arranging the mega events of pilgrimage to some special spots....

It sounds ironical that most people who participate in these sacred visits remain unaware of the true purpose of pilgrimage. They hardly gain anything in terms of spiritual refinement and religious elevation except perhaps a self-satisfying notion of successfully accomplishing an arduous journey to a 'reputed' holy place..... In this volume, the author has explained in detail, the original purpose and glorious foundation of the tradition of pilgrimage and has highlighted the relevance and importance of these in the present times..... He has also eloquently taught the disciplines and prerequisites of conditioning the body and mind before a meaningful pilgrimage.

Highlighting what one can and should aspire to gain from the *Tirthas*, he explains the unique significance of the Himalayas. He describes the heartland on the grand heights of Himalayas as one of the richest sources of spiritual energy which naturally educes divine elevation of the inner self.... The grand beauty and heritage of the regions from Yamunotri to the original location of Kailash-Mansarovara, Gomukha, Tapovana, etc, are vividly expressed here with emphasis on the impact of the great spiritual experiments and subtle presence of the ancient *rishis* and other great souls in this region.

The deliberations here would make it clear why there is a congregation of maximum number of *Tirthas* in the Himalayan regions. Gangotri, Yamunotri, Badrikasharama, Kedarnath, Tungnath, Triyuginarayan, Deva Prayaga, Rudra Prayaga, etc and the origins of the sacred rivers Bhagirathi, Alakananda, Mandakini, etc are all located in the same belt. The higher and deeper spots which

are arduous to reach are more dense in spiritual powers because great *yogis* and *sādhakas* of all ages have been residing in these 'hidden' regions of the Himalayas. The present volume also contains a lot of important and rare information about the Himalayas which only the *yogis* like the author could collect during their stay there....

Pilgrimage in the ancient days did include visits and stay in the *Āraṇyaks* (or *Gurukuls*) and *Āshramas*. A near total lack of those kinds of institutions in the modern age had further added to the deterioration of the tradition of *Tirthas*..... In view of this and in response to the subtle inspirations received from the Himalayas, Acharya Sharma had endeavored resurrection of this noble tradition by establishing a centre for spiritual refinement and intensive training in the art of living and personality development at Shantikunj, Hardwar - the doorstep to the Himalayan region.

In consonant with the needs of the modern times and the future of the world, he also founded the Brahmavarchas research centre in Hardwar. This centre is devoted to the integration of modern sciences and the ancient sciences of total health, *yoga* and spirituality. Shantikunj, Brahmavarchas and the sister institutions initiated by this great spiritual master, eminent scientist and saintly social reformer of the twentieth century have set shining examples of how *Āraṇyaks*, *Gurukul s* and *Āshramas* used to be and what could be their logical projections in today's world. The branches of Shantikunj are spread in India and abroad in the form of 2400 "Pragya Pithas" and " Gayatri Shakti Pithas". These tiny centres are attempting to perform what should ideally be conducted in the temples - as the centres of inspiration and public awareness on dignity of human life.

Every man and woman from every part of the world can, without any barrier of caste, creed, race, religion or social status, participate in the regular training programmes at Shantikunj and become a part of the noble mission of Acharya Sharma.

This volume indicates that the seeds of a cultural revolution and evolution of spirituality in mankind sown by establishment of the righteous *Tirthas* like Shantikunj have begun sprouting... It also raises hopes that the collective participation of all of us in such missions would make the 'tree' of human-religion blossom with the dawn of the next millenium....



Pt. Shri Ram Sharma Acharya Vangamaya Vol. 37, An Introduction

References are available about several Rishis who were not restricted to walk on the ground only. Even at present several travellers in the Himālayan region narrate that on losing their way someone guided them to their destination. Several persons have seen invisible yogīs appearing and disappearing in the caves and on the hilltops. Such stories are prevalent about the lāmās of Tibet also. The Theosophical Society is of the view that even at present there is a group of Devarshis in the central parts of the Himālayas who are engaged in the task of achieving universal peace. They have termed them as 'Invisible Helpers'.

-- Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

THOUGHTS OF PURE INTELLECT : SCRIPTURES FOR THE MODERN AGE (Pragyopaniṣada)

The Vedas, Upanishadas, Brahmanas and Aranyakas are regarded to be the most ancient scriptures of Indian Philosophy, Science and Culture. All branches of knowledge are said to be assimilated in this treasure of the first civilization on the earth. The eighteen *Purānas* had emanated from these scriptures in the pre-historic times to make common people understand the purpose and art of living a righteous life with the help of stories and allegorical descriptions.... There are about twenty thousands *mantras* originally compiled in the Vedas. The total number of *shloakas* in the *Purānas* are over one billion. While the Vedas encompass pure knowledge in abstract form with special configuration of the eternal power of sound in the *mantras* (refer vol. 18 of the vangmaya series for details), the hymns in the *Purānas* are poetic narration of different aspects of life supplemented by illustrations with the help of stories of some mythological characters.

The characters described in the *Purānas* belonged to the ancient times and were most suitable to convey specific lessons to the people of that era.... Though the *Purānas* remained popular among the people in the later ages too, the descriptions contained there had lost relevance.... In the modern age, *Purānas* were mostly read either as part of scholastic studies in ancient literature or because of orthodox traditions.... Misinterpretations drawn from the myths had rather reversed their impact and had led to the 'deformation' of the Hindu religion and Indian culture in several ways.

It was the moral responsibility of the scholars and saints of our times to have presented the lessons of the ideal philosophy of life in new light, having similar intimacy with people's psychology today as was the influence of the *Purānas* in the times of yore. Among the sincere

efforts made in this regard, the recent contributions of Pt. Shriram Acharya are most remarkable.

It was sometimes in 1960-61 when Acharya Sharma had translated all the 4 Vedas, 108 Upanishadas, *Yogavashishtha*, all the *Brāhmanas*, *Āraṇyakas* and the 18 *Purānas* in Hindi to enable even the non-scholastic, common people get an idea of what the ancient scriptures were like... This was also aimed at eliminating the misconceptions, superstitions, unreasonable customs and blind faith that were propagated because of the misinterpretations of the hymns written in the classic language and rhetoric style of yore.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma was a *rishi* of the present era. He had felt the pains of humanity through heart. Every moment of his life was devoted to the welfare of people and refinement of the environment of life.... His sagacious wisdom and spirituality had a reach into the deepest depth of human mind. He could therefore identify the root cause of the ailing state of human life as - the crisis of faith, ignorance about the power of the inner self and lack of righteous attitude. He realized the need for substituting the *Purānas* by eloquent literature which would present the eternal principles of happy, progressive and ideal life in scientific light with practical guidance relevant in modern circumstances...

He wrote on almost all aspects of human life covering thousands of topics pertaining to - daily chores, familial, social and professional interactions, personality development, self-reliant education, viable economy linked with welfare and progress, human psychology, science of entertainment, ancient and modern systems of medicine, bio-electricity , bio-magnetism, sociology, philosophy, comprehensive knowledge of yoga, meditation and spirituality, integration of science and religion, fundamentals of astronomy and astrology, origin and expansion of Indian culture, future of the world, etc....

Acharya Sharma's pen carries the force of his inner self and has the power to make his thoughts reach deep in the minds and hearts of the readers. Each of his book is a milestone in the fields of trenchant

knowledge of life. The volumes of "*Pragyā Purāna*" written by him in the late 1980's are significant parts of this precious contribution.

"*Pragyā*" literally means pure intellect. The volumes of "*Pragyā Purāna*" as the word suggests are going to be the *Purānas* of the years to come. These were written by Acharya Sharma in the introspective style of the *Upnishadas* and are therefore also referred as *Pragyā-Upnishada*. Matching with the style of the *Purānas* there are *shlokas* (hymns) in Sanskrit language which address the important topics by way of question-answers and narration of stories. The interpretations, stories and implications are all presented in Hindi, which can be understood by most of the common people too. The simplicity of presentation and illustrations by way of realistic stories and rational discussions having relevance in the day-to-day life, would certainly help the message of these *Purānas* reach the masses.

The present volume of the vangmaya series compiles the essence of the first six volumes of the *Pragyā Purānas*. This mainly focuses on the views of Gurudev Shriram Sharma on social welfare. His thought-provoking deliberations on the crisis of faith existing today, his ideas and constructive planning of the revival of the methods of teaching of the vedic age and his predictions on the resurrection of the Age of Truth in this millenium are also presented here as prologues of these novel *Purānas*. The epilogues as narration of stories are compiled in some other volumes of the vangmaya series.

The author writes in the preface to the *Pragyā Purāna* that - " The circumstances, convictions, modes of living, traditions, needs and expectations, responsibilities and problems of human life keep changing with the dynamic flow of time. The methods of solution, guiding principles and forums for expressions of people's voice should also be relevant to these changes..." His ideas of total psychology and comprehensive analysis of the science of spirituality as the science of refinement of thoughts, sentiments and faith are unique and revolutionary. These correspond to inculcation of spirituality in human life while maintaining harmonious integration

with scientific logic, liberal thinking and practical implementation in every dimension of life....

Successive Chapters of this volume are associated with the different parts of the *Pragyā Purāna*. The first chapter focuses on the problems and challenges faced by the world today and highlights the silver line of bright future in this millenium. How the philosophy and science of spirituality can be brought into practical use and certainly lead to devastation of the evil tendencies and atrocities in different walks of life is presented in the second chapter. Adept guidance on the cultivation and adoption of the virtuous value system based on truth, prudence, self-restrain, sense of responsibility, discipline, sincerity, affability, amity, altruist cooperation, etc is eloquently discussed here in the illustrative style of questions and answers. Readers would find that every doubt and query of their mind has been addressed here with detailed explanation and experienced guidance.

The third chapter covers the important issue of the duties and problems of family life. Be that the secrets of happy and successful married life, justification of the equality of men and women, ideal development of children, family welfare, role of elderly citizens, or the management of social responsibilities etc, all are covered here in detail, considering different circumstances and psychological makeup of the concerned people.... How the righteous progress of individuals and families leads to social elevation and global welfare is illustrated here under realistic approach. The author's own family and the families sincerely associated with the mission founded by the author have set living examples of how his teachings could indeed be adopted against all odds....

The fourth chapter is devoted to those facets of the divine ancient culture of India which have been forgotten and have been practically out of scene in the present age..... Common men's query on religion, ancient systems of *varna* and *āshramas*, different festivals, fasts and rituals, pilgrimage, hermitage, life after death, ...etc, are responded here with thorough analysis of the original scriptures.

Interpretations given here with the lessons of special relevance in today's circumstances add to the importance of these descriptions.

The fifth chapter gives a glimpse of the human-religion based on eternal values of serene love, compassion, co-operation and collective endeavors of refinement of human self.... Excellent conjunction of the basic philosophies and teachings of different religions is considered here in essence. The necessity and promising benefits of feasible ascetic practices, introspection, self-analysis, self-refinement, religious disciplines and faith in divine laws and value system, etc, are eloquently discussed here with logical arguments and authentic guidance in the "conversational" style of the *Purānas*.

The last chapter comprises of precious information on the subtle aspects of the science of spirituality. The topics ranging from - the inspirations (of the great *yogis*) transmitted from the holy Himalayas, the unresolved mysteries of Nature, ...etc, to - the integration of modern and ancient sciences, are covered here in a comprehensive manner. The questions and detailed answers presented in this section also elucidate important features of the science and philosophy of *mantras* and *Yagya*, *Ayurveda* and herbal medicines and many esoteric aspects of human life....

The first four volumes of the *Pragyā Purāna* were published in 1980s.... Several thousands copies of the same have been sold since then. The popularity of these among the masses is clearly indicated by the fact that eight new prints of each were published in a span of a decade.... Part 5 and 6 of these *Purānas* - which are also covered in the present volume - are under print. As per the original plans of Acharya Sharma, and in the tune of the eighteen *Purānas* written by Maharshi Vyas in the Vedic age, there are expected to be total 18 parts (volumes) of the *Pragyā Purāna*.

The present volume is precious like the ancient scriptures. Everybody who feels the need for finding viable solutions to the manifold challenging problems of the day and who knows that

nothing could be more effective than understanding and adopting the righteous life and enlightening the masses by this knowledge, must read and take it to the common people who might not have had the opportunity to read or listen to such thought- provoking discourses.... This volume also offers excellent opportunity for scholastic studies to the researchers of ancient scriptures and literature of Indian Philosophy and Culture.



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 38 , An Introduction

While many prominent and great thinkers are apprehending annihilation, it is my emphatic prophecy that the Evil, which in reality is an inverted form of Good, will be reconverted into the original Good; that which is topsy-turvy at present will be set aright. Let this statement of mine be taken with the seriousness it deserves. The dark clouds of evil tendencies created by unbridled scientific advancement will be blown away by a forceful hurricane of divine tendencies. Darkness will be dispelled and eternal light will shine forth. This is possible only through the irresistible and invisible power of the Riṣis.

- *Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya*

TIPS FOR HEALTHY AND VIGOROUS LIFE

(*Niroga Jivan Ke Mahatvapūrṇa Sūtra*)

Health is the biggest asset of life. Healthy body and healthy mind is essential for self-reliant, progressive and happy life. Who does not want a healthy and hearty life? Who would like to survive on medicines or to run behind the doctors trying one treatment after another...? Every man and woman, learned or illiterate, rich or poor, knows the value of health. But, how many of us are in perfect health? We hardly find people who have never fallen sick or attacked by some weakness or disorder of the body's machinery. Whatever be the cause - viral infection, germs, environmental pollution or artificial mode of living..., at the root of each lie our own mistakes, carelessness, shortsightedness, or misdeeds at personal or social levels..... Many of us do not even know - what to eat and how to eat in order to maintain homeostasis, metabolic control, resistance and vital power of the body.

The Indian *rishis* were perfect scientists of health. They had guided excellent eco-friendly ways of living which ensured ideal function of the body and mind and also supported spiritual evolution..... Acharya Sharma had extracted the essence of these teachings after in-depth study and experiments on the same and had researched its applicability in the modern times. His research together with thorough review and analysis of the existing environment of life and the common modes of living today has offered scientifically justified and practically implementable guidelines on healthy, hearty and long life.... The present volume is a compilation of his guidelines on quality of food, management of eating habits and organization of daily routine. His trenchant review and guidance on other aspects of total health are given in the next three volumes of this series.

The present volume exposes a gamut of tips, based on - the ideal mode of living as recommended by the *rishis* and the detailed analysis of nutritious properties of different kinds of food

preparations, fruits, vegetables and herbs, for acquiring and sustaining good health in general. Elaborate discussions and suggestions cited here are most relevant today considering the ailing circumstances and polluting effects prevailing in the world.... Practical guidance applicable and easily adaptable in day-to-day life makes this volume extremely useful. One would rarely find such a comprehensive treatise on this subject - covering ancient as well as modern research on total health, which is written in such a lucid style for all sections of the human society.

The first chapter of this volume describes the basic need and fundamental principles of maintaining good health. Ideal balance of diet and physical exercise with creative use of different faculties of the body and mind is emphasized here via illustrative examples and inspiring deliberations.

Many people do not know how to combine taste with nutritious qualities of food intake. What should be the type of austere and pure food for vigorous development of children which would increase the body-strength and help expansion of serene tendencies of mind - is described in detail in the next few chapters. Scientific reasons and practical aspects vis-à-vis the type of agricultural products and natural food-resources available in different parts of the world, the climates and eating habits of people, etc - are given due consideration here. Natural compatibility of human body and mind with simple and pure vegetarian food and negative effects of non-vegetarian or lavish nourishment are described here in scientific light and with evidential examples. The findings of biomedical research, psychological disciplines and the harmonious equilibrium of the ecosystem are also taken into account.

Readers would find it interesting to see the recipes of a wide varieties of delicious vegetarian food preparations presented here in the context of "what should be eaten and how?" Most of the educated and health-conscious people are well aware of the fact that sprouted pulses, fibrous and green vegetables and salads should be integral part of the daily meals. But, only a few can continue with it on regular basis. Excellent substitutes and varieties of this type of natural and nutritious food are presented here which will motivate the readers to

avoid eating junked and virtually toxic food (which they often prefer for taste, style and quick service) and rather adopt the better substitutes in a natural way. Not only this, the issues of self-reliance of a society or a nation in food-production by foresighted selection of diet by its public - are also addressed here with constructive suggestions.

The habits of drinking tea or coffee have been so deeply imbibed in the modern way of living that it appears impossible and unimaginable for most people to get rid of such habits despite knowing their slow but steady harmful effects on the nervous and the digestive systems. Acharya Sharma, being an expert of the innermost domains of Human Psychology has not only warned the people against these virtually 'inherited' untoward habits but also suggested healthy substitutes like "*Pragyā Peya*". These special herbal drinks (*peya*) are not only tasty and capable of inducing similar feeling of getting charged with energy as tea and coffee do, rather, they indeed create soothing effects on the brain and body functions. Details on the herbal preparations, scientific research and people's experience on these types of hot or cold drinks and natural brain tonics add to the importance of this volume.

Acharya Sharma's eloquent explanations and scientifically tested experiments on the feasible ways of practising spirituality in daily life and on the therapies of *Yagyopathy* and fresh herbal medicines initiated by him - have shown significant effects on improving people's psychology and helped them come out of the clutches of tobacco, betel-leaf (*paana* and *paana masāla*), cigarette (*bīdī*) and liquor etc. No amount of medical advice, family's protest, prohibitory laws, etc can have the kind of impact which spiritual treatment has.... Because, spirituality bears upon the core of the inner self which is the source and ultimate regulator of all mental tendencies and sentimental instincts.

This volume would provide guiding light, moral support and courage to people to help them uproot the above kinds of untoward habits and addictions which they might have adopted by chance, because of adversities or 'compulsions' of circumstances or merely as

false status symbol.... People having serious addictions or suffering from mental deficiencies or weaknesses are also advised to participate in the *Yagya* programmes and spiritual refinement training sessions at the centers of the "Gayatri Pariwar" mission established by Acharya Sharma. Further details on the science of spirituality, *yoga sādhanā* and *yagyopathy* - as researched and propagated by him are presented in separate volumes of the *vangmaya* series.

The last few chapters of this volume focus on another fundamental aspect of healthy life viz., the mode of living. Apart from what and how we eat, it is equally important to check whether daily routine, our life-style, our work-habits, hobbies etc are compatible with what is naturally good for our body and mind..... The types of dresses we wear, the kinds of make-up we put, the way we sit, walk, work and sleep,etc - all have no less impact on our health than the quality of water we drink or use for cleansing or the hygienic status of the surrounding atmosphere.... Detailed discussions on each aspect are provided here considering the common modes of living adopted by most people in the rural and urban areas these days.

Such is the depth of knowledge and completeness of details here that while reading this volume, every reader will find as if the author has written all this addressing to his/her life only..... It is hoped that all doubts and queries of all the readers would be satisfied and ignorance about the largely neglected facets of daily chores will also be eliminated. The volume contains large number of live examples of the present times to help the readers realize how it is possible in today's circumstances to follow the guidelines given here.

When wild animals, without passing through any phase of intellectual civilization or under going any training, can enjoy perfect health in their life, why can't humans - the most intelligent and naturally gifted beings at least endeavor to prevent the attacks of weaknesses and diseases? Why shouldn't people also reinvestigate and benefit from the ancient knowledge of enhancing vitality and resistance of the body to combat the self-created pollution and ever growing varieties of infections while they are attempting

purification of the environment of life? The intensive deliberations of Acharya Sharma presented in this volume will motivate the readers think on these lines and at the same time offer substantial information and feasible directions on how to go about....?

Maintenance of good health by adapting to righteous mode of living is an endeavor which offers the dual benefits of lifelong happiness and progress at individual level and increased strength of healthy citizens in the society. It is among the most natural, safest and certain means of conquering the adversities of our times and escalating our potentials and thus, by above view point, offers altruist service to the society as well.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 39, An Introduction

*No other organisation has as many selfless, trusted and contented workers of great calibre as are found here. Everyone associated with this organisation has tested it and firmly believes that the soul of a brāhmaṇa is luminously at work here. Millions of people had abandoned their homes and had become the disciples, parivrājaks of Buddha. Those who participated in Gandhi's satyāgrah did not ask for any remuneration. Similarly Pragyā abhiyān is the rare example of an organisation in which thousands of highly qualified full-time workers are working for the **mission** merely on food and clothes.*

*It is indeed a unique miracle wrought by the divine energy of siddhi, through which so much money, manpower, resources and spontaneous cooperation of people at large are flowing to the **mission**.*

-- *Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya*

MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF HEALTH CARE : ALTERNATE SYSTEMS OF MEDICINE

(*Chikitsā Upachāra Ke Vividha Āyāma*)

The concept of total health is as complex as the origin and expansion of life. In case of human beings, it encompasses the physical (bodily), mental and spiritual health in total harmony with Nature. It would require an absolute system of medicine - as perhaps was devised by the Indian sages and scientists (*rishis*) of yore - to achieve maintenance of total health. The drastic variations in the environment and living conditions and the gigantic proportions of the toxic effects of pollution, filth, infections, malnutrition, addictions and tensions prevailing in the world today however, make us wonder whether even the ancient system of medicine would have been feasible and effective these days....?

An intensive look at the status of physiological and mental health of the people in the present times gives an impression that larger proportion of the world population is living in unhealthy, diseased and disorderly conditions these days. The alarming rate of increase in the varieties and extents of diseases and psychosomatic disorders, seem to have left the achievements of biomedical sciences and technology far behind... in this fast moving age of 'advancement'.....

Today, the sufferings associated with the dreaded diseases like cancer and AIDS and the increasing problems of cardiac disorders, diabetes, asthma, arthritis etc, and further, the challenges posed by psychosomatic disorders ranging - from impotency to hysteria; from depression to virtual insanity,etc, have put a question mark on the vigorous survival of the future generations of the human society. The need for a comprehensive system of medicine is therefore badly felt since past few decades. This has also opened up new directions of research in alternate and complementary systems of medicines - including ancient ethano therapies.

The present volume would prove to be a concise encyclopedia for references and guidance on above kind of research. The eloquence of Acharya Sharma's writing, his trenchant knowledge of every aspect of total health and perspicuous discussions with illustrative examples have also made this volume equally useful for the masses.

Acharya Sharma has suggested twenty-four points formulae of preventive medicine which would help natural upkeeping of good health of the body and mind and which are essential for any endeavor of spiritual refinement. First eight of these twenty-four tips correspond to quality of food and eating habits and next ten focus at mode of living, general routine and other habits. Volume no. 39 of this series discusses these points at length with intensive guidance of special relevance in present times. Six of these major guidelines pertain to the disciplines and principles of mental health. These are also highlighted here and dealt with, in different contexts of total health, in the next two volumes.

Acharya Sharma's thorough study, deep insight, experience and successful experiments with the above mentioned twenty-four points had led him conclude that adoption of the associated disciplines and practices and reorientation of life-style in the natural mode implied by them ensures healthy, vigorous and happy life indeed.

The blind race for technological advancement and artificial mode of living in the name of modern civilization has put human life under the vicious mesh where almost everyone is constantly loosing his natural vigor and vital power because of excessive mental stress, and direct or indirect dependence on machinery and luxurious comforts. Although lot of care is being taken for the fitness of the body by the health and beauty conscious people, it is not known to many that the fashionable modes of physical fitness exert excessive pressure on internal organs and consume lot of body-energy.

The extreme stages of comforts and over-exercise customized in the daily routine of the above kinds of 'modernized' people are not in due consonance with the natural system of the body and mind and usually risk hormonal imbalance, heart attacks, stress born

hypertension, spinal problems, etc. The original practices of *yoga-āsanas* and meditation on the contrary, offer a balanced remedy and preventive cure if performed with proper disciplines and guidance on what is suitable for whom.... Separate chapters of the present volume are devoted to the *yoga* practices for health. Details like - which *āsana* is suitable for which age-group, under what general conditions of the body and mind, etc, are given here with illustrative diagrams.

The wide varieties of higher level *yoga-sādhanās* of *prāṇāyāms* and meditation which create soothing effects on the nervous system, hormonal secretion and extra sensory power centres - are highlighted by the author as natural therapies for treatment of psychosomatic and mental problems. Separate sections are devoted for different kinds of diseases or disorders of mental or bodily health in the chapters on the therapies based on *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāmas*. Preventive as well as remedial modes of natural treatment through these practices of *yoga* are presented here. How the different kinds of *prāṇāyāms* and *āsanas* help elevation and harmonious distribution of vital power is also discussed eloquently. Scientific explanations on interrelationship between vital energy, bio-electricity, aura, mental trenchancy and mental and bodily strength are further elucidated in this context.

Among the other major systems and alternate modes of preventive care or therapies - derived from ancient or natural systems of medicinal treatment - presented here, the *Sūrya Chikitsā* (solar medicine) or chromopathy and the herbal or plant medicine are given significant importance by the author. Color healing, chromo-therapy by sun bath, etc are described in the chapter on "*Sūrya Chikitsā*". Which color is useful and most suitable for which disease and for what kind of mentality..., etc - is also guided at length along with details on how to apply color therapy in practice.... The chapter on herbal or plant medicine specifies the properties of a wide variety of herbs and cites the methods of preparation and mode of treatment of different diseases by specific herbal medicines....

Author's deliberations on above topics give a consolidated review of what best could be made available from the treatises, theses and reports ever written on these subjects. The author has extracted the essence of vast knowledge and presented it for the benefit of all - including those desirous of applying them in practice for natural cure as well as those interested in conducting scientific research in related areas of alternate medicine.

He defines health as a natural quality of life and describes weakness, disorder or diseased state as unnatural. He points out that the roots of sickness or deficiencies lie in our own self. Even if the cause is apparently external - e.g. infection, it is the lack of body-resistance and vitality of a person which allows the negative effect of the external cause(s) persist within the body or mind. Blissful and energetic state of mind, purity of the inner self and creative use of body potentials are advised by him as essential for improvement of body-resistance and vital power.

Most importantly, perspicuous guidance is provided here on domestic methods of treatment which can be applied by common people for the preventive care and treatment of a wide range of diseases by themselves.... This would save a lot of their running around after the doctors and spending on purchase of medicines. The author has covered the following in separate chapters: the Diseases of Eyes, Pediatric Problems, Gynecological Diseases, Sexual disorders and diseases and related Psychological complications.... Methods of treatment of the problems ranging - from those of the pimples and abscess to leucoderma and other skin diseases; from common cold and cough to colitis and malaria, etc; from the psychological complexities giving rise to night-discharge, impotency...., etc to epilepsy, depression, insanity, etc...., are all explained with substantial details and practical guidance.

One chapter of this volume describes the major principles and methods of nursing. Be that first-aid or minor injuries, bandage for spasm or handling of bone fractures... etc, every kind of occupational therapy is also discussed in another chapter. Thorough

study of this volume and sincere practice on the methods as per the illustrations would enable one to manage most of his health-care by himself.....

Interestingly, the areas of so-called "cosmetic medicine" are also considered here. One chapter offers guidelines on the modes of naturopathy and herbal treatment for maintenance and enhancement of the beauty of the body and charm of personality....

This volume is an excellent collections of dissertations covering substantial knowledge on different aspects of external and internal health of the body and mind. How the alternate system of medicine based on the ancient sciences, which were derived from the in-depth understanding of human self at spiritual, mental and physical (biological) levels, could help accomplish the goal of total health - is remarkably elucidated here.... It would be hard to find another source of this kind which efficiently combines detailed information on best of the alternative and complementary systems of medicine with adept guidance on self-management of health and at the same time, gives new directions to research of utmost importance today.



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 40, An Introduction

He is an ungrateful person indeed, who even remotely thinks of turning his back on his benefactors - those from whom he has received love, affection, goodwill and cooperation.

SECRETS OF 100 YEARS OF HEALTHY AND HEARTY LIFE

(*Jivem Śardah Śatam*)

Health is a natural facet of liveliness - both by definition and realization. The Indian *rishis* (sages and scientists of yore) had attributed the secret of "*jivem shardah shatam*" - hundred years of vigorous, healthy, happy and creative life - to the total harmony of the mode of living with the Nature and the spiritual inheritance of life. Longevity and total health were common observations in the world those days..... Our *rishis* had investigated the formulae for ideal maintenance of health and youthfulness and devised the methods of practising them in day-to-day life.... Their approach was focused primarily on the science of consciousness and dealt with the awakening and harmonious use of the vital power in auto-regulation of the body functions rather than control of the latter by adjusting the (bio)chemical reactions and physiological activities as is largely practised in the modern sciences of medicine.

Although the reminiscence of the comprehensive approach of the ancient times are seen today partly in the dedicated practices of "*swasthya yoga*" and in naturopathy or herbal medicine based therapies, the materialization of "*jivem shardah shatam*" is far from the horizons of reality in the present age. After about two centuries of dominance of Allopathic and related approaches of medical treatment, its limitations and incompleteness are by and large being felt by people from all sections of the society - including the Biomedical Scientists. The side-effects of antibiotics and near total inability of the modern system of medicine in combating the increasing complexities of psychiatric and psychosomatic disorders have raised major causes of concern.

Despite extensive research and advancement of different disciplines of biomedical sciences and technology, decipheration of the endocrine system and treatment of hormonal diseases and disorders continues to pose challenges.... Noting the influence of mental

conditions on brain functions and on the endocrine secretions, some researchers have started looking into the ancient system of medicine more carefully as the latter had intensive bearing upon deeper study of the human mind.... The inclusion of music and color therapies in the practices of treatment in several reputed hospitals these days and increasing interest of researchers in applications of herbal medicine (*Āyurveda*) and *yoga* stand as witness to these trends.

The present volume together with the volume nos. 39, 40 and 42 of this series will serve like comprehensive reference text for in-depth research in above direction to devise a new and effective medical system for total health and longevity. The non-researchers or laymen also would equally benefit from the knowledge, guidance, modes of treatment and 'tips' of health-management provided in these volumes.

While the methods and materials and details on therapeutic use and self-practice of the alternate systems of medicine - including *yoga*, *āyurveda*, naturopathy, chromo-therapy, etc, along with similar details on nursing and preparations of herbal medicines for a wide range of diseases are covered in the earlier two volumes, the present volume focuses on the philosophy and science of total health - encompassing spiritual and mental health too. The topics like "*kāyā kalpa*" - transmutation of a diseased and weak body into a healthy and vigorous one - pertaining to the so called 'esoteric' domains of the science of spirituality are also included here. The possibilities of "*kāyā kalpa*" in terms of longevity and evergreen youthfulness are discussed at length in the next volume of the *vangmaya* series.

Why does one fall sick? Why the same kinds of external causes, driven by germs, contaminated water, pollution, etc, are reflected at varied degrees of diseases or negative effects in different people? What is the role of vital energy in exerting the resistance of the body against the attack of diseases and in improving its stamina? How could the levels of vital energy be escalated in routine life...? Do the auto regulatory activities, immune mechanism, intra-body

functions, metabolism, hormonal secretions,etc, depend upon state of the mind, way of thinking and quality of sentiments?

The philosophy and science of healthy life as discussed in this volume focus on the above kinds of fundamental questions.... It elucidates the concept of *pancha tatva* - the five basic elements, *prithvi, jala, vāyu, agni* and *ākāsha* - used in the 'creation' of body and mind... In this context, this volume elaborates upon how the refinement and harmonious balance of these could result in natural cure of any disease. The *yoga sādhanās* associated with the 'perception' - of *prithvi* by the *sādhanās* of smell, *jala* by those of taste, *agni* by expertise in vision of the body's energy aura, *vāyu* by extrasensory sensation through touch and *ākāsha* by the *sādhanās* involving subtle power of sound - and 'healing' of the level and quality of these basic elements as discussed here are rare to find elsewhere.

The practices of *upawāsa* (fasting) and *yoga-kriyās* on regular basis are emphasized here as part of the subject matters of "preventive medicines" and "cure without medicines". The author has also highlighted the different kinds of diseases in this context. The list includes - the diseases and problems resulting from or aggravated because of constipation or due to persistence of the habits of over-eating, etc; the disorders and deficiencies generated by the accumulation of mental stress.... etc. It is indeed like an eye-opener to read how the simple practices of *upawāsa* and *yoga-kriyās* can clean the body from inside and also allay the 'heat' of tensions from the mind.

The guidelines presented here remind us how the otherwise unnoticed factors like quantity and quality of meals, timings and modes of eating, amount of water to be consumed by drinking and absorption through the skin, etc could play extremely important role in regulation of our health... We will also find illustrative examples and explanations on how minor changes in the routine, mode of living and attitude can prove to be of great help in stress-management.

Experiments on ancient and alternate systems of medicine - e.g., naturopathy, chromopathy (solar and color medicine), music therapy, *yoga-sādhanās* of *āsana*, *prānāyām* and meditation, herbal or plant medicines, etc, are being conducted separately in some centres in different parts of the world today. Acharya Sharma had inspired research on collective as well as separate effects of these methods of medical treatment in the Brahmvarchas research centre established by him at Shantikunj, Hardwar in 1979. Descriptions on the findings of the research conducted in this centre and those reported by some other laboratories are also highlighted in this volume.

The unique feature of Acharya Sharma's approach is that he has also linked *yagyopathy* and *mantra-* therapy which have proved to be most effective and accelerating the positive effects of the other healing methods mentioned above. Even some otherwise 'incurable' diseases have been cured by the methods suggested by him in the above connection. His approach to *āyurveda* is novel too because he pioneered chemical, botanical and pharmaceutical analysis of the fresh herbs from Himalayan region vis-à-vis the descriptions cited in the ancient scriptures like "Charaka Samhita"..... He also guided research on - why many of the popular *āyurvedic* medicines available in the market do not show the marvellous effects they were supposed to be having in the ancient times? Important results have been derived from these studies at Brahmvarchas laboratories which would give innovative and significantly important directions to current practices of preparation and use of *āyurvedic* medicines.

The pharmacy at Shantikunj, Hardwar has come out with hundreds of new and truly effective herbal drugs, brain tonics and healthy substitutes of tea and coffee... It is perhaps for the first time in the modern age that an expiry date is labelled on all herbal preparations emphasizing the freshness of natural plant-extracts. Findings of this research indicate six months as the maximum period on an average for several of such products. The scientific aspects of ancient system of herbal or plant medicine - keeping in mind the drastic changes in the climatic conditions and living habits in the modern times, along

with some of the above mentioned research works are also highlighted in this volume.

Acharya Sharma was a great saint, spiritual master and scientist par excellence, for whom, the sole purpose of research was - altruistic service and welfare. He believed in expansion of knowledge to enlighten every heart and mind. He had not only extracted the nectar of knowledge from ancient sciences on total health and ultimate medicine, rather, also arranged for its applications by appropriate research in the laboratories of Brahmvarchas Centre and generating public awareness on the same through his "Gayatri Pariwar" mission. Apart from distributing its herbal products at "no profit no loss basis", the mission's centre at Shantikunj also provides practical guidance, seeds and plants to all interested people to help them maintain their own nurseries or gardens.

Several of the useful plants like those of Holy Basil, Mint, Coriander, Tomato, Ginger, Fenugreek, etc. can also be grown in pots. These and other herbs like Turmeric, Aniseed, Stamen, Giloya (Tinospora), Garden-Thyme, Garlic, Amla (Ambelica), etc, which are frequently used in Indian cuisine are very useful in curing a number of diseases. Information on these as given in this volume should inspire the readers to maintain the "*masālā vātikās*" (domestic herbal gardens) of such spice-cum-medicinal plants for the benefit of their families and neighbors.....

Acharya Sharma's sincere efforts for creative integration of ancient and modern sciences - especially in the context of "total health", are unique and promising because of the incorporation of spirituality along with refinement of psychology for activation and perfect use of the vital power and simultaneous attainment of viable health of the mind, body and the inner self....

Perspicuous analysis of spirituality in scientific light and propagation of its practical use and adoption in day-to-day life is indeed a great contribution of Acharya Sharma's literature and the constructive programmes of his mission. Recognizing this, the human society will remain grateful to him for ages....

What Acharya Sharma had written or guided on "Total Health" was completely practised by him in his own life. His life stood as a shining example of the fact that "*jīvem shardah shatam*" can indeed be realized even today...., if we all learn and endeavor to follow what has been guided in these volumes.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 41, An Introduction

It should be taken for granted that the collective will of ordinary people is mighty. Public opinion exercises strong pressure. Those who are today capable of causing harm will have to yield before awakened public opinion. Pragyā abhiyān has launched the movement of awakening and energising public opinion. This will go on increasing and becoming more and more powerful and the minds of the people will be changed for the better. People will think of utilising their efficiency and skills for growth rather than for destruction. Intelligence is a great power. It preforms miracles in whichever direction it is directed.

-- Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

LONGEVITY OF YOUTH AND BEAUTY

(Chira Yauvan Evam Śāśwata Saundarya)

Youth and beauty are most prominent desires of most people. These are natural sources and expressions of joy and attraction in life. There may be major variations in the human society with respect to physical appearance, body built-up, intellectual level, attitude, etc. But, there is practically no difference in the effects and expectations of youth and beauty among the people. Who does not want to remain youthful and hence energetic, strong and self-reliant? Who does not like beauty expressed in different forms and activities of Nature and life.....? The eternal sentiments of pure love and friendship too are reflections of beauty of the inner core of mind...

Youth and beauty are integral components of total health. The concept, science and philosophy of total health, practical methods of attaining it even in the ailing environment of the present times, novel research and applications of alternate medicine, etc - are covered in detail in the earlier three volumes (nos. 39, 40, 41) of this series. The present volume, as the title indicates, discusses the possibilities and different ways of maintaining youth and beauty for long.... despite the biological aging of the body....

Longevity with youth and beauty of life - in all respects, was common in the Indian society of yore. The *rishis* were perfect scientists of Nature, mind and consciousness. They had studied the anatomy, physiology and biochemistry of the human body as different manifestations of consciousness in the five eternal elements (*pancha tatva*) of Nature. The science of spirituality, *yoga* and natural medicine, invented and practised by them and the disciplines and modes of living advised and followed by them were sufficient to ensure total health with beauty and youth.

"*Kāyā kalpa*" - transmutation of physically sick or 'aged' beings into young and vigorous ones without artificial means like makeup, plastic surgery or tonics - was indeed a reality in the ancient society under the supervision of the *rishis*. Intellectual sagacity and

creativity of average people too was high in those days. Above all, the purity and beauty of heart was the major source of bliss and energy in people's life. Relevant information on the latter aspects of the ancient system of life is elucidated in scientific light in this volume which also gives substantial guidance on the methods of implementation of associated disciplines and 'therapies' in day-to-day life today.

The advancement of medical technology and public awareness on health have helped improvement of "life-expectancy" in the developed countries as compared to what was the scenario half a century ago. Howbeit, one can hardly see any improvement in total health of people in general. The stresses of life, artificial modes of living and excessive dependence on synthetic medicines etc. have worsened the mental health of most of us today. On the somatic front too, suppressions of one kind of disorder or disease by the heavy dose of some medicines result in manifestation of other untoward effects or new variety of health problems. Even during the biologically young age, people now a days are found suffering from problems like bone degeneration, spinal deformation, hypertension, etc., which used to be found in much older people in their parents' generation. It won't be an exaggeration to conclude that today, by and large people are somehow 'maintaining' their bodily youth with the help of synthetic medicine and artificial products which gradually make them weaker and vulnerable to faster aging.

The scenario is worse on the psychological front. Before entering the age of youth most people - especially those in the 'rat-race' of modernization, seem to lose the natural cheerfulness, adventurous enthusiasm and optimism of youth. Rise in the number of suicides, addictions to narcotics, nervous breakdowns, depressions, heart failures, cases of hypertension, instances of cynical attitude leading to criminal activities, etc, among the youths is witness to this fact. It is rare to find the natural glow of youthfulness and aura of vital energy in the people today.

The vicious cycle of single tracked materialistic attitude and lack of faith in the value system and philosophy of righteous life has added to the problems on personal, familial and social fronts. Among other

negative effects of moral decline, licentious character and erotic thinking cause maximum loss of vital energy and thus seriously harm the biological and mental health.... Mental fatigue, illusions, lack of memory, dullness and the whole range of sexual problems and sexually transmitted diseases, which are offshoots of such harmful effects, have posed alarming threats before the human society. The real beauty of human life appears to have been lost in the blind well of sensual pleasures....

Those caring for improvement in the present scenario must recall that austere and creative thinking, faith in moral values and ideals of altruistic life and adoption of disciplines of self-restrain with purity of sentiments, chastity and integrity of character - are eternal requirements of consistent elevation of vital energy and mental strength. Soothing effects of this sort are accelerated by positive thinking free from lust and ego.

What is an austere and progressive life? What are the essential disciplines and righteous modes of life and why are they so? How we can adopt the moral disciplines and self-restrain without any difficulty or forced imposition of ascetic practices? A number of such queries and doubts are eloquently answered in different chapters of the present volume with scientifically justified rational arguments, elaborate descriptions, authentic and practical guidelines and illustrative examples taken from the modern history.

It is said that fresh, natural, vegetarian food helps recharging the life-force in each cell of the body. Volume no. 40 of the vangmaya series cites scientific findings on these effects. Details on the quality and the methods of preparation of ideal food items which maintain natural regulation of the body-functions are presented in volume no. 39. Significant information on preparation and use of herbal (plant) medicines and on different systems of alternative medicines - especially those derived from the ancient sciences including "*swasthya yoga*", solar medicine, chromo-therapy, naturopathy, sound (through mantra and music) therapy, etc, is also given in these two volumes.

The need for austere food and controlled diet is further highlighted in the present volume in the context of restraining - the greed of tongue and the influence of taste on it. Emphasis is made on training the mind and the tongue to adopt this discipline in a natural way. Substantial practical guidance is provided which would be suitable for people with different mentality, who are used to different living conditions and eating habits. While the specific *yoga* and physical exercises are illustrated in the above two volumes, the psychological impact of industriousness is discussed in the present volume. Regular physical labor, exercises and creative mental occupation are prescribed here as essential for keeping the body and mind energetic and for preventing the attack of untoward habits driven by the animal instincts of sensual pleasures....

Rare information on - (i) how the variations in sentimental tides and thought process affect the level of the five basic elements (*pancha tatva*) - described in the ancient scriptures as the fundamental constituents of the body and mind ; and (ii) the spiritual methods of harmonizing the levels and co-operative activities of these basic elements, is also given here....

The author, Acharya Sharma was a true saint and sagacious scholar of the science and philosophy of life who had reached the highest realms of spirituality. He knew all dimensions of human psychology through the deepest depth and was therefore able to convey his message with equal force and intimacy to people having different backgrounds, attitudes and stature of life... He explained that the eternal youthfulness existing in the inner self can be elated by sincere efforts under simple disciplines.

His deliberations make it clear that the beauty and joy of life does not depend so much on external appearance and circumstances as on the state of mind. A minor change in attitude and proper orientation of activities changes the effects of the circumstances. The same is true of attaining total health even in the morally waned and polluted environment prevailing in the world today. Self-restraint, aimed at avoiding the misuse or wastage of time, resources, potentials of sense

organs, the marvellous machinery of the body and faculties of mind...., and honest approach towards cultivation of virtuous strength - is an indication of harvesting total health.

Acharya Sharma had experienced, experimented and proved that spirituality emerges as the culmination of the purity of inner sentiments and internal power of mind and hence endows one with divine power and virtues. Eternal youth and beauty are natural consequences of spiritual elevation and attainments of the highest kind. Detailed guidance on how the fundamental principles and essential disciplines advocated in the science of spirituality could be adopted in modern life for sustenance of youth and beauty is presented in this volume for each one of us. This enlightens our hopes in a healthy and happy survival of the human society and motivates us to make it a certainty.....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vagmaya Vol. 42, An Introduction

My request to all the parijans is that they should not read this work as a mere narration of a life story. They should deeply ponder over it and take it as a saga of siddhi (self-realisation) achieved through sādhanā (self-discipline) and Divine Grace. They should also understand that my steps have advanced in the pursuit of Rishi traditions by presenting the path of spiritual awakening worthy of being followed by others. One should understand what the real nature of true spirituality is. A person will be benefited by spiritual realisation to the extent to which he will be able to integrate idealistically his inner illumination with outer brilliance.

-- *Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya*

MONUMENTS OF MODERN HISTORY OF HUMAN CULTURE

(*Hamarī Sanskrati Itihāsa Ke Kīrti Stambha*)

The philosophy of life as endowed in the Indian culture inherits all elements to help culmination of human self up to divine heights.... This culture, which orients the direction of life - from ignorance to wisdom, from the narrow path of selfish attachments and endless worries to the wide horizons of altruist attitude and limitless happiness....., is often referred as the divine culture. It lays the foundation of absolute progress of all beings....., of the entire world....

Annals of history glorify the Indian culture as the eternal source of generating great personalities. The seeds of divine cultural values reflected in - sacrifice for high ideals of humanity, sentiments of welfare and compassion and purity and integrity of character, were sown by the Indian *Rishis* of yore.... This had helped expansion of the ideal values and eventually augmented the rise in number of great men and women in the other parts of the world too.

History has witnessed ample examples of great personalities born in the modern era who also had sincerely followed the path shown by the *Rishis* and devoted themselves for the altruist service of the society and revival of the lost values of the divine culture. The lives and works of some of these glorious monuments of humanity are thoroughly reviewed here.

Some of these luminous personalities were born in India and had worked within or outside the country while some others were born abroad but they had adopted the principles of the divine culture inspired by the *Rishis*.... The precious contributions of these people to the modern world may be classified in three broad categories:

(i) Sainly sacrifices for the enlightenment of mankind and spiritual elevation and welfare of the masses through the religious platform;

- (ii) Courageous endeavors of social reforms to eliminate ignorance, orthodox practices and suppression of the weaker ones and to provide a healthy environment of social justice and liberal thinking;
- (iii) Dedication for national freedom movements and progressive development of self-reliant, sovereign society based on democratic principles.

This volume presents before us a grand bouquet of varieties of flowers of the immortal beauty and ecstatic fragrance of the invaluable contributions of the great saints, scholars, social reformers and leaders.... The next volume of the vangmaya series focuses on the lives of several great men and women whose valor, scholarly wisdom, creative talents and other virtuous potentials were absolutely dedicated to the altruist service of humanity.

Swami Ramkrishna Paramhansa was among the most inspiring saintly spiritual masters of the modern times whose devotion had laid the foundation for the resurrection of the glory of Indian culture. He was born in a period of cultural darkness when orthodox traditions, superstitions and exploitation in the name of religion were also at the peak. The people of India were largely illiterate, unaware and economically suppressed under the British rule and 'mentally enslaved' by blind faith, castism and communalism. It was in such moments of decline and despair, when spiritual philosophy and cultural developments were considered to be the topics of high intellectual discussions and had virtually become 'privileged properties' of some orthodox 'religious masters' and a few 'forward looking' elite groups of 'rational thinkers', that Ramkrishna's simplicity, absolute devotion and pure spiritual charge bestowed an unprecedented spring of divine love and true knowledge for every man and woman. His miraculous inspirations and internal power generated a treasure of great devotees including the precious jewels like Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda's eminent contributions to bringing the great values of ancient Indian culture in true light stand as monuments of enlightened humanity... His works continue elevating the lives of people from all parts of the globe through the branches of the

Ramkrishna mission established by him. He has remained a symbol of pure intellect and spiritual illumination and a noble hero of the youths since more than a century.

Number of books have been written on the life and works of Vivekananda and on his great master Ramkrishna. Nevertheless, the information presented here would be unique as it focuses on the foundational aspects of Indian culture and spirituality and eloquently describes the needs and scope of expanding, in the present moments, the missions of these and several other great personalities. The author also guides practical ways of mass education and social welfare from religious platforms along the lines of our ancestors....

Swami Dayananda Saraswati also was gifted with supernormal memory and sagacity like Swami Vivekananda. He, after being blessed by Swami Virajananda, had devoted himself for destroying the hypocrisies and superstitious bonds posed on the Hindu religion and culture during the medieval era. He had founded the "Arya Samaja" as part of his mission of refining the religious system in India in the post medieval era. He had successfully implemented the fundamental teachings of Indian culture by expanding the knowledge of *Yagya* and *Gāyatrī* among large sections of the society those days.

Swami Shraddhananda had reestablished the *Gurukul* system of education for ideal development of children with inculcation of virtuous tendencies and escalation and creative orientation of their natural talents and potentials..., by instituting "Gurukul Kangadi" near Hardwar in India. Prabhu Jagadbandhu, Thakur Dayananda, Swami Keshavananda, Swami Sahajananda, Baba Raghawadas, etc also fall in this category of religious saints who rendered great service to humanity by educating people's faith in the original principles and values of the Indian Philosophy.

Sri Aurobindo was a revolutionary freedom fighter, who, upon realization of the divine power of consciousness had endeavored great *yoga* and spiritual experiments of refining the subtle

environment of life. He, like Vivekananda, had inspired people all over the globe and blessed the world with saintly disciples like "Sri Maa" of France, and the spiritually charged centres - like "Auroville " at Pandichery in India.

Illumination of divine glow in the soul of Tirtharam who was a professor of Mathematics had transmuted his personality into that of a saint. He, popularly known as Swami Ramtirtha, was among the few scholars of the British ruled India whose sagacity and dedicated attempts towards revival of Indian Culture were recognized world wide. Among the saintly leaders of the later years, Acharya Binova Bhave is regarded as an ideal disciple of Mahatma Gandhi who did not join politics. Rather, he worked till the last breath for the welfare of the masses through the grand experiment of *Bhūdāna* and *Sarvodaya* and showed how creative implementation of the teachings of the true Indian Culture could lead to self-reliant development of the society and rise of the nation in the present times too.

The volume further describes several of the great saints of the rest of the world. The list includes the following: The saintly philosopher Socrates, whose philosophy is regarded as the medium via which the waves of ancient Indian cultural developments had reached Rome and Greece; his teachings had accelerated the expansion of liberal thinking in the western world and originated the scholarly innovations which are of relevance even today. Saint Francis, who is among the most revered saints in Christianity; his thoughts preaches had motivated a large number of people across the globe to adopt the ideal principles of Christianity in life and contribute to the altruistic service of the society. Saint Bahauallah, the founder of the Bahai religion, who also had taught the righteous principles of divine culture and guided the lives of people by his saintly teachings and love for humanity.

Among the great personalities who made excellent contributions to social reformation during the most critical period of history, the names of Raja Rammohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagara, Master Prabhudayal, Keshav Chandra Sen and Shri Ganga Ram sand

as the symbols of human dignity and the live examples of the limitless potentials of the human intellect when the latter gets linked with the inner sentiments of compassion and love for all beings.... This volume presents the life-histories of such great humans with greater emphasis on how they struggled with the adversities and helped uprooting the 'cancer' of illogical, orthodox and inhumane convictions and customs that prevailed in the Indian society of the 18th and 19th century.... The contributions of these truly brave social reformers were perhaps more effective in emancipation of India than the political or economic freedom movement as they helped awakening self-prestige and generate awareness towards the lost and suppressed values of the ancient culture of this country....

In the above context, this volume also describes the revolutionary efforts of Martin Luther King towards the refinement of the customs and convictions of the systems of Christian religion which during his times were captured in orthodox traditions. Readers will also get an opportunity to see the life of Abraham Lincoln - the founder president of the USA, as that of a great social reformer who had even put his life at a stake in order to wipe out the ugly spots of racism and apartheid from his country.... The immortal works of these great leaders too correspond to establishing the fundamental elements - like liberty, justice and equality..., of the divine culture.

The peaceful freedom struggle of India secured unparalleled success and kindled an ever shining lamp of guidance for the future generations of human society because of the collective endeavors of a large number of great saints, patriotic scholars, dedicated social reformers and martyrs.... The glorious sacrifices and historical contributions of the latter category of the leaders or heroes of India are also highlighted in this volume. The distinct descriptions range from those of Mahatma Gandhi, Lokmanya Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Dada Bhai Nauroji, Chittaranjan Das, Surendra Nath Banerjee, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, etc, to those of the academicians, engineers and industrialists like Raja Mahendra Pratap, Shri Vishveshwariya, Radha Mohan Gopal, Jamanalal Bajaj etc.

In essence, the volume presents the gamut of shining examples from the treatises of modern history of the world and illustrates how the impetus of the inner strength hidden in the human self leads to the transmutation of ordinary mortal beings into great personalities who motivate resurrection of ideal culture on this earth age after age.... The lives of the great saints, leaders and social reformers offer us eternal guidance to forward our march along the path of escalation of human glory....



If the two principles of ātmavat sarvabhūteṣu (seeing one's own Ātmān in all forms of life) and vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam (to consider oneself as member of one integrated global family) are followed, people will immediately be able to know which are undesirable tendencies and vices lodged inside themselves and how much struggle and courage is required to get rid of them. Human capacity for progress and growth is unlimited. Once a person makes up his mind to work for a high, noble and sublime aim there is nothing difficult for him to achieve.

-- *Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya*

THOSE, WHO NEVER DIE

(Mara Kar Bhī Amara Ho Gaye Jo)

Nature has uniformly bestowed its boons on all human beings. Human consciousness is originally endowed with enormous potentials. However, hardly some of us pay any attention to this fact. Most of us live, though with a difference in living standard and worldly activities, an average life largely revolving around - feeding and protection of the gross body, externally stimulated conditioning of mind, extrovert pleasures, reproduction and looking after the family, etc.... Only a few are those who sacrifice themselves for the noble cause of selfless service and elevation of the society, nation, or the world as a whole. Annals of humanity remain glorified for ever by such exceptional lives....

The ideals and altruistic works of the great men and women of the above kind stand as guiding lights to show us the better and brighter ways of righteous progress in purposeful life worth the dignity of a human being. The present volume flashes the eternal glow of this inspiring light before us by describes the distinguished contributions and major events of some of these glorious lives witnessed by the past few centuries pertaining to the period of social and intellectual evolution of the modern world.

Rani Durgawati, Ahilyabai and Lakshmibai were the revered queens whose patriotism, valor, justice and motherly love for the public remain unparalleled in the history. Their memories may make every woman proud of being a woman herself. Today, in the major parts of the world and especially in India, women by and large are living in a state of negligence by the society, deprived of and ignorant about even the fundamental rights granted to them by the law and suffering oppression and assault by men through different means....

Reviewing the biographies of the intrepid queens of yesteryears in above circumstances would offer a much needed source of solace and moral boost to most women today. The simplicity of language and relevant illustrative discussions in today's context presented in this volume raise greater hopes in materialization of this possibility. Simultaneous discussions - on the lives and works of Avantikabai Gokhale, Sarojini Naidu, Kasturba Gandhi, Janaki Maiya, etc, whose

social service and active participation in the freedom movement have made special place in the history of India - are also incorporated here in this context.

Adding to the honor of womanhood, the volume also presents the glorious contributions of Mrs. Annie Besant and Sister Nivedita (Ms. Noble) who, although being foreigner by birth, had spent most important parts of their lives in India. Their inner selves were truly linked with the Indian philosophy and spiritual teachings.... Both had worked for social welfare through spiritual elevation of people in the British ruled India. Mrs. Annie Besant had devoted her life to equality of all religions during her tenure as the president of the Theosophical Society. Sister Nivedita had sacrificed herself to the welfare and rise of women and the weaker sections of the society as per the great mission of her spiritual guide Swami Vivekananda.

The "Lady with a Lamp", Florence Nightingale, who founded the noble mission of nursing - is a symbol of human dignity existing in compassion and altruist service... This volume highlights her life, her struggles and great boons she offered to humanity to awaken the inner sentiments of natural love, compassion, generosity and selfless dedication which seem to have been lost in the artificial, self-centered lives of people today.

Another section of this volume focuses on the immortal lives who laid the foundation of the modern history of India. These include great warriors and ideal kings like Vira Durgadas, Maharana Pratap, Chatrapati Shivaji, etc. The mutual conflicts and frequent wars between the large number of small and divided states would have perhaps removed the great nation of India from the world map, had the intrepid, foresighted patriots like these great kings not born on this land. In the later times, the sacrifices of the brave freedom fighters such as - Lala Lajapat Rai, Sardar Patel, Vira Savarkar, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chandra Bose, etc, have made the sovereign Indian nation stand with pride and salute the ever shining glory of its great sons and daughters.....

The biographies of Dr. Xan, Lenin and Kamal Pasha are reviewed here highlighting how these great makers of the history of China, Russia and Turkey respectively, had succeeded in leading the historical revolutions - at gross root level aimed at providing social, political and

religious liberation and justice to the masses - which had added new chapters in the modern history of the world too.

Contemporary to the peaceful freedom movement of India, there also occurred unprecedented emergence of eminent scholarly personalities in this country who revolutionized people's thinking with the help of refined literature and gave new directions to creative art and culture. Prominent among these contributions are - the "Vande Mataram..." song by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, Treatise on the holy Gita (Gita Rahasya) by Lokmanya Tilak, Gitanjali by noble laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore and propagation of Hindi as the prime national language of India by Rajarshi Purushottam Das Tandon.

Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya had given new directions to academics and higher level scholarly works in India by instituting the Banaras Hindu University.... around the same time period as of the cultural developments cited above. All of these great scholars had also contributed to the liberation of India from political, social and mental slavery.... How could they devote their talents and time for awakening the masses along with erudite studies and distinguished scholarly works - is described here with motivating discussions....

Finding the noble company of elevated personalities or finding the opportunity of learning via working with them has become almost impossible today. Contemplation on the thoughts and inspiring character and deeds of such people appears to be the only way of bridging this gap as it offers instant enlightenment, moral support and courage.... This volume would help realization of such positive effects with promising impact, as a wide range of glorious lives is sketched here with thought-provoking discussions keeping in mind the complexities of the present times.

The virtual crisis of ideal values and thoughts in majority of the people found around us these days has given alarming call for collective awakening of the virtuous characters and creative orientation of the talents and potentials of all of us.... The immortal glow of great lives stands before us as an eternal guide to support sincere endeavors towards this noble goal.... The present volume bestows a rare opportunity of illuminating our minds and hearts in this auspicious light of human glory.....

Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 44 , An Introduction

ELEVATORS OF HUMAN ULTURE: DEVOTEES OF SERVICE

(Sānskratik Chetanā Ke Unnāyaka: Sevā Dharma Ke Upāsaka)

The present volume is an extension of the volume nos. 43 and 44 of this series. It presents yet another set of inspiring biographies of the men and women who contributed from different directions to the escalation of human-culture. This discusses the lives and works of - erudite scholars and social reformers as well as the illiterate saints who gained eminent knowledge through afflatus and several others, including some noble kings, who deserve gratitude of the world for ever for their great service of mankind. As a mark of respect, we must recall their glorious characters and deeds and must also attempt following the excellent path shown by them for all human beings.

Prince Siddharta and Prince Vardhamana were not short of valor, virtues, wealth and support of people in their respective states in India. But, both had renounced all luxuries and comforts and chosen the assiduous mode of ascetic endeavors in search for absolute truth and eternal source of salvation of mankind from the thraldoms of sufferings and ignorance.....

Siddharta became Gautam Buddha after attaining ultimate knowledge and awakening of his divine intellect. His righteous teachings had laid the foundation of Buddhism and helped sprouting of a new religion for the enlightened expression of humanity in a culturally darkened period of world history. Vardhamana too had reached the highest realms of spirituality and realized the absolute truth of life and its supreme creator. He was thereafter known as Mahavira and honored as the 24th *tīrthankar* of Jainism. Followers of these angelic souls, initially confined to small regions in north of India, had eventually expanded over almost the entire Asia and helped the message of peace, non-violence, truth and purity reach different corners of the world....

The descriptions and discussions presented here on their lives along with the divine life of Jesus Christ show that the internal urge for helping out the weaker ones, the poor, the helpless and deprived people, deep feelings for eliminating the pains and agonies of all living beings and the spring of pure love and compassion blown from the inner self - are essential qualities of divinity.... It is the intense force of these inner sentiments which ultimately transmutes serene souls into *thy* incarnations.....

The Indian Culture is said to be the mother of sainthood and divine values in human life. In concordance with this belief, we find the incarnation of many great souls on this land in all ages.... After the period of Buddha and Mahavira (about two to three thousands years ago) and several generations of their eminent disciples, it was the time of Adi Shankaracharya whose trenchant intellect was truly devoted to the enlightenment of the masses by the absolute teachings of Vedanta.

Shankaracharya rose from the interior of Kerala down in the southern periphery of India and moved to the east, west and north - right up to the holy Himalayas to unify the divided cultural and religious components (fractions) of India at that time. He had achieved this by adopting the eternal knowledge of the Vedas in real life. The four major *tīrthas* (sacred places for pilgrimage) established by him in the four directions for this purpose indeed prove that he had successfully helped resurrection of the lost values of the ancient Indian Culture, that too in a period of sheer confusion and diversification on the religious front in the Indian society during the critical phase of the medieval era.

The great cultural heritage of India would have been lost in the tumultuous tides of illusion, invidious scandals, destabilization and large scale moral degradation during the peak of the malice of the medieval era, had there not been the advent of several saintly souls in different parts of India after Shakaracharya. The lives and works of most of these revered personalities are also reviewed in this volume to remind the world of their invaluable endeavors which need be

revived once again in the present times of commercialization of humane value system and all round of pollution of life....

The list of above mentioned saintly men and women includes, but is not limited to - Kabir, the saintly poet who had, despite being illiterate, made immortal contributions to scholarly literature in the form of verse generated through his inner sentiments and expressed in the simple language of the masses. His poems and songs are still popular and carry the same force of inspirations which during his life time had emerged as strong source for wiping out the hypocrisies from the religious system and for reforming the society at the grass-root levels. The "*ulatabāsis*" written by him contain deep philosophical meanings too. Saints Namadev, Chaitanya Maha Prabhu, Tukarama, etc also belong to the same category of cherubic souls, the spring of whose devotion had flown the sacred "Ganges" of "*Bhakti-Yoga*" to purify people's sentiments and bestow the eternal love of *thee* on all living beings....

Guru Nanak Dev, the originator of the Sikh religion, was another great saintly master whose sacred teachings had shown the righteous path of duty-bond courageous life and enlightened the minds and hearts of a large number of followers. Guru Govind Singh was among the most revered masters of the Sikh Panth who strengthened and expanded Guru Nanak's teachings of the basic principles of perfect combination of devotion and valor to fight against the internal and external evils and live a disciplined, graceful and happy life. Among the spiritually charged great masters who also generated the waves of patriotism and immense courage from the religious platform, the name of Samarth Guru Ramdas deserves special mention. He had not only blessed the glorious disciples like the glorious Maratha King Shivaji on the land of India but also served the great purpose of rising the unity and self-respect of people via the propagating establishment of temples and community-centres of sports and physical exercises in every village of Maharashtra and other parts of southern India....

Those who opened up new schools of thoughts and generated revolutions which changed the course of modern history are given

special mention in this volume to emphasize the power of pen.... Karl Marx's treatise on "Capital" gave rise to the principles of Communism and thus initiated a new and bright chapter in the history of labors and poor sections of people around the world. Lev Tolstoy was a writer of reality who had a vivid philosophical vision. His scholarly works broke many untoward traditions of his times and educed the thinking which could look ahead of that era... The brief life-sketches and major contributions of such "Warriors of Pen" - including the revolutionary and bright journalists like Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, etc, as presented here should remind the thinkers, writers and pressmen of today of their moral duties toward humanity....

The volume captures all shadows of the inspiring colors of human talents by incorporating discussions on large number of trend-setters and their significant contributions to the history of the world. This list ranges - from Christopher Columbus, the man of exceptional zeal, who had discovered America by sailing through the unknown routes across the Atlantic,... to... the generous industrialists and businessmen like Shri Jugal Kishor Birla who had played a major role in economic development of India and in preserving its invaluable cultural heritage.

The purpose of the volume would have been incomplete without incorporating the true devotees of the ideal religion of altruistic welfare of humanity. In this sequence, it describes the noble contributions of Shri Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Thakkar Bapa and Saint Andrews. All of these brilliant personalities had renounced power and comforts and performed dedicated social service of the highest kind. Their deeds remain shining examples for the future generations of scholars and talented people. Dr. Praffula Chandra Roy and Jagdish C. Bose had set similar examples of glory for the scientific community. It would be a unique experience to also read about the sacrifices and courage of Garrie Baldi, Mezini, Dr. Luther King, etc, along with the detailed note on the great mission accomplished by Mr. Kagawa - known as 'Mahatma Gandhi' of Japan, and his wife.

A serious look at the lives and works of the men and women who lived above and beyond the peripheries of routine self-centered activities and pleasures and reached greater heights of humanity to realize sainthood directed towards divinity - by the power of their honesty, pure sentiments, refined intellect, zeal and unperturbed faith in noble duties towards the entire world...., makes us feel indebted by their sacrifices which have enabled the dignity of human culture and religion survive the tests of time....

The general tendencies of human mind pulls it towards sensual pleasures and selfish desires coupled with ego... The attractions of external world rarely give it a chance to have introspection and prevent the negative tendencies and untoward attitude.... Even if in some moments of intrinsic peace, the inner sentiments inspire it to do something for others, and even if one begins working accordingly, the pressures of circumstances and counter arguments of greedy and self-centered intellect simultaneously force it to return back to the 'usual' and 'safer' mode of life....

The lives of divine incarnations and great personalities - originated from different backgrounds and circumstances, provide substantial courage, guidance and motivation in the above moments and help diminish the negative influences of selfish and coward mentality... Reading the volumes like the present one is equivalent to being in contact with such people in several respects... Detailed discussions and vivid descriptions presented in this volume should make this 'contact' more real and effective to commence the process of gradual refinement of one's ideology and inculcation of ideal tendencies in every domain of life.....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 45, An Introduction

ARCHITECTURE OF GRAND HUMAN SOCIETY

(Bhavya Samāja Kā Abhinava Nirmāṇa)

The structure and system of human society plays a major role in creation of ideal circumstances for happy and prosperous life on the earth. The convictions, traditions and customs of a social system influence the way of life of majority of its people.... It is a general tendency of human mind to adapt to the existing circumstances and contemporary customs and follow whatever appears to be acceptable as the majority opinion. If a social system is founded on high ideals of humanity and has maintained certain principles and values based on prudence rather than by rigidity, the mental setup of its members would also be molded accordingly and add to the multifaceted development of that society and its cultural elevation.

Mutual respect, co-operating and peaceful coexistence, sharing of pains and happiness, equality of justice, feelings of sacrifice for noble causes and devotion to selfless service - among the people, are the fundamental requirements for generation of what could be designated as a "divine society". Annals of human history show that whenever such virtuous tendencies pervade in the social environment, heavenly conditions of life are bestowed upon the society. Acharya Sharma has envisaged the advent of such an ideally civilized, cultured and divinely prosperous human society in the new era where selfishness would be completely wiped out by altruist sentiments and every part of our planet will be transformed into paradise of eternal beauty.... The present volume sketches his optimism and ideas on the possibilities of turning this 'Utopia' into reality....

The Indian society of yore was ideal in several respects. The flow of noble tendencies in the society used to help cultivate auspicious virtues in the people since their childhood.... The system of *shodash*

sanskāras (refer volume no. 33 for details) devised by the *rishis* was a perfect mode of psychological conditioning for appropriate nurturing, development and orientation of these tendencies. Thus, almost every family was producing divinely refined personalities and every sphere of knowledge and development - ranging from the science of spirituality to the science of matter, agriculture to literature, health and education to religion and culture,etc, was blessed by excellent talents.

That was the time when India was recognized as a universal guide, super civilized and enlightened nation. The treasure of knowledge and all round prosperity here had attracted people from all corners of the globe. This land was like the best place of pilgrimage and a global centre of excellence for the whole world. The principle of "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" - treating the whole world as a single large family, was adopted in every walk of life.

Today, the entire human society and the Indian society in particular, is facing the worst ever crisis of value system, being engulfed in the state of direction-less development of the people under the pressures of materialistic power driven progress.... The evil tendencies appear to have reached the climax..... Corruption, dishonesty and nepotism born out of selfish attitude have virtually become the rules and tools for rapid progress and possession of power and wealth. Such is the influence of cultural pollution and social devaluation that the new generations too are being born with immorality 'infused' in the blood.

No political, economic, scientific and technological development can help any civilization - howsoever advanced, survive far too long in the downtrodden state of its society suffering degradation of religion and culture. The thinkers and seers of all ages have emphasized the need for social reformation at war-footing in such alarming situations as prevailing today. What should and could be the best remedy in present circumstance is adeptly guided in this volume.

Psychological makeup of people lies at the root of socio-cultural developments. Realizing this fact and visualizing that the deeper roots of psychological refinement lie in spirituality, Acharya Sharma had derived a three fold solution of gradual escalation of value system at personal, familial and social levels. He had propounded the practical aspects of spirituality in scientific light and devised the concept of "Total Psychology" for this purpose.

He emphasized the purification of sentiments and prudent orientation of people's intrinsic faith in divinity, their convictions and attitude towards life - as the best remedy for elimination of the evil tendencies and inculcation of moral values. He thus aimed at curing the 'epidemic' - of all round decline and maligning of the moral and social system - through the roots. Without the success of such endeavors, there appear no hopes of any viable treatment to protect the human culture from virtual extinction.

His in-depth study and large number of successful experiments on the refinement and transmutation of personality prove the authenticity and worth of his ideas. He endeavored large scale implementation of the associated principles, disciplines and practices through the "*Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā*" and "*Pragyā Abhiyān*" programmes of his mission.

Those who came in contact with his inspiring literature and sincerely adopted his guidance in day-to-day life have experienced significant improvement in their own attitude, inner strength, intellectual potentials and overall personality at gradually ascending pace. The "Gayatri Pariwar" - society of such dedicated members of his mission, stands as living symbol of the feasible possibility of materialization of his vision of an ideal human society in the new millenium. The model of large family established by him at Shantikunj, Hardwar, is an evidential example of how, even in the present days, a proper blending of faith and prudence, and science, spirituality and human-religion.... could lay the foundation of an ideal social system.

Acharya Sharma had initiated creative programmes for elimination of castism, inequality between man and woman and discrimination on the basis of race, religion, community or social status..... He had generated cultural awareness and nurtured prudent thinking among the masses by reviving the practices of *Gāyatrī* and *Yagya* coupled with modern scientific research on related ancient Indian sciences. His mass education programmes emanated from the religious platform have helped liberation of a large section of the Indian society from the clutches of superstitions, blind faith and illogical traditions and customs.

He is perhaps the only spiritual master of the modern times who has campaigned from the religious platform, progressive thinking on family-planning, self-reliant education, co-operative movements - especially in the villages, collective opposition of liquor and related addictions, acceleration of women's education and their participation in important projects of social and national development,etc. As his teachings and training create impact at the inner cores of mind, he has also been able to engage lots of talents in dedicated social service....

The revival of the practices of the *shodash sanskāras* inspired by him has set the basis for ideal development of future generations. The training programmes of spiritual refinement conducted at his mission's center at Shantikunj, Hardwar, have started showing positive results and raised the hopes of resurrection of the original values of the divine culture of ancient India....

The author has also reviewed and analyzed the basic causes of failure of implementation of the ideologies of "social equality" which were spread under the banners of socialism and communism and had gained political support and expansion in sizable portion of the globe. He has discussed that no ideology, howsoever good, could ever be imposed upon people.... No revolution could bring long lasting changes unless the masses naturally accept such changes and adopt the associated principles through heart....

In his views, liberal thinking is essential for healthy development of the society in any age... Change is the law of Nature. Therefore, one cannot think of adopting the activities and the mode of living of the ancient times *in toto*. However, the eternal value system - based on truth, sacred love, mutual co-operation, compassion, altruist service and serenity of character - being natural expression of the desire of the soul, has been and will remain equally important and essential for the survival of divine culture and hence for the healthy development and viable progress of any society.

Those, who doubt - "how the trends of social and moral declines which have been in existence since more than a millennium could be reversed in few decades?", might not have had any opportunity to experience and apply the power of awakened inner self. They may read the present volume along with the other volumes of the vangmaya series on the topics concerning the impact of human psychology and the bright future of the world. They may also later on visit Shantikunj, Hardwar to satisfy their inquisitiveness and clear off the smog of suspicion.....

Purity of sentiments, moral strength of character and natural elation of the will-power indeed sets the medium for active expression of the soul. This is manifested in upright transformation in attitude, faith and direction of thinking.... Nothing is impossible for the immense source of power endowed in the human self....

"How can the inner powers be activated and used creatively for ideal refinement and reformation at personal and social levels? What are the major activities of the "*Yug Nirmān*" mission? How people with different backgrounds, faith and training can collectively participate in the social reformation and cultural awareness programmes of the Gayatri Pariwar? Is there any supernatural force activated by the subtle spiritual experiments conducted by Acharya Sharma which is going to enforce miraculous changes and create divine environment of morality....?" A number of questions of this sort are answered in the present volume.

Acharya Sharma's motto of "Transformation of attitude leads to change of circumstances...", or, "Elevation of the society and transmutation of the era by refinement of the individuals...", etc, should be viewed with an unprejudiced and open mind and with a feeling of his inner pains for humanity.... After all, who makes the society? It is indeed a congregation of individuals who share something in common which directly or indirectly organizes the shape of a social system. Only a handful of motivating personalities orient the thinking of others in a society and set the trends of future developments. Majority of the people by and large remain followers.....

We are fortunate to have a great saint, spiritual master, sagacious scholar, visionary and social reformer like Acharya Sharma giving us a glimpse of the future society in this volume and enlightening our optimism. It is now for us to come forward and share the role of trend-setters by gravitating our moral strength towards... participation in his noble mission and making his vision of "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" a reality in the next millenium....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 46, An Introduction

He is an ungrateful person indeed, who even remotely thinks of turning his back on his benefactors - those from whom he has received love, affection, goodwill and cooperation.

WOMEN ARE HONORED WHERE, DIVINITY BLOSSOMS THERE

(*Yatra Nāryastu Pujyante, Ramante Tatra Devatā*)

Womanhood has been revered in the ancient Indian culture as a manifestation of divine qualities. Womanhood is a symbol of eternal virtues of humanity expressed in compassion, selfless love and caring for others.... The Indian philosophers of yore (the *rishis*) knew that the seeds of divinity grow and blossom in a truly cultured society where women are given due respect and equal opportunities of rise and dignity. The scriptures and later works on Indian culture and philosophy stand witness to the fact that women indeed receive high recognition and respect in the Vedic age. The contribution of women *rishis* in making the ancient Indian culture a divine culture were not less than those of their male counterparts. In the later ages too, women had always been integral part of cultural, social and intellectual evolution of the human society.

In spite of the declining phase of medieval era, where suppression and exploitation of women occurred at a faster pace than moral devaluation, women continued to prove their existence in every dimension of life.... Though less in numbers, these endeavors of valor, bravery, struggle against untoward traditions, dedication for social welfare, scientific investigations, etc, were significant in terms of positive contributions.

Altruistic service has been an area where the glory of women always shines brighter than that of men. Every woman, by nature, offers great service to her family and thereby to the society too. Her motherly sentiments are bestowed upon almost everyone who comes in her contact. Many women have also made extraordinary contributions against all odds to the service of mankind at the national and global levels....

As a tribute to the expression of *thee* in womanhood, this volume presents a compilation of glorious works during the current millenium of women across the globe in different domains and under different circumstance of life.

The first chapter of this volume focuses on the great women whose revolutionary endeavors are significant in the modern history of religion, literature, politics, etc. The list of descriptions here includes - Rani Rasmani, Ma Shardamani, Durgavati, Amrapali, Ahilyabai, Lakshmbai, Talash Kunwar, Jijabai, Anandibai, Yesubai, Joan of Arc, Madame Kama, Subhadra Kumari Chauhan, Preetilata, Sarojini Naidu, Sarah Beanheart, Louis Michelle, Joyo Kosmode, Sophie Borden, Sokki Pero, Sister Cheval, Jamila, Udosiya, Ms Martha etc. The second and third chapters encompass the brief biographies and glorious deeds of the women who had dedicated themselves for the noble cause of social service.

The second chapter covers a large number of such great personalities from India such as - Kasturba Gandhi, Muthulakshmi Reddy, Kamala Nehru, Prabhavati Devi, Dr. Merry Poonam Lucoz, Asha Devi, Rajkumari Amrat Kaur, Rama Bai Dongare, Mai Harshe, Ramabai Ranade, Pisanhari, Madame Blawetski, Tara Cheriyan, Yashodhara Dasappa, Chandravati Rathore, Isabelle Thorben, Katherine Hellion, Merriam Lester, Margaret Cousins, Mother Teresa, etc. Those from the rest of the world highlighted in the third chapter include - Florence Nightingale, Elizabeth Fri, Anna Freud, Maria Montessori, Henry Clover, Merry Jean, Merry Scott, Ms. Emily, Sujuko, Dr. Keith Campbell, Doreen Chiang-Chi Chec, Dr. Sakori, Angela Davis, Donna Lillian, Jayini Marx, Claudia Johnson, etc.

Major contributions to the women liberation movement in the 19th and 20th century were made by the ladies who, along with looking after their familial and professional responsibilities had come forward for emancipation and constructive support of their less privileged, poor and helpless 'sisters'. Chapter four describes how the Indian women like Mrs.Kama Devi Chattopadhaya, Tahira, Devi Mai, Abala Basu, Subbulakshi, Mrs. Savarkar, Urmila Shastri,

Shivdevi, Kamalabai Hospeth, Lalitha Shastri, Anna Chandy, Dr. Iravati Karve, Jahanara, first woman engineer of India - Ms. Lalitha, etc, and the foreigners like Mrs. Roosevelt, Sarah Hela, Fillice Whitely, Emily Greenville, Jean Adams, Sigrid Anisette, Nancy Ester, Marguerite Mitchell, Evezene Booth, Harriet Stowe, Marguerite Sanger, etc, could accomplish this with the strength of their serene character, devotion of talents and strong will-power.

The glorious biographies of the courageous women presented in the last chapter make us feel that womanhood, if charged with internal urge and will-power can indeed prove to be supernormal. The lives of Helen Keller, Phinavarakini, Alexandra Neil, Sara Fuller, Ms. Jones, Edith Bone, Kusum Kacchwaha, Dedi Morse, Sheila Scott, Sevati, Kantaben, Ms. Karlvin, etc, deserve special mention in this regard. Some of these women were physically handicapped by birth or were virtually made so by the circumstances. They not only overcame these adversities by their zeal and mental power but also made best use of their other faculties for the welfare of many others and set shining examples even for the healthy and fortunate ones to excel the available talents and potentials for better purposes worth the purpose of human life.

This volume gains special weightage in the context of the state of women in the modern society. Virtually all over the world, the status of women could be broadly classified - with obvious variation according to the type and intensity of the effects of different circumstances of their lives - into two broad categories: liberated and well off ones and the relatively poor, weak, ignorant and oppressed ones. By and large, majority of the women in the first category too are subjected to direct or indirect exploitation. Free-sex, commercialization of beauty and woman's body in the present age of advertisements is a curse on womanhood in the name of 'boldness and forwardness'.... This has added to the social anarchy, sex-scandals, and psychological perversion in the materialistically developed countries.

Women in the developing countries and the rest of the world are facing worst effects of the mushrooming of the 'mixed culture' in the 'civilized' and 'westernized' sections of their societies. The second

category of sufferers is found in majority here. In India alone, the number of rapes and deaths due to dowry related conflicts has risen to the extent which would make humanity cry with shame.

Most of the Indian women in the second category are not even aware of their fundamental rights and equality of justice granted to them by the constitution. Despite several attempts from the governmental fronts and constant campaign and creative projects undertaken by several women's and social welfare organizations, the dawn of total liberation and justice appears to be far from their sight. Apart from their literacy and upliftment, a lot more needs to be done towards educating the male members of their families too.

Acharya Sharma was a great spiritual saint and social reformer who could feel the pains and agonies of all beings. He and his wife Smt. Bhagawati Devi Sharma had offered support and help towards elevating the status of women in the average Indian society. They had also enlightened the lives of many deprived ladies by inspiring their family members to give them due respect and affection. They had donated their own property for the cause of social welfare. The first Girls' Intermediate College started by them in the interior of North India in a village (Amalkheda) near Agra stands among the visible monuments of their generosity and care for women's upliftment.

Acharya Sharma and his wife had initiated effective programmes of women's welfare and elevation of the power of womanhood under the banner of "Nari Jagaran Abhiyan" of their "*Yug Nirmāṇa*" mission. The present volume is also a part of the awareness campaign under this noble effort. It should help educe self-confidence and internal strength in women as most of them would naturally feel proud of being women after reading or listening about the inspiring lives and almost miraculous and immortal deeds of so many great women of the present era..... The eloquent discussions given in this volume would also make it an important source of thoughtful guidance for all those who seriously want to do something for improving the status of women....

Acharya Sharma was among the very few scholarly saints who had initiated mass education programmes from the religious front, emphasizing the need for betterment of the condition of women in all respects. He had warned the leaders of the nation and the supposed 'Architects' of the society that - "no society, no nation could rise and substantially benefit from any kind of developmental programmes if half of its population, viz., the women and girls, live in a practically handicapped and suppressed state... How can one remain healthy if half of his body is virtually paralyzed or is weakened severely...?"

Man and woman are complementary to each other. Both together form the family and thus contribute to the making of the society, nation and the world as a whole.... Gain or loss of one in any form is that of the other too. The orthodox, egotist or selfish men, who consider woman as the 'weaker sex' must understand that the rise and amelioration of women's status is going to be of greater help to men as well. There is no reason for them to be suspicious of losing their own power and rights which they deserve because of their own qualities and contributions in the society....

The seeds of good or bad tendencies are sown in the child's mind by the mother only. She is the first teacher of the new generation. A healthy, morally refined and talented mother can train her child better and therefore also offer better citizens to the society. Noting the need of refinement of talents and awakening of righteous intellect in these moments of - 'threat to the very survival of humanity.....', it becomes all the more important to work on war-footing to let womanhood blossom in full spring and help turn the present scenario towards the better side. Deliberations cited in this volume convincingly make it clear that women can indeed lead the world towards a bright future because of the natural power of their zeal, pure sentiments, courage, endurance and determination....

In his arduous attempts towards resurrecting the divine values of the Indian culture, Acharya Shriram Sharma has pioneered what could be normally termed as majestic on different horizons for social, intellectual and spiritual elevation of men and women. On religious fronts too, he had successfully brought the true knowledge of

Gāyatrī and *Yagya* within the reach of all humans without any discrimination of caste, creed, gender or social status, etc and revived the original philosophies of the Vedic age in scientific light. The clairvoyance of this spiritually empowered sagacious scholar has assured the world of a bright future in store and has declared the 21st century as the "Century of Women..."



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 47 , An Introduction

Whether by faith or habit, there is such a strong bond between us that it is not limited merely to the exchange of thoughts and personal contacts. Several parijans are facing difficulties. Most of them are entangled in some problem or the other. Some persons want to be in better worldly conditions. There may be several reasons, but the fact remains that people come to me for the fulfilment of some desire or aspiration and express it, with or without speech. Their faith is reassured when they find that what they wanted has been fulfilled, if not fully, at least partially.

-- *Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya*

GOOD FAMILIES MAKE GOOD SOCIETY

(*Samāja Kā Merudanda Saśakta Parivāra Tantra*)

Family-institution is an important component of democratic societies. It is a cord between the individuals and the society. The social system is formed by interactions between the families.... The first training school of a child is his family. Sound foundation of morality and good tendencies in the family naturally endows one with associated virtues and habits.

Cultivation of the healthy tendencies of mutual respect, co-operation and sharing of responsibilities, tolerance, creativity, industriousness, etc in a family ensures happiness of all its members even in the state of poverty or adversities of circumstances. Mutual conflicts, clashes of ego and selfish attitudes within the family on the contrary, make one's life difficult and may lead to psychological disorders or family-breakups etc, despite abundance of materialistic comforts, external means of entertainment and wealth. One's overall personality development also depends on the background set in the family...

Realising the inevitable role of familial atmosphere in the development of individuals and the society, ages ago, the Indian *rishis* - the experts of the Science of Spirituality, Psychology and Sociology - had given due importance to family institution in the Indian Culture. It was perhaps the foundation of ideal family institution which had generated so many great personalities on this land and bestowed divine environment of life here.

In its original form, the Indian culture and social system grants equal importance and share of responsibility to both the parents - the mother and the father. The married couples, having integrity of character, maturity, mutual understanding, sense of responsibility towards the children, family and the society, are termed *sadgrahastha* here. In such an ideal pair, the husband and wife, as

true lovers and compatible life-partners, should naturally help successive refinement and escalation of each other's personality too.

Acharya Sahrma has described *sadgrahasthas* as the strength of the society and the nation.... Because, it is these people who are the architects of the future generations of citizens. His views, driven from thorough understanding of human psychology and its interrelation with the cultural and social system, are worth reading in this context. Every married or 'would be' married couple must read this volume and get adept guidance on how and why should they become *sadgrahasthas*? Single individuals too should read it to know what are their duties towards the other members of the family and what the family should offer to them....?

Today, when the social and cultural systems are facing the worst ever crisis of all round decline and the entire world is suffering from different kinds of problems, calamities and dangers in several respects, every thoughtful mind feels somewhat concerned and suspicious about the future.... Thinkers, experts and policy makers have carried out thorough discussions and analyzed the situation at large number of national and international forums. Varieties of reasons and remedies have been identified and also applied in actions. The complexities and magnitude of the crisis are so high that despite sincere efforts from several directions, since several years, no viable control or solution appears to be in the offing....

If one seriously pays attention to the deeper roots of the volatile expansion of the multitudes of adversities and irregularities and traces back the genesis of the problems in any domain of life, there would appear one predominant cause - evil tendencies and weaknesses of human mind. Vices of thoughts - generated by selfish and possessive attitude, passion for power, comfort and sensual pleasures - though manifested in different forms with varied degrees of sophistication and support of clever intellect, has infected, adulterated and spoiled the original environment of healthy and hearty life.

The inherent qualities of humanity and virtuous tendencies if assimilated in the inner cores of mind since the childhood, help control the agility of mind and prevent the pressure of its 'natural' animal instincts which usually trigger it into untoward passions. Such pre-conditioning and proper orientation of mental character is totally missing these days. In the absence of this cultural refinement, even the highly civilized, intelligent and technologically advanced man of today has failed in generating strength of character and viable peace and happiness.

Unchecked tendencies of human mind have put the human society at an edge of suicidal crisis. Why all this happened? What led to the cultural and moral decline and psychological complexities which have practically wiped out the serene sentiments of love, compassion and altruistic service from the people's hearts? A single and simple answer would be: "deterioration and negligence of the foundation - the family institution -has allowed the poisonous root of evil tendencies grow and manifest itself into above kinds of disasters". It is this foundation which needs to be refined and strengthened on war footing... It is the need of the day.... We all, as Acharya Sharma has guided in this volume, should collectively try our level best to remove the hurdles in reviving the sacred and prudent traditions of the family-institution.

As we all know and experience, man is a social animal and cannot survive absolutely all alone without the direct or indirect support of others. One learns the first lesson of co-operation and sharing from his family only. The survival and healthy growth of the youngsters will not be possible without proper care by his family members.... It is the responsibility of the grownups to pay as much attention to the maintenance of proper progress of their families as they pay to their own bodily and mental comforts. If the elders in the family are endowed with integrity of character and virtues and also bring the associated qualities into practical use in day-to-day life, the children too are most likely to adopt such tendencies by default.

In Acharya Sharma's words, the best kind of social service can be provided by an individual to the world by sincere endeavors of cultivating virtuous tendencies in his own family by observing a

balanced attitude towards affection and necessary disciplines. One, who truly loves his family and desires a happy and prosperous future for all his dear and near ones, would always take care that every member of his family - including himself, becomes a serene and cultured citizen who is sincerely engaged in continuous refinement, escalation and creative use of his or her talents. The family institution is indeed like a laboratory, training school, nursery or factory for generation and expansion of ideal tendencies and for setting the background for righteous development of personality.

The author has advised a "*panchsheel*" (five point formula) for righteous development of personality (refer volume nos. 2, 20 and 21 of this series). He has also described a "*panchsheel*" for the ideal family-institution. The five points here correspond to cultivation of - (i) industriousness; (ii) sanctity and orderliness; (iii) economic and creative use of the resources; (iv) modesty and honesty; and (v) cooperating generosity. Even if a handful of families in every village, town and city adopt these *panchsheels* in practice, the associated positive effects will begin to show in no time and attract ever increasing number of people towards these simple but effective principles and practices. Soon the benefits will be seen at the social level too.

There is a systematic science of progress and development in the personal, familial and social domains of our life. This is based on deeper understanding of the human mind and heart (the core of sentiments). Likewise in any other scientific discipline, here too one needs continuous experimentation, innovative research. However, the research and implementation here should have relevance with the basic aim of maintaining the steady flow of ideal tendencies against all odds in the changing circumstances of life....

Acharya Sharma was a perfect scientist of humanity. His original ideas, experience and long term research on different aspects of human life have brought new, hitherto unknown facets of Spirituality and Total Psychology in scientific light and showed their predominant role in every dimension, every activity of human life. He has also suggested practical ways of using these findings for the

overall elevation of human society and creating a far better environment of life in the present times. This volume has emerged from his related deliberations on family-institution which, as he has emphasized, is the spine of the body of the human society.

Today, when the concept of joint family has almost lost its existence and the term "family" is practically seen only as - husband, wife and their little children, Acharya Sharma has presented the revolutionary idea of "larger family" - constituted by groups of separate and independent but mutually co-operating families; each constituent family maintains virtuous development of its members and constantly shares experience with the other families. This way, the relatives' families can also become truly friendly and the elders and the youngsters of the 'large family' can benefit from each other's talents, experience and ideas without any direct clash of ego or conflict of generation-gap.

In the present scenario of the Indian society, the 'obligation' of mutual respect and tolerance in the joint families is increasingly becoming difficult for the members to follow. Also, the economic pressures and narrow attitudes of members often shake the desired balance in the joint families. This usually results in breakups between the near and dear ones and also leads to untoward consequences of serious nature. Such possibilities are avoided in the broader concept of "larger families" where people willingly co-operate on the basis of friendly relationship, as per mutual compatibility among the groups of 'small' families without any 'imposed constraint' of lineage or the prejudiced notion of 'blood relation'. The training of co-operation, mutual respect and friendly relationship nurtured at a wider domain in the members of a "larger family" also gradually makes them understand and love their relatives with whom they might not have gotten along well earlier in the joint family.....

Several experiments on the relevance and feasibility of "larger families" are successfully conducted under the banner of "Gayatri Pariwar" mission inspired by Acharya Sharma. Hundreds of families residing in the mission's centre at Shantikunj, Hardwar (India) have

set a live example of what the author has described about this new expansion of family-institution. These also demonstrate - how the collective efforts of "larger families" could lead to the development of a self-reliant, happy and truly progressive society.

In the present circumstances, people across the globe are largely found suffering the pains of loneliness despite being over-occupied with large number of 'professional interactions' and having abundance of entertaining means. Nothing could offer more soothing relief to such people than the warmth of family-relations. Shattered married life - licentious attitude and lack of natural love, trust and respect among married couples, broken families, constrained development of children, etc, are curse on the modern human society. This is the reason why, in spite of having the best of the boons of scientific and technological advancement, people are facing the worst kinds of sufferings due to varieties of psychological problems driven by depression, aggression, stress, suspicion, jealousy, feeling of insecurity, etc.

The natural spring of blissfulness and compassion is fast drying out from the hearts of people. The best and natural means of saving the disastrous consequences is - reestablishment of healthy family-institution. The present volume offers substantial guidelines with reasoned deliberations and authentic examples for all individuals, families and societies around the globe to resurrect the glory of the family-institution using best of their own capabilities. All the married couples as well as those who are going to be so in near future, must pay special attention to the author's call for important role of the *sadgrahasthas* in maintaining the ideals of the family-institution. They may also benefit from participation in the special training programs run at Shantikunj, Hardwar for this noble purpose.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 48, An Introduction

EDUCATION AND INITIATION OF TRUE KNOWLEDGE

(*Śikṣā Evam Vidyā*)

Consolidating the views of eminent scholars, we may characterize "total education" as - "the system of teaching, learning and initiation of knowledge which leads to - complete self-reliance, excellent development of personality and continuous evolution of virtuous tendencies....".

Education begins with literacy and may successively endow one with enormous knowledge, analytical thinking, trenchancy of thoughts and decision making and acumen in specific disciplines of training. In principle, completion of education should also make one scholastic, talented and expert in solving worldly problems and enable one to propagate goodwill in the society. We may review the present systems of education to check whether they are capable of offering what is expected of this definition of education. A thorough evaluation of the present systems vis-à-vis the ancient system of education devised by the Indian *rishis* would be inevitable in this regard if we want to expand this comparison in different dimensions of what corresponds to "complete or total education".

The Indian *rishis* - the spirituals masters of yore who are also revered as perfect educationists of all times, had defined "total education" as a combination of *shikshā* and *vidyā*. *Shikshā* in their view was - practical training of literacy, worldly knowledge and development of specific skills or talents which make one self-dependent and enable him or her earn respectable means of living. By this definition, we might say that the component of education which is generally taught in the schools, universities and centers of higher learning today, corresponds to *shikshā*.

Vidyā, as described by the *rishis* is that component of "total education" which inculcates virtuous tendencies, independent thinking with intellectual and moral illumination of the mind and

the heart and helps perfect refinement of character and development of personality. *Vidyā*, which is initiated by a spiritually elevated noble master and sincerely adopted in every domain of life by a dedicated disciple, gives rise to an ever expanding source of true knowledge and gradual escalation of ideal tendencies. Deep impressions of *vidyā* assimilated in the inner cores of the mind are carried over as *sanskāras* (intrinsic tendencies) in next births too

Shikshā and *vidyā* complement each other and together organize a perfect system of absolute education. Although several centers of excellence have maintained high standards of *shikshā* with induction of liberal thinking and intellectual discoveries, we hardly find any school or righteous mode of propagation of *vidyā* any where in the world today. Even in India, where it was originated and given inspiring dimensions of global expansion via the "*gurukula*" system established by the *rishis*, it appears to have been confined to the decipheration of ancient scriptures in some traditional schools of Indian philosophy and *vedic* education. People in general, do not even know the proper meaning of *vidyā* and as per their faith, often misinterpret it either as *shikshā* of ancient subjects or as some kind of 'esoteric knowledge' or 'spiritual power' associated with consecration by a religious master or *guru*.

Gurudev Shriram Sharma, a noble *rishi* of the modern age, has thoroughly reviewed the genesis, ancient developments, current status and future of *shikshā* and *vidyā* in the present volume and given eminent directions for the improvement in both in today's context. He has emphasized the need of revising the existing system of *shikshā* to make it more rational, dynamic, relevant and useful in guaranteeing a happy and bright future to the world. He has also justified the importance of incorporating *vidyā* in the updated system of *shikshā* and given practical guidance for doing so at the primary, secondary and higher levels of education. He has devised specialized syllabus for this purpose to suit the gamut of students having different backgrounds and mental and intellectual levels. The primary and middle school education offered in the school of his

mission's center at Shantikunj, Hardwar, sets a living example of how this syllabus could be successfully implemented with the innovative methods of teachings suggested by him.

The "*swāvalamban vidyā*" course and training programmes of self-reliant and moral education with spiritual refinement - initiated by Acharya Sharma have also been very successful in generating dedicated, disciplined and talented batches of young men and women who are committed to altruistic service for cultural elevation and global welfare. These self-dependent volunteers are also contributing to the mission's programmes of mass education and social reformation in the villages and helping out the poor, down trodden, illiterates to enable them architecture a better and truly progressive future for the society and the village as a whole. The well educated but unemployed youths may, rather than suffering depression and waiting for the government and other bodies for help, also get new guidance from this kind of self-reliant *vidyā*.

Acharya Sharma had also revived the traditions of the *rishis* by introducing the concept and mode of propagation of "*sanjeevani vidyā*" for people from different walks of the society having different levels of *shikshā* and professional experience....etc. Under this scheme, specific training programmes of varying durations are offered at Shantikunj for spiritual refinement, personality development and cultivation of moral values and ideal tendencies. Different sessions and types of lectures, practical works, disciplines, spiritual experiments and *yoga* exercises etc are designed here so as to suit the backgrounds, psychology and domestic, social and professional environments of the trainees. For instance, there are special course programmes for married people who want to develop ideal family institution; separate special programmers for the engineers who should aim at increasing productivity and moral values in their organizations....; etc.

The "*vidyā- ārambha*" and "*dīkshā*" *sanskāra* (refer to volume no. 33 of this series for details on the system of *sanskāras*) performed under the auspices of the "*Yug Nirmāṇ Yojanā*" and "Gayatri Pariwar"

missions of Acharya Sharma have also been very effective in generating awareness about the true meaning and importance of *vidyā* and in cultivating its seeds in the minds of people who care for piety of sentiments and thoughts and integrity of character. People of all age groups, all educational backgrounds - ranging from the illiterates to those holding highest possible degrees of erudite scholastic distinctions, can participate in these programmes (of initiation of the above mentioned *sanskāras*) free of costs and without any restrictions of sex, caste, creed or social status.

Shikshā is essential for every one for better knowledge of the world and for marching forward along the path of civilization. High standard of this system of education certainly contributes to intellectual awakening and materialistic advancement of the society. Comprehensive education of this kind coupled with real-life experiences also teaches one the art of efficient management of life. However, the great efforts towards excelling this system of education would not serve the real purpose and might even prove counter-productive unless equipped with viable methods of simultaneous escalation of integrity of character, moral values and virtuous tendencies and sentiments of compassion, altruist service and sense of responsibility - in the students.

Shikshā as offered in the modern systems of education is, by and large, serving only as a means or a supporting tool for earning a respectable mode of living and accelerating intellectual evolution in trenchant students. In its most refined form, *shikshā* would be most effective and useful if it complements for the implementation of *vidyā* in order to fulfil the divine purpose of human life.

The Indian education system of *shikshā* is not at all in good shape today. In many cases, neither the students nor the teachers have the desired faith, devotion, sincerity or dignity of character which is essential for healthy growth of the academic institutions. Mostly, it may be blamed to the irrelevance and lack of direction of the structure of the academic course programmes and ineffectiveness of the methods of teaching, but, the growing trends of 'commercialized'

attitudes and declining moral values of the entire society are no less responsible for this degradation of *shikshā*. In this volume, Achary Sharma has examined the state-of-affairs right up to the roots of the concerned problems and he has also given constructive guidance on how this system could be modified right from the primary level of education.

This volume highlights possibilities and basis for establishing an alternate system of (total) education, which would combine *shikshā* and *vidyā* in a creative way and which can be easily adopted in the Indian circumstances. Implementation of such a system would initiate resurrection of the ancient glory of India and once again set the example of ideal education before the rest of the world. This system incorporates special training and continuous refinement process for the teachers and parents too. The "total education" system described here may be regarded as a 'prototype' of the comprehensive scheme for the development of the modern society and conditioning of people's mind to welcome the 'Age of Truth' which, as per the clairvoyance of several spiritually elated great personalities - including the author, is awaiting gradual manifestation with the dawn of the new millenium....

Gurudev Shriram Sharma finds most people of the modern age as those living in a 'self-hypnotized' state, being ignorant about their own selves. In his words - "If a person, howsoever learned and talented, cannot think in righteous direction and adjust or co-operate with the fellow beings, cannot make constructive contributions of his intellect or talents for orderly elevation of the society and cannot even fight against the adversities of his life on his own....., then, his education is of what use? The resources and time invested upon his education too would amount to sheer wastage....". These 'so called' educated people, he continues, "...need *sanjeevani vidyā*, which can awaken them from the state of false impressions and intellectually imposed 'illusions' and subsequently orient their talents and potentials for the creative purposes of social welfare, development and intellectual and moral evolution.....".

His vision indeed shows us the silver line of hope when he says - "In the new era of true knowledge and moral dignity, although the physical appearance and biological nature of the humans will remain the same, drastic changes will be noticed in their convictions, sentiments, attitudes, ideologies, mental tendencies, character and deeds...." Revival of *vidyā* as an integral part of education, in his views, would serve the purpose of this hitherto unimaginable transmutation and would make 'the descent of the bright era' - a feasible reality in the years to come..... Spirituality will then play a predominant role in shaping of an individual's personality and in the developing of a society under this new system of education.

How will the above 'dream' be materialized? Who will disseminate and implement the "*sanjeevani vidyā*"? How and why it will be adopted across the globe? From where will the ideal teachers and the proper *gurukuls* arise? What will be the mode of operation of the *gurukuls* of the modern age? How will the younger generation accept this new system of education? Detailed discussions and authentic guidance is presented on the above issues in this volume which also cites the views of the great educators and noble *gurus* (masters of *vidyā*) of different times.

It is hoped that all the teachers, students and every one, who is concerned about improvement in the present system of education, will get substantial guidance and support from this comprehensive treatise on perfect education. May the institutions of "*shikshā* and *vidyā*" enlighten our minds and initiate the conditioning of our world for the dawn of the new era of truth, spirituality and divine knowledge....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 49 , An Introduction

MEMOIRS OF GREAT LIVES - I

(*Mahāpuruṣon Ke Avismarṇīya Jīvan Prasanga I*)

Every episode of the lives of great personalities showers the nectar of inspiring guidance, solace and courage to soothe our minds and heart even in the moments of fury, tension, anguish, apprehension, depression, tragedy, anxiety, dilemma or confusion.... The noble company of such persons is described in the scriptures as of immense help in spiritual, intellectual and moral refinement and growth of ideal tendencies. Be those the challenges of unprecedented adversities, contemporary problems of a society, nation, or of the world as a whole, or those associated with the 'routine' matters of ups and downs in the lives of most people, the pure intellect and divine sentiments of great persons find amicable and efficient solutions of every problem. Meeting and discussions with them offers instant courage and inspirations.

Finding the noble company of the above kinds of people, who possess absolute integrity and eminence of character and selfless attitude and purity of heart, appears to be almost impossible in the present circumstances. Although, a large number of religious leaders, scholars and dedicated social workers exist in different parts of the globe, the proportion of those having perfect consonance of words and deeds is significantly low. Very few of them can create deeper impulses in the inner minds of their disciples or educe virtuous tendencies in the people who come in their contact. Nevertheless, the vivid memories, the biographies, the historical accounts of the gamut of activities associated with the great lives continues to serve the purpose of their inspiring company and guidance even when they are no more with us.....

Biographies of some divinely enlightened saints, altruist social reformers, immortal leaders and architects of modern history were reviewed in the volume nos. 43, 44, 45 of this series with thorough discussions on the philosophies of divine culture resurrected by them in real life. The major objective there was to awaken the otherwise dormant virtuous tendencies hidden in every human being in one form or the other. These volumes also aimed at the same

time at re-orienting the intellectual eminence, valor, endurance, determination and other talents and potentials of the 'supposed' architects of the world today towards the righteous path of altruist service and welfare which would lead to culmination of their own success and glory along with brightening the chances of happy future for humanity.

The present volume together with the next in this series compiles important and interesting episodes and memoirs of the illuminated lives of all those who have made significant contributions in different areas of importance in the cultural evolution and civilization of the world since several thousands years and are of special relevance in the present times.

The lucid style of presentation and vivid descriptions here would help each one of us enjoy and enlighten ourselves in the noble 'company' of those who have added to the happiness, hope, prosperity and peace of our world.....

People of different age-groups and different social, educational, and psychological backgrounds will all find something preciously useful in these volumes. Different episodes of the gamut of great lives are presented here in the style of short stories. These would serve as excellent teachers of morality for the children too. Reading these will be no less interesting for the children than the storybooks, which they eagerly look for! These volumes would also collectively offer rare information, moral education, entertainment and adept guidance for solving different problems of human life.

The first two chapters of the present volume describe important incidents associated with the lives of - Jesus Christ, Gautam Buddha, Mahaveer Swami, Kumarjeeva, Maharshi Panini, King Ashoka, Chanakya, Socrates, Confucius, Aristotle, Shankaracharya, Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa, etc. Special attention is paid on the aspects which would encourage the readers to boldly face the challenges and problems of day-to-day life and inspire them to overcome all hindrances on the way of achieving higher goals of human dignity..... Although the biographies of many of the great personalities are published and might be known to many of us, the

grand collection of the distinct memoirs of such lives at one place is indeed rare and adds to the significance of these volumes.

The apparently simple narration, without heavy philosophical discussions and intellectual analysis, presented here is like a 'tiny arrow' which is light but sharp enough to penetrate our minds and hearts and vibrate our inner sentiments.... Same is true of the pathetic descriptions of the struggles, which were smilingly faced by the spiritually elevated saints and social reformers in their worldly lives for the noble cause of sharing others' pains and agony and distributing love, peace and knowledge beyond all barriers. The list of these monuments of the glory of Indian culture presented here includes - Saints Raidas, Tukaram, Chaitanya, Namdeva, Gyaneshwar, Pauhari Baba, Matsyendra Nath, Swami Vivekananda, Maharshi Arvind, Maharshi Raman, Swami Ramtirtha, Guru Nanaka Deva and other noble gurus of the Sikh cult, Saints Kabir, Malookadas, Vasaveshvar, Dadu, Ekanath, Raghavendra Swami, Swami Virajananda, Acharya Ramdas, etc.....

The next chapter is devoted to the memories of the brilliant messengers of humanity whose 'self' had been refined, culminated and expanded so much that it could encompass the entire world in its domain of affection.... Swami Sahajanand, Sane Guruji, Vir Haqiqata Rai, Saint Emerson, Father Damiyen, Pope Pious, Robert Isop, J. Krishnamurthi, Guru Gorakhanath, Sadhu Waswani, Ravishankar Maharaj, Swami Tukadoji, Narayana Guru, Jalaram Bapa, Swami Bhakti Vedanta, Saint Fateha Singh, Mahatma Bhagawan Deen, Guru Golwalkar, Swami Muktananda, Sir John Woodroffe, etc - are among those, the inspiring events, teachings and contributions of whose creative lives are highlighted here.

The fourth chapter describes the shining examples and memoirs selected from the life-histories of the architects of the progressive society of India in the modern times. Significant among these are - Devamitra, Dharampal, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Chittaranjan Das, Thakkar Bapa, Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi, Lala Hardayal, Raja Mahendra Pratap, Lokmanya Tilak, Maharshi Karve, Saradar Patel, Damodar Satawalekar, Dr. Bhima Rao Ambedkar, Dada Bhai Nauroji, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Raghavdasji, etc.

The last chapter is a tribute to the sincere dedication, unperturbed endeavors and eminent contributions of the great thinkers, scholars and scientists like - Romain Rolland, Prince Kropatkin, Voltaire, Maxim Gorki, Martin Luther King, Binova Bhave, Henry Doona, Luis Pasteur, Theodore Wilder, Dr. Edward Jenner, Sir Garfield, Isaac Newton, Openhymer, Max Plank, Ramanujam, Maulana Mazaharula Haq, Dr. Homi Bhabha, etc, who have laid the foundation of the prosperous development of the world in the modern age.....

Sacrifices and miraculous eminence of some ancient *rishis* - such as Maharshis Dadhichi, Parashuram, Dhaumya, Nagarjuna, etc are also cited for relevant comparison and emphasizing the limitless potentials of human life...

At the present juncture of two milleniums of the flow of time, of the confluence of two opposite trends of 'materialist advancement' and 'moral decline' in the human society, when the crisis of faith has reached an alarmingly high level, one naturally feels apprehensive about the future.... However, even in these moments of despair and threats to the happy survival of humanity and its original culture...., the immortal lives and glorious deeds of great personalities do educe our faith in the divinity existing in the human self and elevate our inner strength with instant enlightenment.

The present volume offers us this opportunity in an interesting and inspiring way with multiple reflections of integrity, piety, generosity, compassion, endurance, dedication, acumen, wisdom, enthusiasm, foresight, altruism, spirituality, and other virtues and powers bestowed upon human life, which, if awakened and used the way the great men and women before us had, can indeed culminate our lives up to the high realms of divine glory.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 50, An Introduction

MEMOIRS OF GREAT LIVES - II

(Mahāpuruṣon Ke Avismarṇīya Jīvan Prasanga - II)

Complete decipheration of the complexities of the human mind is indeed impossible. The passions for comforts, pleasures, respect, power and possession seem to dominate its tendencies in general. With the support of selfish intellect, the power of mind sometimes even gets engaged in what corresponds to inhuman, pernicious and heinous activities. Howbeit, a single stroke of emotional jerk, blow of inspiring thoughts, force of intrinsic character, spark of wisdom, intuition or afflatus may generate upright changes in the orientation of its enormous strength and creativity....., and, may educe it towards realization of spirituality and divinity.

Noting the crucial role of its normal tendencies of - "learning by examples" and "following and adopting what it often comes in contact with", wise men always try to keep it in the noble company of inspiring interactions, thought-provoking literature, creativity of talents, ...etc, which helps its illumination and conditioning in the righteous direction of elevation.... The present volume is an effort to support such endeavors. This volume aims at psychological upliftng of people's mind with the help of selected memoirs of the lives of great humans who, despite being born as ordinary mortal beings and facing the adversities of worldly circumstances, could register their names in the annals of modern history with perennial glory.

It is a common observation that people by and large aspire for selfish motives. The 'liberal thinking' of human mind gets trapped in the mesh of ego, attachment and limitless varieties of passions..... Majority cares for more and more comforts and rights; some care for the duties too; rare are those, who live with higher objectives of evolution of consciousness. Most people remain unaware of the origin and ultimate goal of life...; the voice of their souls lie unheard within the 'inert' peripheries of their unconscious mind.

Such is the influence of personal interests that even the highly educated, talented and well-off ones -- including the 'experts' of moral sciences and religious philosophies -- are often found behaving contrary to the basic ideals of humanity. Many of them either waste or misuse their potentials. Their minds remain dormant towards the welfare of the society and escalation of human values and culture. Caring for national interests or service of the needy - are beyond imagination for them; such topics are 'subject matters of laughter' for them. What more, they even find logical reasons and 'intellectual' arguments as well as scholarly references in support of their misdeeds....

There is another category, viz., of the 'common people' or the masses, who presume that they are destined to adjust with the circumstances and live the life as it is... Their 'weak' mind finds easy excuses in - 'adversities of time', 'non availability of resources or support', 'pressure of circumstances', ...etc. Hopes of righteous development of personality, viable progress and escalation of thoughts are dim here too unless inspired by a greater force, which awakens their inner strength or enlightens their mind with realization of the limitless potentials and dignity of human life.

While most people are scared of calamities, struggles and hardships and often lose courage and mental balance in the tragic moments, what is so special about the great personalities, whose virtues, courage, determination, prudence and compassion get more and more refined and stronger after passing through the more and more difficult phases of life? What is that which leads them to accomplish, what could never be dreamt by even the more skilled and resourceful persons?

The fact that most of the glorious lives have arisen from different backgrounds under different circumstances proves that the latter do not bear much influence on generation or transmutation of great personalities.... Genetic lineage also does not seem to have any role to play in such effects because, otherwise, the annals of the history of human civilization would have been by now flooded by the large number of 'successive generations' or 'families' of greatness or heroic

endeavors.... Then what it is? Is it the influence of intrinsic characteristics of the soul inherited from its previous lives? Is there any thing common in the attitudes, aspirations, thinking or spiritual levels of the great humans of different ages? The illustrative narration of selected episodes of the glorious lives presented here would throw light on some such points with special emphasis on the presence, transmutation and multifaceted manifestation of virtuous tendencies in such lives

The author has presented a marvellous embroidery of multiple colors of greatness - associated with the valor, courage, talents, sagacity, acumen, altruistic sentiments and spirituality - of the architects of peace and prosperity in the human society at different times, in a collection of six volumes of the vangmaya series. The present volume in particular, focuses at the noble lives of the martyrs and great leaders, for whom, the selfless service of nation, human society and humane culture - was the sole objective of life. Patriotism was the highest kind of "worship of thee and devotion to divinity" for these immortal heroes.

The spirituality of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, Subhash Chandra Bose, etc was always linked with immense patriotism. Although working from different platforms and with a difference of approach, they all had devoted their spiritual powers for a common cause of awakening of the lost prestige of India and its divine cultural values. In fact, the patriotism of these great souls was the basic source of inspiration, which transformed the lives of many others in the righteous direction.

The author, Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya, had also surrendered every moment of his life, every impulse of his sagacity and supernormal powers in the patriotic '*Yagya*' (supreme endeavor of sacrifice) and the 'worship' (altruist service) of the 'deity' of human society. This is the reason why he could describe the sentiments and thoughts of the other great personalities so effectively.

The remarkable sacrifices, patriotic endeavors and immortal contributions of the leaders and national heroes like - King Shivaji,

Maharana Pratap, Bhama Shah, Saradar Patel, Lala Lajapat Rai, President Kennedy, President Roosevelt, Major Shaitan Singh, Bankimchandra, Vidyasagar, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Bahadur Shah 'Zafar'....., etc are described here. The common factor of extraordinary courage, determination and perseverance in these noted personalities are highlighted here along with those of the symbols of valor - like, Napoleon and Alexander the Great.

The unique combination of sainthood, spirituality and patriotism reflected in the inner strength and the revolutionary endeavors of Mahatma Gandhi is recalled here along with the memories of similar distinctions in the lives of - Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Abraham Lincoln, Hemarschold, Marshall Zukob, George Washington, Winston Churchill, George Popindou, etc.

This volume also presents inspiring episodes of the serene lives of those who were endowed with exceptional talents, intellectual creativity, industriousness and adventurous zeal, and who had directed their gifted faculties towards some constructive endeavors and duties for the welfare of the fellow beings, society and nation... The descriptions include but, are not limited to the distinguished memoirs of - Maharana Raja Singh, Peshava Nana Saheb, Taty Tope, Tipu Sultan, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, Hiralal Shastri, Surya Kant Tripathi 'Nirala', Varindra Ghosh, Balaji Viswanath, etc from India, and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Sheikh Muziburrahman, Henry Ford, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Izenhover, etc from the other parts of the globe.

The volume eloquently illustrates how the internal urge of patriotism coupled with coherence of firm determination, wisdom, bravery and foresight help transmutation of ordinary mortal beings - like most of us, into great humans whose lives and works become shining chapters of the world history. The memoirs described here should motivate us to introspect our present life and attempt awakening the altruistic sentiments, piety and power of our inner selves too.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 51, Brief Introduction

TO WHOM THE WORLD OWES FOR EVER.....

(Viśwa Vasundharā Jinakī Sadaiva Riṇī Rahegī)

Literature has always had a predominant impact on shaping of the trends of time.... Be those the initiation and expansion of great revolutions or small attempts of teaching young children or propagating specific message among the masses, in each case, thought provoking books - novels, stories, poetry, essays....., etc, play a crucial role in materialization of the associated objectives. Thinking, imagination, conceptualization and sentimental perception are vital elements of both - the life of literature and liveliness of human mind. Literature therefore has an intimate relationship with human psychology.

Changing patterns of civilization and culture since the time of yore have witnessed the gamut of expressions of the voice of soul and the impulses of mind reflected in the gigantic amount of literature - assimilated in the form of scriptures, collections of the deliberations and preaching of great saints, spiritual masters and social reformers and the written or published prose and verse of diverse nature.... Literature can encompass all possible realizations and expressions of Nature and life within and beyond the limits of time and space....

Abstract philosophical treatises, highly intellectual discussions and deliberations do not generally suit to be effective mediums of teaching or setting communication linkage with the masses. Such forms of literature are rather 'inert' and beyond comprehension or interest of most people..... The conversational style and/or the real or imaginary sketches of life presented in the novels, stories, plays and poetic narration, on the contrary, easily attract the masses. The simplicity of language, closeness of the characters (of the story or play, etc) with the aspirations, imaginations or 'familiarity' of the readers and the relevance and the proximity of the environment - describing the 'life' of these characters, with the real life have added advantage. Depending upon the depth and force of the inherent

motto these can also be significantly effective in specific circumstances.

The above mentioned vivid forms of literature also support the natural tendencies of "learning by examples" and are therefore frequently used as the most common modes of mass-education.... Listening, watching, reading, contemplating or discussing different representations of these kinds of literary creations also helps conveying the philosophical principles, ideologies and theories. The substance of the latter may be brought outside the confinement of esoteric and abstract domains and transmitted - through the lucid medium of stories, plays, poetry, songs etc, into the main stream of people's life.

Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya had always emphasized the creative use of the power of pen and strength of voice for effectuating unity, peace, moral elevation and welfare of the human society. For him, it was more important that the *Vedic* ideals like "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" - regarding the whole world as one large family - are materialized in real life rather than merely glorifying the philosophical literature or being a subject matter of erudite scholarly works on social sciences etc.... He had devoted his sagacity and brilliant versatility (in practically all branches of knowledge in general, and literature in particular) to this noble cause through sincere endeavors towards resurrection of the divine culture of ancient India.

As part of his consistent endeavor, he had studied, translated and eloquently presented in people's language, the knowledge of all the Vedas, Upnishadas, Puranas, Darshanas and other scriptures of Indian Philosophy. He had written thousands of books on almost all aspects of human life and its connection with other living beings, the universal consciousness and Nature. His saintly heart, trenchant scientific mind and spiritually culminated inner self have enabled his literature encompass all dimensions of human life and its external and internal worlds.

The topics pertaining to - deeper aspects of spirituality, *yoga-sādhanā*, psychology and culture, integration of science and religion, evaluation of ancient and modern systems of human society, future of the world etc, as well as the subject matters of - total health, alternate systems of medicine, refinement of talents and personality-development, mass-education, moral and self-reliant education, healthy development of children, and, the routine guidance for day-to-day life on topics such as - 'what to eat how to eat?'; 'how to interact with family and society?'; 'how to maintain an upbeat mood and creativity?'; '....etc, all are covered with equal depth and impact in his books.

Because of his exceptional eloquence, intimacy with human mind, sincere feeling of the pains, aspirations and attitudes of others and because of his internal urge to enlighten every mind and heart, his writings and speeches interest and inspire almost every body who comes in their contact. The simplicity of his language, illustrative style coupled with inclusion of real life examples and authentic references make them more effective. His words seem to carry the force of his soul and the charge of his afflatus.

It is natural for a great scholar, saint, spiritual master and social reformer like Acharya Sharma, to also recognize the eminent contributions of others' pens and voice. He has honored creative works in different fields of knowledge and culture and acknowledged related contributions with special admiration. Great thinkers, endowed with immense courage and integrity and having revolutionary ideas devoted to the service of humanity...., have been given sincere tribute by him in the present volume.

This volume presents precious collection of the significant contributions and noble aspects of the revered characters of - Mahatma Gandhi, Karl Marx, Rousseau, Harriet Stowe, etc, whose thoughts, speeches and writings could illuminate the world-history with perennial glow in its darkest phases. As the rows of kindling lamps and candles converts the dark night of *Amāvasyā* ("no moon") into *Deepāwali* - the festival of light, similarly, the impulses of courage, righteous thinking and self-respect triggered by the

dedicated endeavors of these great personalities had turned the oppressed, weakened, waned and maligned face of humanity into a clean, healthy, bright and smiling one....

The immortal contributions of glorious men and women of literature are remembered in the first chapter. The lives, works and greatness of the scholars like - Kallat, Kahlil Gibran, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Vishnu Sharma, Dante, Babu Gulab Rai, Shopenhover, William Shakespeare, etc, are revered here. The next chapter remembers the great poets of all times, ranging from - Kalidas, Tulasidas, Mirabai, Amir Khusaro, etc, to - Chandra Bardai, Mohammed Jayasi, 'Nirala', Mathilisharan Gupt, Moh. Iqubal, Earnest Jones, Elliot, Puschkin, Pabloneruda, etc, whose poesy and songs can, on the one hand, kindle the glow of compassion and divine love and, lit the fire of protest to burn the roots of malice, exploitation and immorality on the other.

The noted writers, journalists, painters, musicians and other artists, whose works had direct contact with larger sections of the society and whose talents had the power to divert the flow of thoughts and convictions - capable of bringing historical changes in the socio-political systems of their times, deserve special mention. Among the talents of this dignity, the names of John Steanback, Pearl Buck, H.G. Wells, Lenin, Arnold Tynabi, etc, are referred as highly as, those of Karl Marx or Harriet Stowe. The readers will get an opportunity to feel the great moments of the lives of their ideal writers (of this class) in the third chapter.

This chapter naturally incorporates the sketches of important literary contributions - reflecting people's voice, of eloquent writers and journalists like - Chandradhar Sharma Guleri, Ramanand Chattopadhyaya, Shantinarayan Bhatnagar, Ben Harris, Amratlal Chakravarti, etc. Lives and characters of Uri Gogrin, Earnest Hemmingsway, Alfred Noble, Max Muller, Samuel Johnson, Von Gog, Guestav, Eiffel, Rahul Sanskrutayan, Riche Kalder, etc are also recalled here to illustrate different spectrums of the talents and creative engrossment of human mind.

The amazing contributions of distinguished talents in other disciplines of life including arts, science and culture have indeed made the world grateful forever.... In the successive chapters, this volume reminds us of the enormous potentials of human mind by highlighting the immortal achievements and important episodes of the biographies of such extraordinary talents. The list includes - Mathematicians like, Euclid, Voltaire, Pythagoras, etc; Scientists like, Newton, Einstein, Darwin, J.C. Bose, Birbal Sahani, Hargovind Khurana, etc; Philosophers and intellectually reputed social reformers ranging from George Bernard Shaw, Dr. Radhakrishna, etc to Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Purushottamdas Tandon, etc; Artists, singers and musicians of the kind - Dada Sahab Phalake, K.C. De, Angelo, Bithoviyar, Fra-Angiko, Stravinski, Shaishanna, Ustad Allaudin, etc.

Most importantly, all the descriptions here are presented in the narrative and conversational style of stories. That makes the volume more suitable for most people. It not only offers a rare collection of precious information, rather, also contains the power to educe the greatness existing in each one of us and refine and activate our own talents too....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 52, An Introduction

THE SECRETS AND PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

(Dharma Tatva Kā Darśan Aur Marma)

The word "religion" is as vast and deep as the expansion of human life. It cannot be defined within the known dimensions of mind. It cannot be encompassed within the narrow peripheries of the faith and disciplines of any community or school of thought. The 'religious' thoughts and 'faith' associated with a community are often reflected in specific modes of worshipping, conventional rites and rituals or the specific ways of living..... in a broader sense. Traditions, communal faith, convictions and associated practices may change with the changing circumstances of life in different time periods and in different regions of the world. But, religion by its very origin is eternal and limitless.

The perennial philosophy of religion is based on the knowledge and realization of truth, morality and spirituality. Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya had realized the eternal linkage of religion with the inner self and described the principles and practices of religious philosophy as a systematic science of refinement of sentiments and inherent tendencies of mind. Religious philosophy in his view is the expression of an elevated and broadened attitude and trenchant intellect, which is illuminated by the purity of the divine sentiments of - serene love, compassion, unity, generosity, altruist service,etc.

The misinterpretations generated during the dark period of medieval era had consequently provoked the extreme views, like, the Marxist logic of - "religion is a dead man's dream", "religion is a hypocrite's expression of blind faith", "theism is an illusive state of an intoxicated or emotionally excited mind", or "religion is a tool of emotional exploitation", etc - which were propagated by some rational thinkers in the later centuries. However, these extremities of "blind faith" and "no faith" have had their days....! By now, the scientifically liberal minds and kind hearts have realized the eccentricities and limitations of these notions. Those, who

understand the importance of sentiments and impact of psychology on every act of life, would certainly see the completeness and righteous direction in Acharya Sharma's view point.

Acharya Sharma had analyzed the deeper aspects of spirituality, psychology and religion in scientific light. His writings were aimed at promoting righteous thinking on these subtle but essential components of human life. The logical arguments, authentic illustrations and experiences, the depth of reasoning and intimacy of inner sentiments reflected in his views have enshowered the nectar of religion on every rational thinker, researcher and sincere seeker of religion who came in contact with his vivid literature or got an opportunity to experience his spiritually refined company.

His realistic views presented in this volume will apprise us with the true meaning of religion. These will also convince and motivate us to realize that religion is indeed the eternal source of guiding righteous progress in every walk of life. The volume also presents his ideas on refinement of the religious system today and creatively use it for the all round development of the human society in an eco-friendly manner. Acharya Sharma has described mass-education from religious platform as the best mode for improving the status of majority in a society like the Indian. He has also given practical guidance in this regard. The reality of his vision can be seen in the enlightened activities of the Gayatri Pariwar inspired by him.

Scriptures proclaim - "*Dhāraṇāt Dharma Ityāhu, Dharmo Dhāryati Prajāh*", Meaning - "People in the society which adopts religion through faith and action in every dimension of life always remain protected (from the 'attack' of evil tendencies, adversities and anomalies....)". How is that possible? How could that be accomplished in day-to-day life in present circumstances? Substantial details on these issues are given here.

This volume also highlights how the misdeeds of a few and the ignorance and evasive attitude of many in the Indian society of the medieval era - which is also known as the darkest phase of human history, gave rise to maligning and misinterpretation of the original

philosophy of religion. The prejudiced traditions, illusions, superstitions, illogical customs and blind faith seen associated with the religious system in India and in other parts of the world are largely the offshoots of the pernicious effects of the moral decline and the cultural and religious deterioration nurtured and accelerated in the medieval era. How could a society of humans justify the heinous acts of 'killing' other living beings - including humans in the name of "*balivaishwa*" (religious sacrifice)? Such inhumane acts can by no means be accepted as religious

This is indeed unfortunate to note that the abominable practices of above kinds were initiated and propagated by some scholarly but perverted and cruel minds for selfish motives via deliberate misinterpretations of the Vedic scriptures and of the original treatise on Indian philosophy of religion..... In spite of dedicated attempts of great social reformers and saints, the negative effects of the dark era of religious anarchy persist in one form or the other.... The associated customs and rites driven by blind faith on the one hand, and the challenges posed by the cultural pollution and materialistic attitude of the modern society on the other, cannot be eliminated nay diminished without revolutionary revival in scientific light of the original basis and values of religious philosophy.

With the objective of elucidating the true philosophy and relevance of religion in human life, the author focuses here at refinement of the currently popular notions and practices of religion. He emphasizes the need of scientific religion which encourages liberal thinking, morality and awakening of divine sentiments indwelling in every human being. Wise men and women who care for the piety of character and creative orientation of the power of sentiments would certainly be inspired by his ideas and thought-provoking discussions. This volume should encourage them to come forward and propagate the adoption of righteous religion in the modern society.

The ten fundamental elements and associated five basic principles of religion described in the ancient Indian scriptures have been interpreted and analyzed in different forms by different schools of

thoughts over long span of history. These have been propagated as large number of different systems of religious disciplines and practices. Acharya Sharma has cited authentic references from these scriptures and assimilated the essence of different philosophies of religion in his explanations. He identifies the ten signs of the existence of religion in one's life as - the active presence of truth, prudence, self-restrain, sense of responsibility, discipline, determination for moral elevation, serene love, compassion, courage and co-operating and altruist attitude.

In his views, the adoption of the above ten virtues is the true "*dharma dhāraṇa*" (adoption of religion) in human life. This interpretation is in absolute consonance with the definition "*Yato abhyudaya Nihśreyasa Siddhi Sa Dharmah*" of the eternal religion (of humanity) advocated in the Indian cultural philosophy.

Religious principles in essence, encompass all the basic disciplines and essential virtues which set the basis for overall development in the materialistic, psychological, as well as spiritual domains of life. Religion provides the basis for evolution of humanity up to high realms of divinity..... The secret of success of religion lies in the growth of morality, integrity of character and piety of sentiments. This cannot be realized without educating serene faith in divinity, which, in Acharya Sharma's words may be defined as the ultimate state of culmination of virtuous tendencies, prudent talents and refined potentials....

Awakening and enlightenment of people's faith can be achieved even in present times of "crisis of human values" if religion is brought back in their lives with scientific reasoning and progressive ideology. This is indeed the need of the day....

Today, when religious, political and social systems have lost their original glory and have virtually exploited each other along with the deterioration of the edifice of morality, one wonders whether the refinement and strengthening of one would ruin the other....? The deeper understanding of religion affirms the contrary. Refinement of

religious system and resurrection of its original glory would support simultaneous improvement in the other two if it is given due place to guide the prudent and honest development of the latter.

In practical terms, religion can control the selfish autocracies of the political system and give liberal shape to the structure of society on stout grounds of human values. What cannot be achieved by the governmental machinery of law and security, in checking out crimes, can be easily accomplished by inculcating the faith in religions principles in people's minds and hearts. Because, the latter would keep one's conscience awaken and naturally prevent his or her indulgence in the sins of criminal activities.....

The nectar of religious sentiments can revive the life of humanity with the vital force of spirituality. This volume convincingly describes that - adoption of religion through heart would naturally transform the tendencies of possession into that of sharing, greed into generosity, passion into compassion, ego and hate into altruist service and love.... Where would then be a place for injustice, exploitation, crime or moral devaluation? Unity, piety, integrity, and enlightened humanity will then be the visible manifestations of the life-deity. The feasibility of this 'virtual utopia' are discussed here with practical guidance for each one of us to follow right away.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 53, An Introduction

AWAKENING OF DIVINITY IN MAN

(Manuṣya Me Devatva Kā Udaya)

All living beings are children of God. The status of humans among them is like that of the "crown prince" of thee. Thou has been endowed - in visible and subtle forms - the seeds of HIS potentials in the inner cores of human self. The amazing functions and immense power of human body and mind are only minimal manifestations of the divine faculties blessed upon the human beings. Spiritual transmutation of the vital force, mental trenchancy and the inner strength of pure sentiments indeed awakens majestic powers in one's own self by which he or she can enable desired culmination of physical, intellectual and mental qualities and enforce revolutionary changes in the society as well.

Evolution of human self materializes at the level of consciousness. It does not really depend on the environment or the external means, rather, emanates from one's own psychology - attitude, thoughts, sentiments and the intrinsic tendencies. Creative use of the willpower and the strength of inner self indeed makes one the architect of his own destiny. This, together with elevated spirituality also enables gradual evolution of human self up to divine heights..... Successive transmutation of people from ordinary mental beings to - refined individuals of exceptional talents, great personalities, saints, angels and.... divine incarnations is realized along this path of evolution of consciousness.

The origin and expansion of the philosophy and science of spirituality and religion revolve around the basic objectives of refinement of the deep core of mind and sentiments and enlightenment and righteous orientation of faith, convictions, intrinsic tendencies and powers of the inner self. The states of ignorance, illusion, prejudice and immorality reflect dormant or bleak state of the soul. Persistence of these conditions without any attempt of improvement invites further assimilation of evil tendencies and tightens the bonds of "*māyā*" - in the forms of selfish

attachments, ego, lust, and varieties of passions. This is against the original nature of the soul.

As expressed in the universal prayer of "*Tamaso Mā Jyotirgamaya*", the awakened soul aspires for the eternal light of absolute truth and ultimate knowledge. Its perennial desire to evolve up to the greatest realms of divinity is the motivating force for its endless journey from one life to another..... The impulse of the inner self, expressing the voice of the soul, and the influence of the inherent and acquired untoward tendencies and passions of mind therefore give rise to mutually conflicting tides of thoughts and emotions and lead to the subtle struggle of the divine and the devil powers in our internal worlds.

The accumulated demands of opposite nature of one's mind and the inner self set the 'battle field' of the continuous 'war' between the vices of one's character and the purity of one's soul; between the evil tendencies of mind and divine aspirations of the inner self.... This great war is indeed the 'Mahabharata' in which Lord Krishna motivates and guides the 'Arjuna' existing in our souls. The preaching of Gita provides eternal enlightenment and moral strength to fight this 'spiritual war' between the *sātwika* (pious, righteous, divine...) and the *tāmasika* (evil, pernicious, inhumane...) forces present in our own selves. The devout endeavors aimed at the victory of *sātwika* virtues over the *tāmasika* tendencies - are defined as "*sādhanā*" in the language of *yoga* and spirituality.

Our ignorance, extrovert attitude and passions - driven by the agility of our mind and its animal instincts often help empowering the evil side. These if left uncontrolled, eventually diminish the strength of inner sentiments and shield the subtle glow of the soul.... Those, who awaken, rise and attain success in the *sādhanās* of spiritual refinement, gradually move forward on the path of perfection and ultimate development. This is why a "*sādhanā*" is honored as the key to divine culmination....

Acharya Sharma had devoted his supernormal spiritual attainments for the orgulous purpose of awakening of divinity lying in human beings. His "*Yug Nirmāṇ*" mission of resurrection of divine culture and creation of heavenly conditions on the earth aims to achieve this rather 'unimaginable' goal by - inculcating righteous attitude and virtuous tendencies in the masses and making people realize and 'worship' the God living in themselves. Mass-education, practical training and propagation of the methods of refinement and spiritual elevation of personality are among the multiple activities which are being pursued by his mission in a constructive way.

Acharya Sharma's own life was an eminent example of how an ordinary man could be transmuted - while living in the same body, under the same external circumstances of life, into a divine like great personality. He had emphasized the need for people to know themselves, realize their own potentials and the distinctions of human life. He taught, how the *sāadhanā* of self-analysis, self-restrain, self-refinement, selfless service and spiritual enlightenment of every dimension (especially those associated with the sentiments and thoughts) of personality could lead to amazing transformations and ideal progress. Sincere endeavors of this kind, focused at the emergence and adoption of virtuous tendencies and coupled with the escalation of vital force and inner strength, eventually transmute a biologically normal human into what is conceptualized in science-fiction as "superman" or in the spiritual literature as "divine being....".

The concepts of *amrita*, *pāras* and *kalpavriksha* cited in the scriptures are often interpreted respectively as - nectar, the source of immortality; a supernatural stone, which converts everything into the precious metal (gold) by mere touch; and, a heavenly tree, whose shadow fulfils all desires.... In this volume, Acharya Sharma has elucidated the righteous meanings of these terms and logically explained how these 'magical entities' are indeed bestowed upon human life. This volume presents his thorough deliberations and lucid illustrations on such topics. It also offers his trenchant guidance on how to enrich our existence with these hidden endowments and make their creative use in day to day life as well.

The ancient Indian culture is often glorified as the "divine culture". Once upon a time, this land was regarded superior to what could be imagined about the heavens. This was because every man and woman residing here was endowed with divine virtues. The serenity of their altruist lives, piety of their characters, trenchancy and purity of their minds and spirituality of their thoughts and sentiments - was a perfect reflection of the divineness educed in them. The reference of "33 crores *devatās*" in the Indian religious scriptures logically appears to correspond to these 330 million 'living Gods' who populated the Indian society of yore.

The Indian Philosophy developed in that age is indeed a perfect science of cultivation and activation of divinity existing in each one of us. Refinement and enlightenment of the inner self with the eternal glow of godliness is regarded as the greatest endeavor of the spiritual *sādhanās* described here. Transmutation of the individual self into divine self defines the evolution of human consciousness.

The philosophers and the scientists of different ages in the other parts of the world have advocated different lines of thoughts and the methods of modifying and enhancing the potentials of man. Each one has his own reasoning and arguments to support his ideas. The theory of Nitsche, which gives importance to the external circumstances, the Anarchist's propagation in favor of individual autocracy, the Communists' views of forced brain-washing, and the scientific research on transforming the brain functions and hence the personality, by means of medicines, electrical and hormonal treatments or via the genetic engineering approaches, advancing to achieve the high-tech goal of cloning 'superman', etc -- each aims, in its own way, at increasing the 'quality' of life and augmenting the bodily and mental powers of human species.....

The Indian Culture and Philosophy suggests altogether different approach and natural methods for viable progress and absolute evolution in the physical (pertaining to the body and environment), intellectual, emotional as well as the spiritual domains of life.... Acharya Sharma has presented this philosophy in scientific light

with sagacious analysis in this volume. He eloquently explains how the disciplines and *sāadhanā* procedures propagated here could be used even today and the resurrection of divine era could be made a reality.

The scriptural descriptions of "Hanuman jumping over the sea" or "Arjuna's intrepid victory in Mahabharata" - remind us of the miraculous impact of prudent self-confidence, will-power and unperturbed courage. These messages of Ramayana and Gita inspire us to realize our hidden potentials and stand up with dignity to fight and ruin the evil instincts and untoward tendencies.... These also teach all of us, the importance of sincere endeavors towards the awakening of our collective consciousness and divine sentiments. The present volume would serve as an eye-opener for most of us and would also be like an adept guide in helping us find suitable ways of achieving this in the prevailing circumstances of life today.

The in-depth knowledge and realization of spirituality seem to become alive in the pen of Acharya Sharma when he describes the origin, purpose and ultimate goal of human life. He shows us the brightest side of human psychology and motivates divine illumination of our existence.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 54, Brief Introduction

OCCULT FACETS OF THE REAL WORLD

(*Draśya Jagata Kī Adraśya Paheliyān*)

The genesis and expansion of the universe is limitless like the manifestation of its eternal creator. The world we live in is a marvellous expression of Nature in its visible as well as subtle forms. Our world has two components - one which is materialistic or perceivable and the other which is invisible, beyond the normal limits of perception through our sense organs. The electromagnetic waves, radio waves and other energy waves, though being integral part of our life in terms of the splendid applications of sound, heat, light and electricity etc, cannot be perceived directly.... The activities of our physical body at the molecular, cellular and organ levels too are governed by the invisible, intangible, sublime, vital force of *chetana* (eternal cosmic consciousness) existing in our 'living' self.

The three dimensional expansion of the space is endowed with matter, energy and absolute emptiness. Broadly speaking, its constituents are classified as *thala* - solid material forms existing on the earth and other planets; *jala* - water, liquids and all fluids; and *nabha* or *ākāsha* - the limitless ensemble of energy waves and the etheric space of the physical and mental world. What happens deep beneath the earth's surface or within the depths of an ocean - cannot be measured or sensed accurately and completely despite the availability of ultra-sensitive instruments and sophisticated technology. More difficult it becomes in the case of *ākāsha*. The realization of the vital energy, thought waves and other subtle reflections of *chetana* pervaded in this "unlimited hole" is impossible to be achieved only by means of material based science and technology. Human intellect and inner self too cannot even get a 'glimpse' of this sublime world in general....

The existence and importance of the subtle world and the mysteries of Nature is emphasized in this volume. In view of the author, Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya, if the *jada* (perceivable, materialist)

component of Nature is like a living body then the *chetana* or subtle component is like the source of life in this body. Both are essential for the existence of the world. However, the *chetana*, being the cause, the source of universal force and creation and expansion of the *jada*, is of perennial significance. The *chetana* world plays a predominant role in human life as it inspires the gamut of expressions of mind including the inner cores of thoughts and sentiments.

Little do we realize the impact of the subtle environment of *chetana* upon our psychology. The power of *chetana* governs our mental activities and hence orients our deeds and the conditioning of the circumstances of our life as well. The tendencies of our mind, our thoughts and emotional impulses also affect the sublime cosmos of *chetana* around us.... The latter kind of impact becomes significant if mutually compatible or synergistic effects are generated by the collective consciousness of larger number of people.... The vicious cycle created by maligning of the subtle world because of the collective malice of people's thoughts and pernicious passions has given rise to an alarming crisis of faith today. This has resulted in unprecedented decline in moral values and has virtually driven humanity near the edge of tragic extinction.....

Man's faith in the truth of visible world has been substantially strengthened with the support of advanced science and technology today. But, the loss of ancient literature on spirituality and the lack of practical guidance on adopting the spiritual disciplines have minimized the faith of majority in the existence and influence of the subtle world of *chetana*. Studies in Human Psychology too have got narrowed down because of being treated as part of the behavioral science alone. Sentiments of people seem to have got confined only to selfish attachments and self-esteem.... The single tracked evolution of intellect has almost annulled the existence of the subtle world, which is beyond the reach of scientific laboratories.... This, rather prejudiced attitude has led to incomplete development and untoward consequences in terms of - loss of mutual faith, benevolence, love, healthy co-operation and openness in people's

relationships with each other.

Progress, without due consideration of the softer and subtle domains of our thoughts and sentiments, has proved to be counter productive for the modern civilization in more than one respect. The immoral thoughts, mental eroticism, self centered attitude and near total absence of spirituality in most people has shaken the order of the subtle world these days. The subsequent pollution of the *chetana* environment is more dangerous than the pollution of the physical world. Because, the latter may penetrate even the deeper cores of one's inner self and hence toxically adulterate the internal as well as external domains of his life. The multitudes of sorrows, tensions, risks, mistrust, deception, uncertainties and complications seen in people's life these days, despite desired progress and brilliant success on the materialistic front..., affirm this fact - leaving no room for doubt or blind faith about the importance of the subtle world.

Balanced, eco-friendly progress of the materialistic or 'visible' world would have created heavenly environment of life on the earth if equal attention was paid to its subtle counterpart. How could that be achieved in the present circumstances with the help of the science of spirituality and faith - is eloquently explained in this volume. The author's reasoned arguments and thorough discussions are as rational and authentic as those would be in any scientifically justified discipline of knowledge. He cites several examples of Nature's mysteries and wonders, present in the visible world, which make us feel the eternal presence of an omniscient power in every expression of existence. He motivates us to understand the perfect order of the absolute creator which is omnipresent and eternal.

The author describes how every single creation, every form of existence in the visible and in the subtle world is there for some purpose.... Tiniest of the creatures, plants or any other form of life, is endowed with suitable potentials, efficiency and specific features, which reflect the grace of *thee*.... Every activity of matter, every material entity - from subatomic and subtler particles to the huge planets, gigantic oceans and galaxies, etc - existing in the cosmic expansion is co-operating with the other, under the universal laws of

Nature. Other living beings also follow the disciplines of *thee* expressed in the laws of Nature. Why shouldn't then a human being, the exceptionally blessed child of God, obey these disciplines in a natural way? Every man and woman should realize his or her extra responsibilities as the "crown prince" of *thee*. We, as Acharya Sharma reminds, should know that God has created us so that we could contribute towards the betterment of the world and happy and healthy survival of all living beings.

While mentioning the omnipresent *thy*-reflections in "*aṅoraṅīyān*" - subtlest of the subtle.... and "*mahato mahīyān*" - gigantic expansion of the limitless...., Acharya Sharma emphasizes the need of unity, equality and universal love. He explains that every living being, every activity of Nature is connected to the others by a common linkage. Though subliminally, each one depends upon the other. In this context, he also describes the possibilities of understanding the 'voice' and expressions of the animals and birds.

Because of greater evolution of their consciousness, humans have stronger linkage with the *chetana* world. They may awaken their collective consciousness and enlighten the visible world by the radiance of divinity in their inner selves. This volume would elude our blind faith and prejudices and at the same time, educe the acumen, prudence, intrinsic faith and courage which is necessary to endeavor achieving the above objective by spiritual refinement of our lives.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 55, An Introduction

THEISM ROOTS AND REFLECTIONS IN HUMAN LIFE

(*Īśwara Viśwās Aur Usaki Falśrutiyān*)

Faith is a natural quality and essential requirement of human life. Philosophy states - "we think because we believe...., we live because we have faith in life....". But, what is faith in life? Is it the faith in the eternal existence of life-force or in the origin, growth and continuity of life? The very definition of faith implies its intrinsic roots and internal expansion in the deep cores of consciousness and hence supports the above assumptions in affirmation. Intrinsic faith in the piety of the soul and its eternal omnipresent source - is a sublime impulse of spirituality,, a reflection of inner inspirations and the basis of inner strength....

Faith in God means faith in divine values - expressed in truth, love, amity, unity, honesty, purity, austerity, objective creativity, enthusiastic assiduity, zeal, etc, which maintain the certainty and dignity of human life..... Lack of faith in *thee* would mean negligence of compassion, altruism, integrity and discipline in every sphere of life.... Total absence of faith would give absolute freedom to selfish desires, unconsumable passions for sensual pleasures and materialistic possession and comforts. It would also reduce control on audacious autocracy driven by ego, lust and avarice in people's life in general. This impact would sooner or latter result in moral and social anarchy which might eventually destroy the edifice of humanity.... What would be the shape of our life and that of our society then? Will there be any place for peace and happiness?

Great thinkers and propagators of human culture have always emphasized the need for inculcation of faith in high ideals of humanity and moral values emanated from conceptualization and realization of divinity. This has indeed been the basis of religion and theism..... Acharya Sharma's trenchant literature, eloquent deliberations and thorough analysis of different aspects of human life encompasses the decipheration, scientific elucidation and creative implementation of the reality and psychological impact of

"theism". This volume, in particular, presents the nectar of his gigantic knowledge, spiritual sagacity and deeply inspiring views on this topic - derived from his absolute realization of psychology and inner sentiments. It also presents authentic illustrations of the implications and positive impact of "theism" in the physical (worldly), mental and spiritual domains of human life.

In his views, "theism or faith in divinity" is best manifested in self-confidence, strong willpower and immense strength of the inner self.... A "theist" should therefore have unflinching faith in his own reality in the truest sense of the word. The blows of adversities or cyclones of hardships cannot perturb him from his ideal path. He would never be lost in the 'eddy currents' of untoward passions. In the same sense, one who knows his own truth and has firm and non-prejudiced confidence in himself is a theist in reality. This definition and interpretation of theism is in perfect consonance with the Vedant Philosophy of "*Ayamātmā Brahma*" or "*Tatwamasi*"..... It explains the meaning of "theism" in the light of prudence and guides the righteous way of worshipping the deity of life....

The selfish attitude of people today, has narrowed down the definition of divinity and practices of theism as those pertaining to some rituals of worships or religious rites as per the customs of their own community... For most people, the expression of believing *thou* power revolves around worshipping a deity or praying at sacred shrines..... However, as Acharya Sharma's prudent analysis shows, this kind of faith is nothing more than an illusion or a deception.... Rather than inspiring total surrender (of ego and selfish attitude) which is an essential condition for true worship, such misconceptions and blind faith virtually make one a helpless creature who begs before his imaginary God for petty things as part of his 'prayers'. The so called 'atheists', who have faith in the potentials of human mind and who respect the moral dignity of humanity, are better worshipers or believers of divine order as compared to the 'theist' of above kind....

The illusions and misconceptions spread in the name of religion and theism since the medieval era have nurtured orthodox faith and

superstitions in majority of the 'theists' and as a consequence, created some sort of dejection in the minds of the rational thinkers and intellectuals for whom 'faith in God' is nothing more than a sign of ignorance, illusion or emotional excitement. Such a *mélange* of extremes of misconceptions has given rise to a crisis of faith. This is more threatening than any other crisis ever faced by the human society.

Having blind faith or no faith - both extremes are pernicious for the human psychology. Morality, prudence, liberty, justice, eco-friendly mode of life, compassion, mutual trust and co-operation too are shaken under the subtle but deep effects of these extreme states of mind. How could the trend be reversed? How could we inculcate prudent faith in the present and future generations of human society? Trenchant thoughts of Acharya Sharma provide us invaluable guidance in this regard along with enlightening our minds and hearts by the knowledge of the realities and necessities of having faith in our divine origin and *thy* disciplines.

Acharya Sharma describes the eternal realization of *thee* in absolute consonance with the deeper depths of human mind and core of sentiments. There is no place for blind faith, ambiguity, confusion or dejection in his deliberations. In his words - "if it is a must, we may define God as an absolute ensemble of righteous tendencies, ideal virtues; as the eternal source of intrinsic enlightenment and ultimate evolution of consciousness....". Therefore, *thy* worship or faith in HIS omnipresent existence is meaningful only if it inspires adoption of divine virtues and consistently augments the prudence of intellect, generosity and bliss of the heart and purity and strength of the inner self of the devotees (theists)....

The views of renowned scientists, thinkers and great personalities of the modern era are also cited in this volume to support the scientific reasoning, logical basis and relevance of faith in divinity.... The list of references in this context includes - Albert Einstein, Heisenberg, Carl Jung, etc. The author himself represents a remarkable blending of a sage and a scientist, whose life was a perfect example of what he defined as absolute faith in God. His eloquent explanation of theism

in scientific light, his character and deeds, have the potential to educe our faith in divinity and rise our virtuous tendencies accordingly.

The volume does not attempt proving or disproving anything by arguments, rather, it makes us rethink, introspect, analyze and realize the ultimate truth ourselves. Most importantly, it offers unique solution to the unlimited complications of life created by man today because of his negligence of the sublime world of his sentiments, intrinsic aspirations and soft mental tendencies.... It helps us understand how our faith in - the continuity of life, possibilities of rebirth and the realities of natural punishment in return of sins and immoral actions and boons in return of altruist service and other noble deeds..., supports our moral elevation and adds to the maintenance of the ideal order of Nature. Hence it also motivates our creative contribution to the progressive and happy survival of the world.

Faith in God, as Acharya Sharma explains, increases our faith in *thy* creation.... To a true theist therefore, the whole world, the entire expansion of Nature appears as a reflection of *Thy* Will He therefore has natural love for all living beings.... Whole world appears to him as his own and he enjoys the beatitudeous state of "*raso vaisah*". There is no place for fear, tension, evil tendencies, bitterness of relations, agonies or scarcities in the life of a true theist.

The nectar of absolute bliss, for which, the soul strives in every life against ego, avarice and selfish attachments, is naturally enshowered by the feeling of *thy* presence in every moment of life....

In essence, faith in God and realization of *thy* presence, divine blessings and guidance appear to offer a source of immense bliss, peace and righteous progress of human life. Foresighted wisdom should therefore endeavor inculcate and expand true faith in the eternal disciplines and love of the Almighty.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 56, An Introduction

SAGACITY, STRENGTH AND SPIRITUAL RADIANCE OF MIND

(*Manasvitā, Prakharatā Aur Tejasvitā*)

The amazing potentials of spirituality manifested in the visible world often appear to be supernatural or mysterious. The associated phenomena appear as unreal or impossible to most of us because of non-compatibility of the "cause-effect relationship" vis-à-vis the known laws of Nature. However, those, who have realised the deeper depths of human mind see these as the natural effects of refinement and focused use of the immense powers of firm determination and intrinsic orientation of the activated vital force of the subconscious, uncounscious and superconscious layers of mind.

The potentials of human mind - reflected in intellect, sentiments and inner aspirations, unless channelized creatively towards clearly focused objectives, remain engaged in imaginary thoughts and dreams which might serve well the purpose of entertainment, self-satisfaction or mere time-pass, but are good for nothing else.

Because of the agile tendency of mind and its general nature of searching joy in comforts, it likes to rove in the colored dreamland of illusive plans triggered by its ever-new ambitions and imaginations.... Lots of people around us may be seen engrossed in the hype of optimism without proper planning or creative orientation of their ideas and sincere endeavors. Their 'dreams' of success seldom materialize and hardly offer any thing other than irritation of failures and feeling of despair.... The major causes of their failures is lack of - talents, vision and firm determination.

Positive thinking coupled with strong will power naturally cultivates the creative zeal and helps one endeavor what may lead to marvellous success in the chosen domain of life.... At the root of astonishing potentials of human body and mind lies the awakened force of determination and unperturbed zeal of the inner self. Acharya Sharma had always encouraged and inspired inculcation and active elevation of this zeal - *Manasvitā*. The brilliance of

intellect, excellence of creative talents and sagacity of mind are, in his views, manifestation of this inner power.

In his words - "firm resolution, before sincere endeavor for aimed goal...., is like sowing the seeds in a field. Like a farmer works hard, takes care of the saplings and organizes necessary means for safe growth of the crops, a determined person too should make best use of his or her potentials and willpower to steadily proceed towards the deserving goal...." . He defines *samkalpa* - sincere pledge with firm determination, as an expression of *Manasvitā* - the vital force of inner mind.

When one sincerely vows or resolves to endeavor for achieving a target after thorough evaluation of his own potentials vis-à-vis clear vision of the likely difficulties along the chosen path...., and sows the seed of *samkalpa* in his alert mind, he almost ensures the success well in advance. Glorious accomplishment of a *samkalpa* materializes only if the latter is creatively adopted and followed as sincerely as an ascetic discipline (*vrata*). No hindrance, adversity, passion or avarice could disturb the one who is bond by a true *samkalpa*. Eminent success is certainly attainable by such courageous personalities who are endowed with *Manasvitā*.

This volume elucidates the meaning, realization, source of expansion and escalation, and creative use of *Manasvitā*. It also unfolds the secrets of supernatural expression of talents and the achievements of the architects of world history. It illustrates how the intrepid kings, trenchant scholars, scientists, great social reformers and yogis like - Alexander the Great, Maharana Pratap, Garrison, Darwin, Chanakya, Winston Churchill, Paramhans Yogananda, etc, had attained glorious success because of their *Manasvitā* and dedication to the *samkalpa*. Added to this, the adept guidance of Acharya Sharma on the adoption of positive thinking as a virtuous habit and arousal of willpower make this volume, a masterpiece of deliberations on "Total Psychology and adept Development of Personality".

Manasvitā of morally refined talents, which would set the foundation of the bright era in the offing. The *Manasvitā* of spiritually enlightened saints, foresighted and altruist social reformers, eminent intellectuals and talented personalities, if oriented for a common cause, can change the flow of time and architect the future of mankind. The larger the number of such people in the society, the faster would be the dawn of the luminous era of progress, peace and prosperity. The author describes this as an urgent need of this time.

Realising the importance of people's psychology in motivation of their zeal and hence in healthy progress of their lives, Acharya Sharma advocates refinement and creative orientation of people's thinking. He explains the science of thoughts, sentiments and intrinsic tendencies, up to the deepest depths of spirituality, which enlightens and empowers one's zeal and willpower. The mutual dependence of inner sentiments, aspirations, mental tendencies, attitude, positive thinking, vital energy and *Manasvitā*, is thoroughly analyzed by him along with eloquent guidance concerning the different aspects of joys, hopes and emotional immensity of human life. He cites ample examples of relevance in our day-to-day life and helps us improve our own attitude and activate the 'currents' of *Manasvitā* hidden in our inner self.

The thoughts and aspirations, which have greater impact on the delicate regions of our sentimental core, create deeper impression on our unconscious mind. Repeated assimilation of these inculcates corresponding tendencies, which gradually become integral part of our nature.... We should therefore avoid negative thinking, untoward desires and attempt cultivating reasoned optimism, focused contemplation and noble aspiration of refinement and elevation. This volume offers practical guidance on mastering this art.

Conjunction of positive attitude with zeal enhances the level of vital energy in the body and activates healthy secretion of hormones. This, coupled with mental concentration and creativity, synergistically augments one's enthusiasm, sagacious potentials and strength and

brightens one's talents as well. Combination of creative enthusiasm and industriousness of the body with the keen interest and focused determination and endeavor of mind - is an excellent *yoga*, for the escalation of *Manasvitā*, which is the "magical key" to success in every walk of life.

Manasvitā is a manifestation of an evolved state of human consciousness. Life without it is nothing more than that of any other mortal being. A physically healthy man or woman would practically be like a reptile or a parasite if he or she lacks in this power of inner mind. A severely handicapped person would, on the contrary, may make significant success and set an example for others with the help of his *Manasvitā*. Spontaneous flow of this spring of zeal and inner strength is essential for enchanting liveliness, progress and excellent success.

The aura of vital energy around one's body is illuminated by his *Manasvitā*. The sagacity of one's brilliant intellect - *Prakharatā*, adds to clearer appearance of this aura especially around the head. Purity of character is reflected in the nitid radiance (*Tejasvitā*) of this aura. Different shades of the 'spectrum' of this aura are associated with different levels of one's inner instincts and overall personality. Rare information on recognition of one's latent character and evaluation of one's personality by study of his aura is also included in this volume....

Subtler facets of the powers of human mind, are elucidated here in the context of the scriptural quote "*Shraddhamayooyam Purūṣaḥ Yo Yacchdraḥ Sa Eva Saḥ*" - which indicates the eternal influence of intrinsic faith upon orientation of *Manasvitā*, *Prakharatā* and *Tejasvitā*.

The state of mind directs the thoughts and actions and thereby determines the ultimate state of the life of an individual. Everybody experiences the immense power of mind in day-to-day life. It is indeed the mind, which, depending upon its *sanskāras* (inherent tendencies) and *shraddhā* (intrinsic faith), leads the individual self

towards a life bonded by the materialistic attachments and agony of unlimited desires, or, to a liberated life glowing with beatified blissfulness....

Piety of inner self and intrinsic faith in divine virtues and *thy*-disciplines help *Manasvitā*, *Prakharatā* and *Tejasvitā*, culminate up to their absolute levels.... and, reach high realms of divinity. The *Manasvitā* of the devil giants of great bodily and intellectual potentials and talents, can, on the contrary, lead only to destruction and decline in the personal and social life.

The source of attainment of orgulous brilliance, exceptional talents and all round progress lies in our own zeal, willpower, purity of sentiments, and positive orientation of our thoughts. The secrets of the powers of mind and the guidance for day-to-day life presented in this volume would enable us realize this source and enrich our lives with the treasure of marvellous boons of *Manasvitā*, *Prakharatā* and *Tejasvitā*.....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 57, Brief Introduction

EVOLUTION OF THE SELF BY TRUE KNOWLEDGE

(*Ātmotkarṣa Kā Ādhāra Gyāna*)

G *yāna* - absolute depth and expansion of righteous knowledge, contains the source of deciphering the ultimate truth.... Acharya Sharma had devoted his exceptionally bright intellect, sagacious eloquence and spiritual talents for the noble purpose of enlightening people across the globe by the pious glow of *Gyāna*. He aimed that righteous knowledge be adopted in action, in every dimension of life, rather than being confined within the peripheries of philosophical deliberations and abstract intellectual discussions. For him, propagation of *Gyāna* was meaningful only if it could enable the masses learn the art of living a happy, progressive and serene life and motivate the 'social animal' to rise and gradually reach the glorious state of a 'divine being'. Different volumes of the *vangmaya* series express the gamut of different domains of *Gyāna* elucidated by him for this purpose.

The present volume represents the complete meaning, eternal existence and universal nature of *Gyāna*. It may be identified as the foundation stone of the edifice of the "Vichar Kranti Abhiyan" initiated by Acharya Sharma for creative materialization of his noble purpose of distributing the nectar of *Gyāna* to improve the quality of life on the earth. This volume also gives the details on the programmes implemented under the above *abhiyān* (mission) of refinement and creative orientation of people's talents and thoughts.

Elimination of evil tendencies of mind, perverted mentality, untoward thoughts and negative attitude by positive thinking and righteous knowledge is among the fundamental objectives of this "Vichar Kranti" mission. It is indeed remarkable to note, how Acharya Sharma has made this movement perfect in terms of suitability for people with different psychological, educational and social backgrounds, who are living under different circumstances of life.

Shikshā and *vidyā* are the principle modes of propagation of knowledge (ref. vol. 49 of the *vangmaya* series). These two are mutually

complementary components of absolute education. *Shikshā* deals with school education, which begins with literacy and endows one with the knowledge, rather information, about the external activities of life and the visible world. It makes one 'qualified' for self-reliance in earning his living and developing skilled talents and expertise in specific disciplines of worldly knowledge.

Vidyā deals with what could be attributed to the knowledge and realization of the inner world. It goes far deeper from the behavioral science of human mind and enables self-analysis, refinement and development of personality with integrity of character, and awakening of virtuous tendencies, which set the foundation of human dignity. There may be little hope of materialistic development and attainment of worldly comforts of life in the absence of *shikshā*. But, there certainly appears no possibility of viable progress and persistence of peace and happiness in human life, without *vidyā*. In fact, materialistic progress cannot serve its true purpose without being accompanied by *vidyā*.

Illumination and escalation of human life at personal as well as social levels, depends upon inculcation of *vidyā*. Comprehensive evaluation of one's personality should therefore be done with respect to his *vidyā* rather than *shikshā*. Negligence of this aspect in the modern times has given rise to what Acharya Sharma calls - "a crisis of faith". The rising heat of this crisis might evaporate the nectar of intrinsic faith in divine values of humanity and dry up the currents of the soothing sentiments of love and compassion, if the spring of *Gyāna* offered by *vidyā* is stopped completely.

Sadgyāna is that stream of righteous knowledge, which awakens the divine sentiments hidden in our inner selves. It is *Sadgyāna*, which inspires the driving force for upward journey along the ideal path of truth. It also inspires true devotion. It is like a '*pāras*' which illuminates every sphere of life with divine glow and bestows the boons of prudence and righteous attitude, which open up the treasures of peace, happiness and prosperity. Acharya Sharma's words and deeds illustrate how *Sadgyāna* can offer realistic solutions to every kind of problems being faced by the human society today.

Acharya Sharma's literature is unique not only in terms of its expansion and depth, but also, in its vivid expressions and its intimacy with the internal and external domains of life and the world as a whole. His thoughts represent every impulse of knowledge and his inspirations can penetrate every fold of our minds and hearts. This visionary had affirmed "propagation and adoption of *Sadgyāna*" as the crucial need of the day and had declared it as the motto of the revolution motivated by *Mahākāla* - the Supreme Force and Order of Time, God of Eternity and Divine Spirit of Nature - as part of the resurrection of divine culture in the new era.....

"*Nahi Gyānena Sadrasham Pavitramahi Vidyate*" - this quote of the holy Gita recognizes *Gyāna* as the most pious source leading to the ultimate goal of life. This message is recalled in the present volume with practical guidance on how the piety of righteous knowledge eliminates the vices of our thoughts. The author emphasizes the inversion (upright change) or the inverted (untoward) mentality of the masses by the creative force of *sadgyāna*, which is presented here in an easy-to-grasp and inspiring manner.

Acharya Sharma had set live example of the authenticity and feasibility of the above endeavor - of refining people's faith, convictions, attitudes and mode of living, by promoting "*Gyāna Yagya*" as integral part of the creative programmes of altruist service and social reformation undertaken by his organization at Shantikunj, Hardwar. This volume gives details on the meaning and methods of performing *Gyāna Yagyas* and cites information about the centres, spread across the globe, which guide, support and implement these noble activities under the auspices of Gayatri Pariwar, Shantikunj, Hardwar.

The Vedic hymn "*Aroha Tamaso Jyotih*" inspires us to come out of the dark well of ignorance and move towards the sacred glow of *Gyāna*.... One's ignorance about himself is described here as his nearest and biggest enemy. The term "*Ātma Gyāna*" refers to the true knowledge and realization of one's own self, its origin, internal character, eternal existence and ultimate goal. *Ātma Gyāna* is affirmed as the highest state of *Gyāna* in the science of spirituality.

"How and why to attain *Ātma-Gyāna*?" - this natural question, existing in the mind of almost every seeker of knowledge, is adeptly addressed by Acharya Sharma. Because of his perfect understanding of people's psychology, value systems and philosophies of life, the methods of *swādhyāya*, *satsanga* and *pragyā-yoga*, suggested by him for self-realization, self-analysis, self-evaluation, and self-elevation, are most suitable for today's society.

The importance of *Gyāna* cannot be described in words.... *Gyāna* is the source of enlightenment and transmutation of the physical, mental and spiritual domains of life. It penetrates the smog of the evil tendencies of mind, which gather because of illusion and ignorance. *Gyāna* assimilated in one life is said to move in the form of divine *sanskāras* (inherent tendencies) with the individual self in successive lives of the latter. *Sadgyāna* is the power of the soul and the basis of spiritual eminence and evolution of human life.

The edifice of the divine culture of ancient India was built by the *rishis* on the stout foundation of *Gyāna*. The remarkable influence of *Gyāna* on the lives of the great personalities is seen in the later ages as well. Unfortunately, in the modern times, the excessive use of only few dimensions - namely, those pertaining to the science of matter and knowledge of the perceptible world, of *Gyāna* has narrowed down its impact in people's life. Prejudiced dominance of extrovert attitude and *shikshā* has waned out the relevance of *vidyā* in today's world. Therefore, *Sadgyāna* has practically become an abstract philosophical concept for most of us....

The present volume is like an oasis in the desert of the buried sentiments, among the mirages of 'wise' ignorance found in our lives today. Sincere practice of *swādhyāya*, *satsanga* and *pragyā-yoga*, as described here and attainment of *vidyā* would enable us fetch the nectar of *Sadgyāna* from this oasis for making the ancient tree of divine culture blossom again....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 58, An Introduction

BREAKING THE SHELL OF UNTOWARD TRADITIONS

(*Pratigāmitā Kā Kuchakra Aaise Tutegā*)

Healthy traditions and customs which are justified on the grounds of prudence and unprejudiced relevance and which have passed the test of changing times, provide stable support, guidance and continuity to the progress of a society or nation. These also help establishing perennial norms of discipline in public life and serving the purpose of training people's minds in specific directions. However, lots of firmly rooted religious and social customs prevalent in different societies, appear to be mere demonstrations of rigidity. People follow them more because of convention, compulsion or orthodox beliefs.

Orthodox traditions, superstitions and customs followed because of blind faith deteriorate the foundation of a society and prevent its progress on economic, political, scientific and technological fronts too. Post medieval Indian society is the best illustration of this negative effect.... Acharya Sharma has analyzed the status and impact of such untoward customs and traditions in the human society in general. The Indian society of today, has been the major focus of his "*Yug Nirmāṇ*" mission of initiating a new era of ideal developments....

Mass education through religious platform and constructive integration of science and spirituality - are propagated by Acharya Sharma's mission in consonance with the social reformation programmes, with special emphasis on improving the day-to-day life of people.... These also aim at inspiring elevation at personal, social, professional, intellectual and spiritual levels.... This volume presents the unique features and details of implementation of his ideas of comprehensive social reformation via refinement of people's thinking.

Although, a significant rise in social awareness is noted in the Indian society with the increase in literacy, education and scientific

developments, lot more needs to be done here. Despite the dedicated efforts of some eminent social reformers of the pre- and post-independence India, the Indian society has not been able to get rid of the pernicious convictions of orthodox mentality, superstitions and exploitation in the name of religion. The influence of castism and communalism is indeed a curse on this society. Inequality between man and woman, the system of dowry attached with girl's marriage, extravagant showoff in wedding ceremonies, feast as part of the 'religious' rituals performed after the death of near relatives, sacrificing animals to 'worship' the imaginary Gods..., etc, are like the ulcers of leprosy on the body of the Indian society, which has been weakened and deprived of healthy development since the medieval era of cultural and moral decline. Eradication of these social evils through their roots is a must if we want to usher into a new, bright era.

No economic, political, educational, or even social-revolution can grant desired and viable changes in a nation or society unless its people are aware and ready to accept those changes through heart. Before attempting the elimination of social evils and wrong traditions in the 'backward' society like the Indian, one must investigate the causes and depths of their roots in the lives of common people. Acharya Sharma has adeptly analyzed these aspects and offered detailed guidance for collective efforts of the individuals and the organizations, which care and work for the development and discerning refinement of every unit of this society.

Acharya Sharma's thorough knowledge, acumen, and deeper reach up to the inner cores of human mind and heart and his sagacious understanding of the mutual intimacy and interdependence of religion, spirituality and human psychology, have made his approach most comprehensive like that of the ancient Indian sages (*rishis*). His serene love for all living beings and his intuitive realization of the divinity existing in each one of us - makes his deliberations more vivid, prudently reasoned and realistic...

The religious faith and spirituality of Indian mind was the source of its strength and divine culmination in the ancient times.... The

gradual confinement of the philosophy of religion, and the science of spirituality, in the narrow peripheries of abstract intellectual thoughts had over-shadowed the nitid glow and blocked the ever-expanding flow of religious spirit in the latter ages....

The selfish motives of the mighty 'religious masters' or 'community leaders' in the medieval era had worsened the situation to the worst possible levels. Exploitation of the faith and simplicity of the masses, on the one hand, and the widespread ignorance and near total absence of wisdom in the minds of the oppressed ones, on the other, had led to the misuse of religion in this period. Moral decline on the social front was a natural consequence. The religious hypocrisies, castism, superstitions and customs nurtured in this dark phase of Indian history had practically ruined the structure of the social as well as the religious system.

While discussing the inherent difficulties in achieving social elevation, the author reviews the complications of the highly diversified, constitutionally liberal but mentally enslaved, society of India. He focuses at the root cause - hidden in people's mentality. He has propounded a three-fold solution targeting refinement and development at personal, familial, and social levels. For the first level, he has emphasized change of attitude, inculcation of righteous thinking, and creative orientation of sentiments by way of self-analysis, sincere *swādhyāya* and motivating *satsanga*. The volumes numbered 2, 20 and 21 of the vangmaya series cover these aspects in detail with practical guidance and live examples.

The importance of righteous development of the family institution in the modern times is described in the volume no. 48 of this series. A crucial basis for the familial and social development, is the marriage institution. The evils of dowry, extravagant celebrations and a large number of absurd customs associated with traditional marriages in India have been identified by the author as the major obstructions in proper progress of this society. These untoward customs have destroyed the high ideals of the marriage institution which were established under the divine culture of ancient India and have maligned the inherited glory of this great country. Analysis of the

factors responsible for such aberrations and detailed information and guidance on the effective programmes for elimination of these social curses - are covered in detail in the next volume. The other illogical customs and traditions associated with the marriage institution, such as - the abominable practices of child marriage, ill treatment of widows etc, propagated in the name of religion, are heavily criticized in this volume.

The author's critical analysis and rational discussions are so realistic and effective that even the ardent supporter or faithful followers of above kinds of untoward traditions would have to rethink and realize their ignorance and prejudices.... Implementation of the social reformation programmes of his mission - aimed at uprooting such wrong customs and traditions from the religious and social system, are also highlighted in this volume.

Notably, Acharya Sharma is among the rare saints and spiritual masters, who had supported the ideas and practices of remarriage of widows, prohibition of child-marriages, strict control over population growth, etc, and propagated these progressive trends from the religious platform. The dowry-less and non-expensive marriages arranged and conducted under the banner of his mission have been a great success. These marriages are performed according to the original *vedic* traditions and there is no place for discrimination in terms of caste or social status etc.

The present volume elucidates the evils and dangers of religious misconceptions and associated rituals and rites followed in the Indian society. The superstitious practices and blind faith prevalent among the masses are discussed here with special attention on the weaknesses and complexities of psychology behind them. Such is the influence of psychological makeup and assimilated tendencies, that, even the erudite scholars and scientifically progressive people are sometimes seen driven by superstitions and insane convictions in one way or the other.

In the above context, Acharya Sharma has also unmasked the 'skills' of the so-called 'astrologers', 'swamis', 'religious masters', etc, who

have been exploiting people's faith . The unscientific and illogical (mis) interpretations propagated by such people have given bad name to the Hindu religion and the ancient sciences of *yoga* and spirituality.

The misinterpretation of religious scriptures and the insane traditions emanated from there, gravitate the dejection of bright minds from the ancient streams of knowledge, on the one hand and add to absurdity in the name of traditions, on the other. The vicious cycle so generated also widens the distance of the wise and forward lookers from the so-called backward sections of the society. The latter thus have less opportunities of coming out of the well of ignorance in want of proper guidance and learning by interaction with the formers.

The author's prudent arguments, lucid style of presentation, and intimacy with the people's psychology, make his views and guidance more effective. He enlightens the mind with the knowledge of - what is wrong and why? What is true and what is not? Most importantly, he inspires courage and motivation in us to fight against our own weaknesses, wrong convictions, halucinating faith and superstitions which often keep us abide by the wrong traditions and practices.

May this volume inspire each one of us to participate in reversal of the backward and wrong traditions into forward and righteous ones on the social and religious fronts of our lives and thus prepare to welcome the revival of the divine culture.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 59, An Introduction

REFORMATION OF THE MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

(*Vivāhonmāda: Samasyā Aur Samādhāna*)

Marriage is a sacred relationship. It is supposed to associate two souls. Marriage institution unites the complementary potentials of man (husband) and woman (wife) so that both together, work for mutual elevation and contribute - as *sadgrahastha* (ideal married couple), to the healthy development of the family institution and hence also to the progress of the society. Marriage institution also supports and strengthens moral disciplines, which are essential for maintaining social values. In principle, it sets the stout foundation of the development of a good society by cultivating a sense of responsibilities among the married couples (*grahasthas*).

The union of two would-be life partners for a better future of both - is naturally an event full of hope, enthusiasm and cheerfulness for the concerned individuals, their families, relatives and friends. Collective sharing of the feeling of joy, mutual trust, benevolence and co-operation on such occasions is the basic motive behind celebration of weddings. The tradition of celebration of wedding with friends and relatives is also a formal declaration before the society of the fact that the concerned couple has tied the nuptial knot and has thereby accepted the responsibilities and moral disciplines of married life. Incorporation of religious rites in wedding marks the piety and righteous structure of marriage institution. The ideal rites and rituals for such occasions should inspire deeper sentiment of the divine grace of the linkage being set between the two individuals.

The religious nature, moral disciplines, importance and social and psychological relevance of the marriage institution in the modern times are discussed in vols. 48 and 61 of the Vangmaya series. The present volume focuses on the misconceptions and the untoward practices and absurd customs associated with the celebration of weddings - especially in the Indian society today.

Varieties of rituals and modes of celebrating weddings are popular in different parts of the world. However, the diversities and absurdities of the associated customs found in India alone appear to be most significant by every measure. Different components of the Indian society have their own traditions and modes of wedding-celebrations. For most people, following these traditions becomes necessary because of social compulsions, or, as an outcome of pompous status symbol.

The customs of dowry - given from the bride's side (or the bridegroom's side, in rare cases) is the worst of the illogical and even inhumane practices observed in majority of traditional Indian marriages.... The vicious combination of avarice and ignorance has worsened the impact of this 'curse' on the Indian society. In many cases, because of this evil, marriage has practically become equivalent to 'an auction of the bridegroom'. The demanding side wants the return of every single penny it has spent on growing the boy and also wants 'enough' for the future comforts and luxuries of his family..... The other side too is often seen competing and 'buying' the best match for the girl by paying maximum price (dowry). The amount of this deal usually increases with the 'qualities' of the boy and the 'non-qualities' of the girl.

Educated or illiterate, rich or poor, most people, including those belonging to the so-called modern and westernized sections of the civilized society - are party to this shameful act, either as donors or receivers of dowry. Ironically, even the people, who have faced severe problems in arranging their daughter's marriage because of dowry, do not hesitate in making any demand before the family of the 'would be' daughter-in-law. The average number, per year, of suicides, murders, and similar attempts, resulting from 'non fulfillment' of the demands of the boy's (husband's), is so high which would make any sensible person feel the pains of humanity through heart. It should make each awakened man and woman furious and ashamed for the misdeeds of his own society that promotes such heinous customs....

Despite being abandoned under law and facing the best efforts of many social organizations, the 'blot' of this immoral, inhumane,

practice has not been wiped out from the face of Indian society. The custom of dowry coupled with the crazy competition of spending huge sums in gorgeous showoff, fireworks, lavish food, and other 'celebrations', during wedding - is indeed the biggest barrier on development of the social and economic systems of India. In Acharya Sharma's words - "the combination of avarice, cruelty, and stupidity, seen in the wedding celebrations increases poverty, corruption and socioeconomic disparities prevailing in our country.... People, who nurture and propagate such evil 'traditions', should be treated as traitors of the nation....".

The burden of dowry - especially in the middle and lower economic classes, and the maddening craze for 'status symbol' - especially in the affluent section of the society, promote corrupt practices in one form or the other. How would one who gets limited salary by honest means and who has no other source of income in possession, marry his daughter(s)? In average case, he sees only two options - let his daughters suffer the agony of 'ill-omened' life or, somehow arrange for sufficient money towards dowry, without caring for the morality of means.... On the other extreme, "Who would 'burn' hard earned money in pompous shows of gorgeous weddings? Here too, the money and other resources earned by dishonest practices make all the show....

It is pathetic to see that a poor country, where more than half of the world's second largest population lives below the poverty line, has been suffering the dual attacks of social and economic degradation because of the above evils.... The poor become poorer in somehow arranging the marriages of their daughters. The ignorance and social pressures continue to deprive the girls of their due rights; as a result, almost half the population of this nation of great heritage, is found living like oppressed parasites... Where is the hope for betterment? What is the effective solution? This volume brings positive answers with substantial guidance on feasible actions.

In this volume, Acharya Sharma has perspicuously analyzed the roots and grandeur of the insane practices and unethical customs incorporated in celebrations of wedding. His eloquent views, on - how dowry ruins the very purpose of marriage institution and

destroys the ideal basis of family institution, must reach every would-be married couple. The touching description of the status of women suffering because of this social evil indeed represents the inner pains of his divine heart....

Acharya Sharma emphasizes the need to cure the roots of the 'social disease' of 'wedding-celebrations infected by dowry and extravagant show'. He prescribes the best remedy as - elimination of ignorance and fear of the masses, refinement of people's thinking, reorientation of their convictions and faith, and gives practical guidance with live examples in this volume. His words have the power to penetrate people's mind and convince them through heart that future lies in progressive changes and not in rigid traditions.

He has set shining examples for other social organizations and for the people, who too want to liberate the Indian society from the clutches of dowry, orthodox traditions and mindless 'religious' practices observed during weddings. He has implemented what he suggested as comprehensive approach towards refinement of marriage institution in India. The increasing popularity of ideal marriages propagated by his mission ("Gayatri Pariwar") illustrates his authenticity.

The concept of "ideal-marriage", proposed by him, appears to be in perfect consonance with the original glory and great purpose of the marriage institution. These marriages are performed free-of-cost and according to the *vedic* norms, in a matter of few hours. Dowry and expensive arrangements are strictly prohibited here. Mutual compatibility - of the bride and the bridegroom and of their respective families - is given maximum importance here, without any barrier of caste or social status.... The simplicity of the ceremony and authenticity of the religious rites has made this method, popularly known as the "*Gayatri Paddhati Vivāha*", widely acceptable in different classes of the Indian society in a short span of few decades.

The morally charged atmosphere created during above kinds of ideal wedding-celebrations, enlightens all those who attend those

functions and thus serves the purpose of expanding social awareness. All those present on the occasion, including ofcourse the newly wedded couple, are asked to pledge to discard and oppose the misdeeds of dowry and expensive weddings.... This collective resolution generates courage among these people as they see that others, similar to them, are capable of contributing towards the reformation of marriage institution in a big way.....

It is the collective responsibility of all of us to improve a system, which is an integral part of our personal, social and national life. Individually, we may not be in a position to do much on the social front, but, we certainly can be one among the many, who advocate the righteous modes guided by the great social reformers of our times. This volume will serve as a living guide, to enable us contribute in the collective effort of resurrecting the system of ideal marriages - which will be the greatest service to our society today.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 60, An Introduction

The work of moulding and preparing vibrant and brilliant workers was taken in hand at Haridwar and for this Prāṇ pratyāvartan camps, Yug-shilpī camps, Vānprastha camps of the duration of one month each were organised. The holy atmosphere of Shantikunj situated on the banks of the holy Ganga in the lap of the Himālayas surcharged with spiritual vibrations attracted and inspired hundreds of persons who participated in the series of small and big Gāyatrī-puraścaraṇas which were started here for general category of sādḥaks. Side by side, the training of self-sacrificing vānprasthīs, who had dedicated their entire life in the service of this mission, also continued.

-- Excerpts from "My Life Its Legacy and Message"
Autobiography of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya

MARRIED LIFE: AN IDEAL PHASE FOR ASCETIC PRACTICES

(*Grahashta : Eka Tapovana*)

The *grahashta āshrama* is that phase of life in which one is supposed to enjoy married life, look after the family and children's development and also contribute to the materialistic growth of the society. It is in this *āshrama* that one has to make best use of his or her potentials on multiple fronts of the responsibilities of personal, professional, familial and social life. The importance of this *āshrama* has been admired by the *rishis* - the scholarly sages, experts of the philosophy and science of human life, as - "*dhānyo grasthāśramah*". All the other *āshramas*, associated with the other three major phases of human life, depend upon this *āshrama*, like a living being depending upon his mother.

The structure and strength of the family institution and hence of the society also resides on the foundation of *grahashta āshrama*. In its ideal form, this *āshrama* shapes the future of the society, the nation, and the world as a whole by producing ideal citizens of its successive generations. This phase of married life is like a laboratory for practical training and experience of cooperative coexistence and co-development along with collective sharing of love, success, responsibilities, sorrows, and the gamut of other sentimental expressions and activities of human life.... It is only in this *āshrama* that one naturally learns to love, care, tolerate, compromise, and sacrifice for others without any selfish or ascetic motive. The best lessons of service and sharing are also learnt and brought in practical use during this *āshrama*.

Healthy, happy and progressive coexistence cannot be achieved without sacrificing the egotist and selfish attitude. The key to successful married life lies in the hands of both the husband and the wife. Each one has to respect and understand the other. The glory attributed to the *grahashta āshrama* in the Indian culture can be realized only if the life-partners care for the health, happiness and

progress of each other and also support mutual elevation in intellectual, mental and spiritual domains.

The principles and disciplines prescribed for this *āshrama* under the Indian culture and philosophy of life are based on the in-depth analysis of the complications of human psychology and varied circumstances of life in general. These, if followed sincerely, ensure ideal success of married life. How these could be adapted in the present times, under increasing pressures of the modern circumstance of life, is guided by Acharya Sharma in this volume. The meaning, purpose, and necessity of the marriage institution are also discussed here with elucidation of the enormous boons that could be offered by disciplined married life, where, sexual desire is transmuted into serene love, cheerful co-operation and enhanced vital energy.

If we look at the status of the marriage institution today, we largely see the contrast of what it is supposed to be by the original definition of the *grahastha āshrama*. Marriage today is mostly viewed as some sort of a 'contract' for mutual comfort and security, or as a socially approved license for satisfying uncontrollable concupiscence. Expression of love between the wife and the husband has, for the majority of people today, practically become synonymous with sexual indulgence for physical proximity and carnal pleasure.

In the societies like the post medieval Indian society, 'marriage' often means a right, granted by the society to the husband and his relatives, for exploitation of the wife and her family. The weapon of dowry plays a predominant role in such adversities. The roots and magnitude of the social problems caused by the social evil of dowry and its poisonous effects on the delicacy of the marriage institution are critically discussed in detail in the previous volume of this series along with adept guidance for eradication of such customs. Information on the feasibility and popularity of a new mission of ideal marriages is also cited there in this context.

The attitude of a couple towards the morality, discipline and piety of the marriage institution has significant, though subtle, impact on the

environment of life of the concerned individuals and the psychological development of their children too.... The split in family institution, social anarchy, and the increasing crime rates, mental and physical abnormalities and weaknesses of one kind or the other, found in the children today - are the natural consequences of the ignorance, shaken faith and negligence of people towards the philosophy and disciplines of *grahastha āshrama*.

The ignorance of the married couples about the disciplines of healthy sex, not only results in uncontrolled growth of population, it also weakens the physical and mental health of both - the husband and the wife. The wife has to bear multiple burdens as she also loses her strength with the delivery of each child.... The pernicious impressions of the medieval era - where, women were treated as mere tools of sensual pleasure of the men and thousands of wives and mistresses were kept like animals in the harems of the lusty kings and the perverted riches....., have not been wiped out completely...

In many parts of the world, women are still treated as second grade citizens. How can one expect progressive movement of the reformation of marriage institution in a society where one wheel of the 'cart' of married life is smaller and weaker than the other? On the other extreme, is the case of "women liberation", misinterpreted in some sections of the ultra modern societies, as the liberty of exposition of woman's body. Excessive attention to the bodily charm and looks...., in the crazy world of advertisements and modelling, on the one hand, and the passion for free-sex in the 'forward' and 'advanced' generations of such societies, on the other, have caused equal harm to the ideal basis and purpose of the marriage institution.

The social impact of diminishing dignity of the marriage institution and of the broken families is discussed with authentic reports in volume 48 of this series. The focus of the present volume rests mainly on marriage - as a vital relationship, a discipline, a source of reaching great goals of life vis-à-vis the psychological and social relevance of the *grahastha āshrama*. The thorough views of Acharya Sharma on "*grahastha āshrama* - as a *yoga*" presented here make this volume more distinct and precious.

A perspicuous analysis of the multitude of interconnected problems associated with the marriage institution is presented here with relevant review of the social, economical, religious, educational and psychological facets of direct or indirect influence. Possible solutions are discussed with inspiring guidance on refinement of people's mentality towards the marriage institution.

The author also trenchantly criticizes the misdeeds of orthodox traditions, which are based on deliberate misinterpretations of the religious scriptures and emotional exploitation of the delicacy of the marriage institution. His perfect hold on human psychology enables him present the facts with vivid power of expression, which can penetrate even the rigid minds and stony hearts and inspire the latter to change their outlook and mode of living in concordance with the inherent serenity, beauty and responsibilities of married life.

Acharya Sharma's sagacious discussions of - "how a disciplined married life is a perfect *yoga*", would enlighten every thoughtful mind about how a balanced, duty-bound, healthy and progressive married life is also the best phase of life for psychological and spiritual refinement and rise. He has cited many real life examples to illustrate the practicalities. His married life itself stands as a shining example of how the highest realms of spirituality could be achieved in the ideal *grahastha āshrama*. It is indeed in the fitness of the things that the essence of the philosophy and modalities of the *grahastha āshrama* are presented here by his lucid pen.

This volume should motivate people to elevate their own potentials, become better persons in all respects and contribute to the glorious progress of the society by observing the moral disciplines of the *grahastha āshrama* described here. The deliberations of Acharya Sharma on "*grahastha as yoga*", would also add to higher level interdisciplinary research in the fields of sociology, psychology and the science of spirituality and yoga.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 61, An Introduction

TWENTY FIRST CENTURY: A CENTURY OF WOMEN

(*Ikkīsavīn Sadī: Nārī Sadī*)

The twenty-first century is going to bring many-fold changes in the world order.... Prophecies of great many visionaries affirm the grand transformations, in the subtle world, which are going to write the fate of the world in a new script... Those, who can feel the eternal impulses of the flow of the perpetual consciousness of Nature, have predicted revival of the "age of truth". Authentic details on the scientific reasoning, implications and mode of realization of such possibilities are presented by Acharya Sharma in volume nos. 28 and 29 of the vangmaya series. This particular volume deals with upright changes in the social scenario, with special reference to the status of women in the 'new world' of the new millenium.

This volume gives historical details on how the glorious state of womanhood of the *vedic* era got deteriorated to the present state of all round exploitation of women. It highlights the multiple dimensions of the problem encompassing religious, psychological, social and economical fronts. It reviews the history of woman liberation movements from different angles and illuminates the possibilities of the rise and dominant role of women in every walk of life in the new era....

Acharya Sharma cites authentic proofs of the high recognition of womanhood in the Indian culture and religious philosophy. It was mainly due to the misinterpretations of the scriptures propagated in the medieval era that led to the heinous customs and practices of *satī prathā*, polygamy, etc in this society. The moral decline enforced in this period had accelerated negative trends of social and economical progress. This had worsened the political instability in the country and had further fueled the invaders' attacks. The problems of security of women coupled with the psychological perversions triggered by the deliberate misinterpretations of religious teachings had nurtured the untoward customs of dowry, child marriages, etc

during this dark phase of Indian history. A systematic and trenchant review of these kinds of negative developments, which took place the world-over, is recorded here with rare pieces of scrupulous information.

The changing scenario with democratic developments and scientific and intellectual evolution, began to show the signs of public awareness and paved the way for expansion of the social reformation activities since the past two centuries. The roots of the subsequent movement of women's emancipation, its progress and scope - are also discussed in the present volume with foresighted guidance. The volume also pays due attention on - how the sexual exploitation of women, ongoing under the fashionable trends of advertising woman's body in the name of 'recognition' of her beauty and boldness...., should be and could be stopped? How the idea of women-lib could be oriented to give constructive boost for the righteous progress of women as well as the other components of human society?

Unlimited contributions and sacrifices made by a woman - in her multiple roles as mother, sister, wife and daughter..., have continued in spite of the utter negligence, injustice, inequality and exploitation 'showered' upon her in return by the male dominated society! Is not her tolerance, endurance, generosity and altruist love equivalent to what could be attributed as a divine virtue? In Acharya Sharma's views - "it is because of womanhood that humanity, beauty and grace of human life and the serenity of the sentiments of love, service and compassion have survived on this earth. One cannot dream of viable progress with peace and happiness without women's participation on fair grounds of equality".

Men should realize that they have lost a lot by not giving women their due share of rights. It would have added more to their own benefits, if the 'other half' of the society - the women, were educated, enlightened and given equal opportunities to progress.... It is collaboration, not exploitation; mutual trust, not suppression; love, not compulsion, which wins the partner's faith and sincere support.... Educated, healthy and cultured wives and mothers would naturally contribute to better training and development of the

future generations than what they could in a deprived state of ignorance and despair.... In Acharya Sharma's words - "womanhood is the strength of human society, the main cause of survival of love and compassion.... Woman, by nature, is the originator of welfare, the inspiration of humanity and the protector of moral values.... That is why she has been conferred the title of "*devi*" (a manifestation of goddess), in the Indian culture....".

It is laughable that men live under the false impression of being superior as compared to women, whom, the society has compelled to live in inferior conditions.... It is high time that people learn not to gravitate any more, such imbalances that would destroy the very foundation of the human society. In Acharya Sharma's words - "sooner or later, Nature is going to set the clocks of social justice right.... The oppressors, the culprits of exploitation of women..., will have to come forward to undo the misdeeds of the medieval times, and help, as part of sincere atonement, resurrection of women's dignity.

Acharya Sharma's sagacious deliberations on the need and importance of improving the status of women today awaken our prudence and humanly sentiments..., and also motivate us with clear guidance on how we could contribute our level best in this noble endeavor. He and his wife, Smt. Bhagavati Devi Sharma, had set live example of an ideal couple. Their mission of religious and social reformation - as part of their dedicated strives towards the revival of human glory, gave utmost importance to the betterment and escalation of women's status. The "*Nāri Jāgarāṇa*" movement initiated by them for this purpose - is a shining example for other woman-lib movements and social organizations to follow.

As Acharya Sharma has emphasized with regard to the removal of other social evils, here too he has inspired total eradication of the root cause - the wrong convictions, misconceptions, negative and selfish attitude.... His approach promises viable solutions for the giant problems of today and also for nullifying the possibilities of the recurrence of such man-made adversities in future....

Acharya Sharma's saintly heart feels the agony of women through

the inner self... His words reflect this pain and therefore possess the trenchant power to reach the deeper layers of the reader's mind. The spiritually charged power of his pen and voice together with his noble deeds of altruist service of the human society have motivated a large number of men and women contribute for his noble mission by elevating the lost confidence and prestige of womanhood.

Apart from attempting propagation of women's education and escalating their self-reliance on the socioeconomic fronts, the most important of this mission's achievements is - invoking the ancient glory of womanhood in the fields pertaining to religious activities. The latter becomes most significant in the context of the Indian society. Women, from different parts of the Indian society, having different familial and educational backgrounds..., are now conducting - under the auspices of Acharya Sharma's "Gayatri Pariwar" mission - *havans*, grand *Yagyas* and other sacred ceremonies, which, until the past few decades, were supposed to be the privileges of only some male priests of special 'Brahmin' class.

The "Gayatri Pariwar" founded by Acharya Sharma, has largely been successful in eliminating the discriminations of gender, caste and social status from the religious faith and practices of the Hindus. The great science and philosophy of *Gāyatrī Mantra* - the origin of the Vedas and entire knowledge of the Hindu religion and Indian Culture - is now being taught and propagated by large number of women in the Indian society, where, until recently, women were not even supposed to know or read this mantra..... This is indeed a great revolution and evidence of what the spiritually empowered foresight of Acharya Sharma has envisaged here about the predominant role of women in the 21st century.

Here, we will get an opportunity to read in detail on the background, sound foundation and continuous growth of the noble mission of Acharya Sharma. The global picture of the visible activities of women's welfare, directed towards - the liberation and rise of women, recognition and promotion of their talents..., etc, are also given in this volume with substantial facts and figures. The logical arguments, reasoned analysis, and above all, the comprehensive

approach - to social reconstruction, presented here are indeed unparalleled.

The dedicated endeavors and accomplishments of the "*Nārī Jāgarāṇa*" mission, initiated and directed by Acharya Sharma and Smt. Bhagavati Devi Sharma, evince and assure us that the "resurrection of women's lost glory...." is no longer a dream.... That, the 'golden dream' of "21st century - women's century" would become a reality...; the impact of positive changes will get more visible in the years to come.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 62, An Introduction

I may become invisible to the physical sight of the parijans, but pictures of whosoever have given me a niche in their hearts with love and affection will be indelibly imprinted in my heart at the time of my 'leave-taking' and I will worship them all with my tears. Parijans might forget me, but I will forget none of them.

ARCHITECTURING OUR NEW GENERATION

(*Hamārī Bhāvī Piḍhī Aur Usakā Nava Nirmāṇa*)

Children of today will be the architects of the society and the world of the new millenium.... The seeds of proper development of their personalities need to be sown in right away...., because, childhood is supposed to be the best phase of life for inculcation of righteous tendencies (*susanskāras*). A child's tender mind and sentimental core is like soft wet clay, which can be molded in any desired form.

Giving birth to a child is not so difficult as to bring him up with proper care of his health and training of his mind and inner self. While most people are aware of healthcare means, a few know about how the child should be educated...., still fewer, only countable ones, are those, who know about the necessity and modalities of ideal development of a child's future by - understanding his psychology, refinement of his inner instincts and cultivation of ideal values and tendencies in him.... This volume brings us detailed guidance on these less-heard and little-cared aspects of child-development.

Acharya Sharma writes that birds, animals and enormous varieties of other creatures grow and adapt to the specific modes of life as per the inspirations of Nature. Their lives revolve around food, reproduction and defense. So remarkable is the influence of natural conditions on them that even the new born creatures become self-dependent in no time; Fish, for instance, starts hunting for its food soon after birth....; dogs of hardly one or two days, find their own place to rest.... But, a child of the intelligent species - the humans, is quite helpless in this respect. An infant of this highly evolved class can't even find the breasts of his mother - who is lying besides, to suck the nectar of her milk....; he hardly does anything on his own except crying....

A human infant can't grow and survive in good health without the mother's, or the nurse's help... At every stage of his development, he needs others' help. Whether it is learning to speak, walk, play, read or write..., a human child performs this by observing others, and getting training and support from the members of the family at home and teachers at school...

In terms of psychology and subtler domains of consciousness, it is true that the inner instincts (*sanskāras*) inscribed in the unconscious mind from the past births, and the genetic inheritance, do have their influence on human mind since its childhood. Nevertheless, it is also true that the environment of present life, influence of parents' characters, behavior of family members, mode and quality of teaching at school, etc, play significant role in overall development of the child. The healthy inherited tendencies driven by the *sanskāras* could be gravitated in ideal directions, and the evil ones could be waned out, by careful conditioning of the child's mind. This is what the "*vidyā*" taught in the Indian *Gurukuls* of yore used to render.

Indifferent attitude, neglect of child's psychology, or harsh behavior with the child, hinders the latter's development and might result in making him dull and duffer, or, aggressive and cruel.... Balanced attention with love and discipline and careful encouragement and refinement of his talents, on the contrary, would help his development into a bright, enthusiastic and creative citizen and might endow him with sagacious will power too....

The above facts might have been observed by hundreds of experts of child psychology and gamut of theories might have been developed and written by researchers on these lines, however, we hardly see practical implementation of these in any family or any school of education these days.

The present volume focuses on ideal modes of bringing up the children, adept methods of their education and training, which would help revival of the ancient system of *gurukuls* while keeping pace with the present circumstances of life.... It also shows us the practical ways of adopting these ideal modes in today's life style.... A

large number of live examples are cited here to enable us see the authenticity, practicalities and scope of Acharya Sharma's ideas and experiments.

In the ancient times, *gurukuls* used to bear the responsibilities of righteous shaping of the disciple's personality since the latter's childhood. The *gurukuls* offered excellent *shiksha* - school and university education, which gives detailed knowledge of the world and material components of Nature and sharpens one's talents, skills and intellect for professional success and worldly progress...., - in different disciplines of knowledge. What made the *gurukuls* distinct and absolute as compared to the best centres of education today, was the simultaneous inculcation of *vidya*, which used to refine and ideally orient a disciple's attitude, inner tendencies and aspirations.

The piety of sentiments and strength of inner self, which are the architects of great personalities, of the glory of human life..., were nurtured in the *gurukuls* by the nectar of *vidya*. The ascetic disciplines and training of altruist life educed in the *gurukuls*, under the eminent guidance and immense love and attention of the noble *gurus* and their wives, were indeed the secrets of what founded the divine culture of ancient India and made this country a land of heavens.

Today, when education has been confined to *shiksha* alone, and has been largely commercialized..., the dignity of cultural heritage has lost its foundation, and cultural values are suffering all round adulteration and moral decline..., it has become most essential to review what we are doing for the younger generation. How are we going to ensure happy and healthy environment of life for them with a bright and secured future? Acharya Sharma's thorough discussions, systematic analysis and foresighted guidance presented here, cover every aspect of these challenging issues....

Acharya Sharma identifies - the family, as the first training school, and the mother, as the first teacher of a child. He attributes the noble title of "first *guru*" to the mother and therefore emphasizes the need

of uplifting her status to enable her bear this great responsibility efficiently. Right from the birth of a zygote, it is the mother, who consistently sacrifices her vital elements for the survival and growth of the embryo. She keeps the foetus in her womb until nine months and continues feeding the child thereafter for several years from her own body...

Externally, her blood, her milk and other biochemicals of her body nurture the child's body. Internally too, her vital energy, flow of her consciousness, her thoughts, her mental impulses, affect the mental and subtler development of the child's consciousness since the post embryonic stage.... When the child begins to perceive through the sense organs and learn from the surrounding environment, again it is the mother, who influences him most intimately. The kinds of thoughts and aspirations she cultivates in the child at this stage, naturally condition corresponding sensitivity and tendencies in him. These inscriptions, unless subjected to greater and more powerful influence of a noble *guru*, or vital inspirations of others in contact, significantly affect the child's mental makeup.

The mental tendencies inculcated in the early childhood attract, with greater intensity and expansion, the thought waves and mental vibrations of matching characteristics in the later phase of child's development. This is what lays the foundation of his inclinations, determination, his desires and his overall character.... Serene character, brilliant aptitude, righteous thinking and piety of sentiments of the mother, would thus set the righteous basis for moral elevation and ideal development of the child's psychology. Her ignorance, misconceptions, improper development, misconduct, etc, on the contrary, would delude the child's mind and might accelerate his development in the negative (untoward) direction.

Acharya Sharma's trenchant views should give substantial food for thoughts to all those who want solutions for righteous education and proper development of the future citizens. The men and women, the entire social system of today, will have to work as per his guidance, to first educate and develop the mothers of today and tomorrow to

enable them play the role of an adept teacher, an ideal source of positive inspirations for the child.

A child's mind is like a clean piece of paper.... Whatever is sketched on it in whichever color, it begins to look like that. The images of parents, other family members and teachers leave deep impressions on the mirror of child's mind. His delicate mind and sentimental core need to be dealt with carefully, till he enters well within the teenage. The teenagers need altogether different, but equally caring, approach based on friendly interactions. Acharya Sharma presents adept analysis, encompassing the multifarious vibrations of children's psychology through the deepest depth and widest grandeur of their minds in different stages of adolescence. In this context, he elucidates the subtle influence of inherited intrinsic tendencies too. He shows how it is possible to inculcate virtuous tendencies, talents and righteous attitude in children at the right moments.

He writes that love, encouragement, respect and protection are more required by the children than the elders. Little care towards disciplining them along with fulfilling these sentimental requirements opens their minds for receiving what we want to teach them. He makes the points clear with live examples of relevance in the day-to-day life of most of us.... This volume would be an excellent guide for the parents, teachers, as well as the researchers of child psychology.

Another distinguished feature of this volume is that, a comprehensive, foresighted and feasible approach for collective development of culture and civilization is presented here focussing at the role of younger generation in particular. How the elementary training of hygiene, orderliness, punctuality, civic sense, soberness, modesty, etc, given in the childhood induces these qualities as natural habits in the youngsters and thus ensures essential support for their contributions in the civilized society? What is essential for cultural development of the children? How to deal with their inquisitive nature? How to activate and enhance their compassion, altruistic feelings and spiritual sentiments?

What is the ideal notion of religion and theism in the context of cultural and moral elevation of the younger generation? How to recognize and handle the transition in children's psychology? A gamut of the above kinds of important queries are answered here with perspicuous discussions and guidance especially suited for today's circumstances, where the external environment appears to be highly toxic - both for the biological as well as the psychological development of the youngsters.

The new millenium is going to bring new hopes, new directions, and new possibilities. But, we have to face the ever-new challenges of today and prepare well to welcome the new opportunities of the new era..... As we all know, our preparations for the future of the society, nation and the world as a whole, would depend a lot upon how we prepare the future generations.... This volume offers us the key to do so in an ideal manner and witness the culmination of human civilization and culture worth the divine dignity of humanity.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 63, An Introduction

MAKING OUR NATION STRONG AND SELF-RELIANT

(Rāṣṭra Samartha Aur Saśakta Kaise Bane?)

Individuals make the families; families constitute the societies; and societies together form the nations, an ensemble of which is seen as the world.... This relationship is not hierarchical in nature, rather, it naturally persists and expands like the mutually supportive motion of the waves in an ocean. Disturbance in the natural order of any component, though implicitly, affects the others in corresponding proportions.... Social anarchy accelerates the law and order problems at national level... Moral degradation and instability of the family institution is reflected in similar negative trends at the social levels too....

Harmony of all musical nodes is necessary for the melody of a tune. Analogously, when we talk of all round peace, progress and prosperity of a nation, we will have to ensure harmonious endowment of these prospects in its constituent social, familial and personal domains too.

The present scenario at global level depicts an arbitrary melange of bright and gorgeous as well as dark and dull colors of positive and negative progress. The national picture - especially in the Indian context, is equally blurred. After more than half a century of political independence, it is not clear where the nation is really headed? There certainly has been significant progress in some fields of science and technology. Self-reliance in agriculture, decrease in mortality rate, increase in literacy, are also counted as positive signs of progress. But, the explosive growth of population, rapidly declining cultural values, unequal economic progress, social disparity, rising corruption in almost every walk of national life, decreasing morality and reduced sense of responsibility in the personal, familial and social spheres of common man's life,etc, show the depressing sides.

Excellent constitutional provisions have not been implemented to the extent as might have been planned by the architects of sovereign Indian democracy. Social status of women has not been amended much as compared to that in the pre independence period. Similar is the case of the economic exploitation of the weaker and the poor ones. Wealth of the nation, its economic growth and industrialization, seem to have made the rich men richer... ; the poor ones continue to increase in number. The condition is more pathetic on other facets of social development.

Castism, religious misconceptions, blind faith, superstitions, the curse of dowry and similar absurdities of the customs and convictions born out of the disgraceful past of ignorance and slavery - continue to dominate the Indian mind. The political and economic systems too are infected by these social evils in one form or the other.... The large number of literacy campaigns, healthcare projects, social welfare schemes, etc, appear to have little effect in diverting the wrong trends.

The egotistic and selfish attitudes of the learned and elite ones - including many of the journalists, writers, artists, scientists, philosophers, bureaucrats, industrialists, planners, policy makers and managers, etc, and, the ambitions and aspirations of the majority for luxuries and aplomb..., have added to the complications of the challenging problems associated with national development.

It is surprising to note that even the awareness generated during the great movement of India's independence could not be channelized for similar revolution on the social front. Despite significant progress in agriculture, economy, science and technology, the social and religious systems have remained the areas of lesser attention.

It is indeed unfortunate that after over 2500 years of slavery, when we finally got the opportunity to breath in free India, we, rather than resurrecting our original glory, chose to remain culturally enslaved and confused. We became the followers of single tracked materialistic development without bothering about what could be essential for elevating the status of a diversified and illiterate society like ours. We hardly cared about the inherent nature, culture,

convictions, and attitudes of our masses, without whose compatible response, efficient cooperation and justified sharing in the national progress, our dreams of prosperous development were bound to be shattered in the long run....

Our democracy and our constitution are indeed the best in the world, and we have the right to crown ourselves with the pride of the dignified values these stand for... But, have we ever thought, whether or how much, do we deserve them?

How can a democracy be healthy and strong unless the voters, who design its political edifice, are made aware of their rights and responsibilities? How would we prevent biased voting influenced by caste, bribery, personal favors or threats and fears in a society, where, the majority of voters are uneducated, ignorant and deprived of even the basic necessities of human life? How could we expect efficient, honest and responsible representatives to be elected from a society, where, "might is right"; where, social injustice prevails in almost every family - depriving its female members of the fundamental human rights; where, the impact of 'religion' has been confined to emotional excitation, blind faith and backward traditions?

Some of us might think that this is not our duty to answer the above or to search, our level best, for the solutions to accelerate righteous progress of our beloved nation. But then, we might be either selfish, coward, irresponsible or cynical in some respect, or, might be unaware of our duties and ignorant about the facts of - where our true welfare and progress would lie? Many of us think that the best we could do is to improve ourselves, increase our own integrity and efficiency in order to fulfil our immediate duties...; because, after all we are not leaders, politicians or activists, who could initiate revolutionary movements. We don't even believe in the purpose and success of any such movement these days....

We might be correct, but that is neither the end of our duties, nor, do we get to try best use of the limitless potentials of our lives because of the above attitude. We may not generate movements, but we can certainly expand the peripheries of our immediate duties to inspire all others in our contact to educe greater faith in moral values,

righteous thinking, self-confidence and civic sense of responsibilities in them too. Some of us do want to contribute in this direction; we do care for honestly serving the nation, but do not know how to proceed?

This volume brings motivating guidance, detailed information and feasible and creative programmes for each one of us to help ameliorate our personal, familial and social lives by means of thoughtful orientation and collective contribution of our own potentials and talents. The volume also elucidates what is necessary in terms of policy decisions and planned reformative activities at national level towards genuine implementation of our constitution and prestigious progress of our democracy. Guidelines for viable economic techniques for progress of agricultural sector and small-scale industries are also presented here along with details on creative programmes of effective control of population growth, considering the psychological makeup of the Indian public.

Acharya Sharma was a dedicated freedom fighter, who had sincerely participated in the movement of India's independence. He was trained under the noble guidance of Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, (Maharshi) Arvindo Ghosh, and other revered national heroes of India. Right since he was a young volunteer in the non-violent freedom-struggle, this great patriot, saint, spiritual master, social reformer, and sagacious scholar had envisaged that - "an absolute revolution would be necessary on the cultural front too, if India were to be independent and progressive in the truest sense of the words...". The state of the nation today - after more than 50 years of political independence, evinces that his vision was indeed real.

What Acharya Sharma had warned over sixty years ago, has now become a reality. His trenchant views concerning the present state of the nation and its cultural and social system should open the eyes of the leaders, policy makers, planners and the intellectuals of today.... His guidance for the future development is realistic and takes into account the multifarious problems and impedance existing in the present system.

After India's independence, he had, unlike many other freedom-fighters, chosen to dedicate his life for social and cultural reformation from the religious rather than political platform. He knew the psychology of Indian mind and the depth of its religious spirit..... His definition, philosophy, and realizations of religion (refer vol. 36, 53 of the *vangmaya* series) are scientific and universal as they emanate from absolute understanding of human mind and realization of the purity of inner self. His sagacious deliberations would convince us that it is religion, which separates animals from humans; which can eliminate the smog of animal instincts and unethical passions, and illuminate the intrinsic world by the nitid glow of pure intellect and divine piety....

Religion is an integral and intimate component of human life. Then, how could it be separated from the social and national domains? In fact, cultural and moral rise of a nation becomes possible only when religion - ideal philosophy of life, is given due place in the lives of its people. Political anarchy, corruption and autocracy can be controlled by the righteous disciplines (ethics) of religion. Acharya Sharma therefore emphasizes the need of compatible integration of ethics, culture and politics. He critically warns those who propagate communalism, superstitions and prejudiced principles and traditions in the name of religion.

His deliberations on the role of religion in national development should be analyzed by all those who discard religion from the "prudent modes" of life and who are utterly against the collaboration between the religious and political systems. His trenchant views should also be read by all those, who try to politicize the concept of religion, or who exploit people's faith for their vested interests. Misconceptions and hypocrisy have no place in Acharya Sharma's perspicuous explanations.

His thorough discussions encompass comprehensive reviews of other authentic experts of the concerned topics. With reference to the reformation of political system, he describes the qualities essential for a good leader. The leader should be someone who knows the enormous problems of the socioeconomic system of his nation; who has the will and experience of solving people's problems and also has

vision to guide viable solutions. A leader has to be an efficient manager - of the national system, who is wise, innovative, creative and determined. Integrity of character, sensitivity of heart and stability of mind are fundamental requirements in public service. It is in the context of establishing such virtuous tendencies, that the linkage of religion with politics is advocated here.

The author also reminds each voter of the latter's duties and rights, and, at the same time, inspires courage and motivation to enable the voters come forward and strengthen the democratic system. He has specially called the awakened talents to feel the pains of the nation and share the collective responsibility of national development.

Acharya Sharma's mission of cultural and religious revolution and social reformation and welfare is based on the fundamental elements and principles of the original Indian Culture - the culture, which had bestowed divine glory on this nation. In his words - "the enlightened development of a nation progresses on the strong foundation of the prudence, piety of sentiments and strength of character of its citizens...." It is this class of ideal citizens, which has come forward to contribute in the constructive programmes and reformative activities of his mission.

Acharya Sharma's mission and its dedicated volunteers stand before us as guiding light and live evidences of how awakened talents would design the bright future of the nation. It is by our collective endeavors and confidence that, as assured by Acharya Sharma, this country will regain its lost prestige and set shining example before the world in the twenty-first century.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 64, An Introduction

SOCIAL, ETHICAL AND INTELLECTUAL REVOLUTION HOW?

(Sāmājika, Naitika Evam Bauddhika Krānti Kaise?)

The progress of science and technology since past few centuries has indeed been revolutionary. It has drastically changed the shape of our lives. World today is blessed by multifarious comforts and facilities, which were beyond imagination a century ago... Science fiction of the past appears to have become a reality today. If a man of 300 years ago descends here, he may not recognize whether it is the same world he once inhabited! The enormous boons of science and technology have helped culmination of human civilization to ever-new heights... However, despite this enrichment and advancement, the goal of global peace and happiness still appears to be far from sight....

Man of today, generally feels more lonely, more privative, more deprived, more disappointed, more insecure, more worried, more tensed and weaker than his great grand parents. The human society today, appears to be challenged by unprecedented challenges and facing negative evolution of - bodily health, mental stability and peace, moral development, familial amity, financial security and satisfaction, social goodwill and cooperation, inner bliss and enlightenment.....

Acharya Sharma sees the misconceptions and misdeeds of people's shortsighted, extrovert thinking at the root of these man-made threats to the very survival of humanity. "Folly of Wisdom" would be a more appropriate representation here to summarize the illusions and mistakes of human intellect. Blind race of single-tracked materialistic advancement has disturbed the harmony of the ecosystem on the one hand, and has severely hindered the natural flow of humane sentiments on the other. This has put the cultural growth of the highly advanced civilization on a preishing front.

The present volume focuses at the depth and grandeur of the selfish attitude, prejudiced thinking and evil mentality, and measures their

adverse consequences in different dimensions of life. It also discusses the major issues and approaches concerning reversal or diversion of the morally inverted and ethically perverted thinking of people and elucidates practical approaches to enforce ideal use of the power of science and technology.... It sketches the basis, prudent philosophy and modalities for materialization of intellectual civilization in perfect consonance with righteous expansion of social and ethical revolution - emanated from the limitless source of spiritually refined thoughts and sentiments...

Power of thinking is greatest of all the powers of Nature and its conscious component. Prudence of pure intellect enables ideal use of this immense power. It is the sunrise of righteous thinking, which educes spark of life in the otherwise dead education and thus enlightens the latter with the glow of *vidya* (vol. 49 of the *vangmayaseries*). The nectar of *vidya* induces the vital charge of divine values in the human intellect and activates the hidden force of the soul. Then, there remains no place left for evils, mistakes, fear, tension, sorrow, despair, infirmity or scarcity in any domain of life.... Life blossoms with immense bliss and brilliant success there after....

Sagacity is a virtue of spirituality. It rises with the piety of intellect and sentiments. Revolution of thoughts cannot proceed without its emergence in people's minds. The fundamental elements of *Gāyatri* and *Yagya*, and the gamut of Indian cultural values derived from them, encompass all that is necessary and sufficient for this revolution to take place in the present circumstances of life.... Initiation and expansion of this revolution (*Vichar Kranti*) has been the major objective of Acharya Sharma's "Gāyatri Pariwār" mission.

The distinctions of the Indian cultural system and the need, possibilities and scope of resurrection of this culture, are elucidated in the present volume in the context of the ethical (moral), intellectual and social revolution by *Vichar Kranti*. This volume also discusses the philosophies and impact of other revolutions, which have been significant in the history of modern civilization.

Acharya Sharma suggests a comprehensive approach involving collective participation of people across the globe. In his views, the process of moral and intellectual refinement should begin at personal level and expand at familial and social levels in a natural way. He has guided practical solutions and psychologically appealing methods -- for prudent refinement of personality, which can be adopted by each one of us for gradual progress right from today onwards.... Rather than emphasizing ascetic disciplines of high spiritual elevation, he advises easily adaptable modes for changing our attitude and our direction of thinking, which are most essential for inspiring moral ascent as a natural impulse of our mind...

His analysis of the natural tendencies of human mind, and the influence of thought waves generated in its internal and external domains, is so appealing that it would make us feel, as if, it is a projection of a thorough analysis of our own selves; as though, he has known every aspect of our lives and sensed every vibration of our thoughts and sentiments....

While discussing the trends of ethical and intellectual developments on the social front, the author remarks that - "some misconceptions, untoward tendencies, and unwise notions, have so firmly entangled with our social customs, that we don't even notice their influence on our lives, neither do we realize the need to examine their applicability or harms in general....".

For a meaningful review of the moral character of a society of the modern times, we should find out how many of its citizens could be regarded as morally elevated on an average scale, and why? Even going by the most 'pragmatic definition' of a morally refined citizen, we will have to set some norms compatible with the ethics of humanity. Those, whose selfish intellect sees nothing else except what suits their vested interest, aplomb, luxuries, lust and ego, and who never bother to care for the society or anyone other than their near and dear ones..., cannot fit to be called moral or religious by any norm.

Those, who choose to live a simple life with minimum necessities, or having comforts comparable to that of an average citizen of their nation, and who consistently endeavor for enhancing their virtuous potentials, integrity, piety of character, refined thinking, and sagacity, are morally elevated indeed. They cannot live without contributing their level best for the moral rise and altruist support of the fellow beings.... Gradual purification of their sentiments, clarity of mental vision and broadening of attitude naturally expands the domains of their affection. It is this category of intellectuals, social reformers and other citizens, who should set the ideals of ethics in the human society today. They would, as per the prudent deliberations and foresighted reasoning of Acharya Sharma, be the architects of the 21st century and receive glorious recognition and honors in the years to come....

The philosophy of life and mode of living based on the ideals of humanity is indeed the righteous and foresighted choice in the present era of ethical crisis. It is pathetic to note that, in today's advanced society, many of the highly successful industrialists, other professionals and intellectuals often prove to be failures in their personal lives. Excellent managers of the external and materialistic phase of life often perform so miserably in the internal world of emotions and personal interactions, that depression, tension, psychosomatic disorders, aggressive and suicidal tendencies, etc., become predominant features of their lives.... Increasing trends of these kinds have raised the alarming need of judging emotional qualification along with intelligence in the industrially developed, technologically advanced countries these days. The growing use of EQ along with IQ is a visible sign of this effect.

The edifice of advanced civilization cannot stand if the foundational support of human values is shaken..... Acharya Sharma's vast literature, his oral deliberations, and the creative programmes of *Vichar Kranti* inspired by him, aim at awakening the divinely pure, humane sentiments of love, compassion and altruist service... The principle objectives of the ethical revolution proposed and propagated by him include training and generation of morally refined talents and dedicated, duty-bond citizens, who are endowed

with the spiritual serenity and vital charge of the above sentiments. Precious collection of his distinguished ideas and motivating guidance on this unique revolution of our times is presented in this volume.

In Acharya Sharma's views, the major cause of India's underdevelopment and poverty lies, not so much in its poor economic condition, as in the mental backwardness of its people.... An average Indian mind is captured by varieties of superstitions, blind faith and lethargy in the name of religion and 'theism', and by illusory complexes and artificial life-style adopted under the false notions of social status and prestige. Narcotic drugs, other kinds of intoxication, craze for name and fame, fashionable showoff, excessive possession of luxuries and wealth, tensions, broken families, licentious practices of free-sex, uncontrolled reproduction, declining physical and mental health, etc, - are the other visible offshoots of the anarchy, demoralization and degrading of people's mentality here, as in the rest of the world...

Uprooting the basic cause of the maligned mentality and unhealthy tendencies of mind is targeted under what Acharya Sharma refers as intellectual or mental revolution. This revolution also aims at simultaneous enlightenment of people's faith and righteous and creative orientation of their thoughts. Removal of religious misconceptions and rigid faith, and unification of the prudent principles and philosophies of all religions - with the noble purpose of divine ascent of humanity - are the other important facets of this revolutionary endeavor, which, the author affirms as essential for progressive survival of the human civilization and its cultural dignity.... How this should and could be achieved, is eloquently described here. Authentic examples from modern life are also presented to illustrate the feasibility of such revolutions today.

Several volumes of the "Vangamaya" series have discussed different aspects of Acharya Sharma's ideas and endeavors of social reformation and reconstruction. The present volume deals with those pertaining to the notions, philosophies and convictions of -- the leaders of religious, social and intellectual organizations, and the

celebrities who largely influence and shape people's opinions and social trends. Here, he emphasizes eradication of those misconceptions and untoward notions and theories, which propagate inequality, separation, prejudices, social disparity and nurture the rigid tendencies that are neither just nor suitable in the interest of the society.

Acharya Sharma suggests excellent substitutes in place of untoward customs and trends. Because, without doing so, no ideology, howsoever prudent and useful it might be, can come into practice. This novelty and practicality of his approach has been among the secrets of the popularity and success of his mission. ... He discusses feasible projects of co-operative societies and larger families, constructed on the basis of mutual trust and fair sharing of responsibilities, benefits and losses. He also advocates propagation of social culture driven by liberal thinking, foresighted wisdom and scientifically justified practices.

At the outset, the idea of moral and intellectual refinement of over six hundred billion people of the world sounds imaginary like a utopia. But, those, who have witnessed and experienced the supernormal intellect, divine personality, absolute spirituality and clairvoyance of Acharya Sharma, and who have participated in the reformative and constructive activities of his mission, would not have any doubt in the reality of his visions.... We all would also be convinced of the possibilities and success of the ethical, intellectual and social revolution envisaged by him as we move deeper into the details of this volume....

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EVOLUTION OF A NEW ERA VISION AND PLANNING

(*Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā Darśana Swarupa Va Kāryakrama*)

The aspirations, inspirations and attitude of awakened mind play an important, though subtle, role in the advent, development and evolution of religious, cultural and social spheres of human life. Acharya Sharma had realized and studied, up to the deepest depth, the immense potentials of people's mentality and inner sentiments, which shape their lives and hence collectively design the future of their society too...

He had envisaged the possibilities of spiritual refinement of thoughts and sentiments and creative orientation of the same to design ideal basis for advent of a new era of enlightened human glory. He had conceptualized, planned and initiated the "*Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā*" to let his visions materialize in reality. The present volume highlights the objectives, philosophy and modalities of this mission and describes the creative programmes undertaken to accomplish it.

Acharya Sharma had propagated mass education from religious platform because, in his views, nothing else could be more effective in refinement of people's faith, convictions, sentiments and aspirations.... No law, no socioeconomic system, no scientific theory or technological development could achieve what religious faith could, in terms of changing one's attitude, character and deeds in a natural manner. The intimacy of religion with the intrinsic sentiments makes the former more powerful and effective in the internal, deeper and subtler domains of human mind, which are pivotal to the external activities of human life.

His interpretations of the eternity and power of religion and its righteous adoption in human life - as discussed in vol. 53 of the *vangmaya* series, would convince every liberal thinker of the sound

basis of his foresighted approach. These would also convey why he had chosen to initiate the great mission of resurrection of ideal human values, from the religious platform.

As part of the social reformation programmes of the *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā*, he had given maximum importance to eradication of blind faith, superstitions and untoward customs and traditions prevailing in the Indian society in the name of religion. Details on some of these social reformative activities and their successful expansion are presented in vols. 36, 48, 59 and 60 of the vangmaya series.

The social welfare activities under the *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā* are not confined only to providing external help to the needy and deprived ones. Rather, this mission aims at finding viable solutions to improve the status of people's life forever. It aims at enabling people solve their own problems and also help educe confidence and positive thinking in others. The personality development programmes of this mission focus at wakinng the inner potentials of the individuals and giving positive and creative orientation to their talents.... The programmes of self-reliant education with moral elevation and spiritual refinement - initiated under the banner of this mission since 1971, have set shining examples of what is an ideal service of the human society.

The foundation of organizational structure necessary for the implementation of the *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā*, was laid by dissemination of the knowledge of *Gayatri* and *Yagya* in scientific light. This had also made possible, endeavoring, the revival of the Indian Culture in its original glorious form.... *Gayatri Sadhana* is the universal source for purification of the inner self, illumination and righteous orientation of intellect, and evolution of spirituality (c.f. vols. 9 to 15 of the vangmaya series). The philosophy of *Yagya* teaches the altruistic mode of living a creative and enlightened life. Scientific experiments on *Yagya* serve the dual purpose of purification of environment and total cure by natural herbs (vols. 25-26).

The unique experiment of "*Vichara Kranti*" - gradual refinement of thoughts, righteous transformation of attitude and sublime transmutation of intellect and emotions up to the divine realms of spirituality - was initiated by Acharya Sharma from the day he had organized a grand *Gayatri Yagya* in Mathura (India) in 1958. The saintly life of Acharya Sharma and his wife, the spiritual aura of their personalities and the inner power of their sacred love for all beings, had attracted all those who had attended this *Yagya* to work for the noble cause of his great mission. This is how the "larger family" typed organization - called "*Gayatri Pariwar*", came into existence. This has now expanded across the globe beyond the barriers of caste, religion, creed, gender, socioeconomic status and educational background.

It is remarkable to note, how the determined pledge of a single person (Acharya Sharma), for "*Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā*", has brought millions of people together for the same purpose.... This grand organization has grown and is continuously expanding without any support of any government, non-government funding or donations by rich bigwigs. The small sums and pennies contributed by millions of its members on regular basis have played remarkable role in strengthening its financial resources. Generous devotion of talents and labors by these true followers of Gurudev Shriram Sharama Acharya, ensure the successful progress of *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā*.

The activities of this mission rebuilt our faith in the immense strength of collective endeavors for altruist purposes. The details given in this volume would further enhance our hopes in the possibilities of revival of human dignity even in the present times of - deterioration of cultural and social system and a near total crisis of faith in moral values.

The comprehensive planning of *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā* encompasses simultaneous materialization of ethical, intellectual and social transformation in day-to-day life. Sincere action for this purpose begin with the objective of maintaining healthy body, pure mind and practice of industrious co-operation -at the individual and familial

levels, and gradually lead to expanding the roots of developing a culturally aware civilized society....

The planning and implementation of *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā* is three folded : incorporating - propogative activities for the expansion of the organization and for generating social awareness; reformative or revolutionary activities to fight against the malice, misconceptions, ignorance, evil tendencies and weaknesses prevailing today's society; and constructive programmes for creative establishment of social goodwill and transformed social system and inculcation of righteous and progressive tendencies.

Acharya Sharma has suggested "one hundred formulae" for successive progress of people's life via implementation of the above plans of *Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā*. These guidelines can be understood and adopted in daily life by each one of us. The present volume describes every point in detail and would answer, in his lucid style of writing, the gamut of queries that might arise in the readers' minds while glancing through this brief introduction to this volume.

From 'usually known' but 'largely forgotten' principles of hygiene, proper eating habits... etc, to the spiritual disciplines of married life....; from "love and cooperation within family..." , to " altruism and spiritual transmutation of sentiments..."; from "social reformation...", and "self-reliance...",, to "future of world economy..."; from "psychological basis of spirituality...", to "integration of modern science and religion..."; from "necessity and relevance of theism....", to "awakening of divinity in man..." -- every topic, every aspect concerning human life today, is analyzed, researched and eloquently discussed by Acharya Sharma. The present volume gives us the essence of his ideas and thoughts with greater emphasis on how these could be useful to us and could be creatively applied in the present system of our lives....

Readers would also find detailed information in this volume on natural queries like - "where and how many centres/branches of the "Gayatri Pariwar" are there within and outside India,....?", "What are

their regular activities...?", "How could one attend or participate in their regular programmes....?", etc.

The distinct excellence of Acharya Sharma's approach lies in the fact that he encourages natural escalation of people's bodily, mental, intellectual and spiritual potentials by inspiring their conscious and unconscious minds.... This way, every man and woman can rise consistently from whatever his present level is, by adopting what Acharya Sharma calls - "the art of living", and by sincerely following the simple disciplines and practices of self-analysis, self-restrain, self-evaluation and *Pragya Yoga* taught by him....

As the collective and continuous motion of waves in an ocean expands beyond every limit, similarly, the collective and progressive endeavors of refinement and elevation pursued by the individuals can lead to the grand awakening and transmutation of collective consciousness along the limitless grandeur of the divine origin of humanity. This is how the "unimaginable" objective of resurrection of a bright era, is expected to be achieved under the auspices of "*Yug Nirmāṇ Yojnā*".

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 66, An Introduction

Liberation for me means release from the clutches of desires and cravings. This I have attained. Heaven for me means the mingling together, as a river, of the triple streams of: moulding one's life in accordance with sublime and ennobling ideals; seeing only the good in others behind the facade of appearance to the contrary and loving others through identity of Spirit. I have been bathing in this blissful river of heavenly joy for a long time. I have now no desire either to go to Heaven or attain Liberation.

INSPIRING EPISODES OF HUMAN LIFE

(*Prerñāprada Draṣṭānta*)

Examples serve a great purpose of natural teaching..... In formal teaching of any discipline of knowledge, simple examples are constructed or derived to illustrate specific topics or points, which are otherwise difficult to explain. Beginners also grasp the subject matter better with the help of examples. Examples have greater importance in real life. Learning from observation of what others are or have been doing - is a general tendency of human mind. This seems to be the most natural mode of learning in the childhood and continues to be significant in the later ages too....

Because of human nature of following others, we often see common trends of fashion and mode of living in specific sectors of the society or among majority of people of a common locality. Even opinions on issues of general interest seem to be clustered according to this tendency in most cases. Except for the impact of incisive intellect and sound reasoning, for most people, the impressions of real-life phenomena, the examples of others' lives - especially those of direct or indirect interest or relevance with respect to one's own circumstance of life, etc, bear deep on their psychology. What is more, even the aspirations and attitudes of some people are driven by the instances of the lives of others, especially celebrities - their life-style, habits, conduct, behavior and reactions, etc.

Commentaries on religious scriptures, in particular, those written or narrated with an objective to convey and inculcate the preached thoughts and messages in the minds of the masses, are full of examples illustrated in the form of short stories and episodes. The *Puranas* were written for the purpose of teaching the philosophy and art of living to those people in the society of yore, who could not follow the deep knowledge hidden in the hymns of the *Vedas* or in the abstract deliberations of the *Upnishadas* and *Darshanas*. Acharya Sharma also had written "*Pragya Puranas*" (vol. 38 of the

vangmaya series) in similar style of illustrative and inspiring stories and conversational episodes for the people of the modern times.

Short stories, anecdotes and episodes drawn from the limitless spectrum of human life are also found to be most effective means of mass education. The ancient tradition of teaching the children with the help of the stories of Panchantra and Hitopadesha, etc, and the elders by those of Ramayana and Bhagawat, etc, on these lines, has continued till date with obvious changes in the modes of presentations and plots of the stories.....

Realistic nature of the theme and background of the story and lucidity of the style of writing or narration are essential for making this medium of teaching more effective and attractive. Similar is true with the popularity and impact of the plays and novels too. These should also focus the interest of the readers and the audiences.

Fiction may be an excellent means of entertainment, time-pass, or diversion of mind, but, it may not always be useful for righteous conditioning of people's mind; neither can it be consistently used for inducing courage and strength in them to fight out the adversities and design their own destiny.... This is because, it is usually the objective of entertainment or the rhetoric expression of the imaginations of mind..., which leads to the creation of a fiction. While writing a poem, story, play or novel, one is free to give any color to his mental impulses, imaginations and mold the circumstances and characters as per his will.

Incorporation of the 'constraints' of - "ideals of human life", "positive thinking", "righteous and realistic approach",, etc, would be against the liberty of the imaginative minds of the poets and writers and this would also block the natural flow of a fiction.... Therefore, we cannot expect fictions to be always good (ideal) and realistic. The episodes and stories of a fiction might support or project, positive as well as negative tendencies of mind and might create illusive and untoward impressions in the adolescent minds; these might even pervert or deceive the minds of those who lack in reasoning and wisdom.

It is said that because of their imaginary nature, fictions generally make only short-lived effects. However, sometimes the unrealistic notions and psychological reactions projected 'realistically' in the stories or imaginary instances in fictions create such deep impressions in a reader's (listener or viewer's) mind which might trigger the latter - even after a long span of time - to think or react in an abnormal or inhuman manner.

In view of the above limitations of hypothetical creation of examples, and noting the general non-reachability of the difficult philosophical deliberations and the similes derived from them by intellectual decipherations, Acharya Sharma had advocated the use of inspiring examples from real life in the teachings under the mass-education programmes of his "Vichara Kranti" and "Yug Nirman" missions....

The present volume is an exclusive compilation of authentically reported, inspiring instances of the lives of the great many ordinary people of the ancient and the modern times. It encompasses almost all circumstances and different walks of life that are of relevance to human society today.

The adversities, challenges or difficulties faced by the people cited here, may, sometime stand before us too. In such situations, the memories of the concerned instances given here would offer us instant courage and solutions. How the ordinary humans, who were suffering from sever diseases, handicaps, poverty, etc, or, who had been tortured by assault, scorn and exploitation by the society or even by the near and dear ones..., etc, overcame all hindrances, agonies and pressures...., and made best use of their potentials..., and achieved success and happiness while living under the circumstances worse than ours? Live examples of these sorts are of great importance in alleviating our worries and awakening our talents and positive thinking.

We might have been taught or might keep reading or listening about the great religious principles and the importance and righteous values of the ideal qualities like - patience, endurance, modesty, honesty, integrity, courage, bravery, justice, equality, altruist attitude, creative optimism, etc. Depending upon our upbringing,

education and intrinsic nature, we might have also adopted some or all of them to some extent.... We might also attempt controlling the negative tendencies related to anger, ego, erotic thinking, selfish desires, etc. However, as might be the case with most of us, we normally remain far from what we should or would like to be in ideal sense. The examples cited in this volume would inspire and encourage us to proceed further with greater and greater strength and success.

Examples and episodes of the glorious lives of great personalities are presented in the volume nos. 50 and 51 of this series. The present volume is unique and might be most suitable to most of us because it deals with ordinary people. Acharya Sharma's vivid discussions - on how and what the specific episodes convey to us...., make the teachings more perspicuous, trenchant and impressive.

Many a times we are in a state of dilemma or confusion, and can't foresee the consequences of our possible actions; we can't even sometimes analyze what would be a correct decision or reaction... In such cases, we do look for someone who had experienced similar situations or who could guide us righteously with substantial moral support..... The present volume will indeed be the best friend or advisor in such critical moments too.

The all round tensions, agonies, misdeeds, desperate competitions, blind ambitions, corruption, mistrust, uncertainties,etc, prevailing in the world today, give a clear indication that majority of the people have not learnt the art of living a happy & righteous life....

Acharya Sharma has gifted an intimate "well-wisher" and a perfect guide to us in the form of this volume. This will help each one of us learn, from the live-examples of the 'fellow beings', the best mode of living a creative and successful life, bearing all its ups and downs cheerfully. The volume would also be an excellent source for guiding sincere self-analysis and refinement and development of personality, endowed with virtuous potentials, which would set examples for others to follow....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 67, An Introduction

TALKS AND SPEECHES OF GURUDEV

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(*Pujyavara Kī Amratavāṇī* - I)

Acharya Sharma's personality was a rare combination of a great saint, spiritual master, sagacious scholar, scientist par excellence, patriot, social reformer, notable writer and an inspiring orator of distinct qualities. It is indeed surprising how the same person could express perfect eloquence in writing as well as in oration.... He wrote a record number of books in Hindi on the topics concerning all dimensions of the limitless expansion of human life. His depth of knowledge, lucidity, and ability to penetrate the reader's mind and core of sentiments, are truly exceptional. His writings are regarded as masterpiece of literature and precious theses of different branches of knowledge - ranging from *vedic* scriptures, religious philosophy, spirituality and culture, etc., to psychology, health sciences, sociology, physical sciences, civilization and future of the world, etc.....

The vangmaya series of 108 volumes gives a collection of his monumental contributions to different disciplines of knowledge through his writings. The present volume and volume no. 92 are distinct in the sense that these contain the nectar of his discourses and oral deliberations (*Amrit Vāṇī*) on a wide variety of topics. His speeches and talks are compiled here in their original form from the audio recordings. This would offer to all those, who might not have met him or listened to his inspiring discourses, an opportunity to do so.

The simplicity of language in his orations and his ability to set a live linkage with the audiences used to have a hypnotizing effect on the listener's mind. Similar engrossment would be felt while reading this volume. Such is the flow of his illustrative lectures that the readers will find spontaneous answers and learn in reality.

This volume covers a spectrum of topics concerning psychological refinement and spiritual elevation of mankind. These include series of his lectures and talks, delivered on different occasions, before heterogeneous gatherings of people - coming from different walks of society, having different educational, social, psychological and spiritual backgrounds. The broad class of topics compiled here, may be grouped as - "*Gāyatrī* and *Yagya*"; "The foundational elements of the divine culture of India"; "Principles and methods of spiritual refinement"; "Myths and Facts of supernormal attainments by spiritual endeavors"; "Awakening of divinity in human beings - relevance and experiments in day-to-day life"; "Divine call of eternity for mankind - preparation and progress towards a new and bright era"; "The meaning and philosophy of Brahmnism - how people belonging to any case or creed, having any religious faith, could become a true Brahmin and enhance their potentials for global welfare.....?"; etc.

The earlier volumes (no. 9 to 14 of this series) on *Gāyatrī* are invaluable treatises on - Complete knowledge of the philosophy and science of *Gāyatrī Mantra*; *Gāyatrī* - as the source of genesis and expansion of the Vedas and all the knowledge of the material, conscious and super-conscious components of Nature and its eternal creator; *Gāyatrī* - the power of refinement and righteous illumination of intellect; Spiritual endeavors of realization and supreme attainments of *Gāyatrī Vidya*....; etc. The associated topics covered in the present volume offer complementary support to clarify the readers' doubts in general.

Here, Acharya Sharma talks about "*Tripadā Gāyatrī*" and the three components of - conception, perception and realization of divinity. Understanding and experiences of theism, religion, spirituality, intrinsic faith, prudence, creativity, talents, success, and responsibilities, associated with it are also explained perspicuously with illustrative examples from ancient as well as modern times. He openly discusses how he proceeded with the great spiritual endeavors of *Gāyatrī Sadhanā* while also fulfilling his familial and social responsibilities. His eloquent deliberations leave no room

for doubt or suspicion. The kind of live interaction set in his speeches enables the listener (reader, here) endow his teachings and inspirations directly within heart. His voice becomes the voice of the listener's (reader's) inner self.

The topics on *yagya* covered here will teach us the philosophy of *Yagya* and its relevance and scientific importance in our daily life. The logical basis and scientific process of *Yagya* is vividly explained here covering every detail on queries ranging from "how and when to perform a *Yagya*?" to "the complementarity of *Gāyatrī* and *Yagya* - in materialistic (worldly), psychological and spiritual domains of human life"....As his speeches were meant to make even the deep and difficult domains of knowledge, accessible and understandable to the beginners - including those who can't even read...., Acharya Sharma has been extremely lucid here. He teaches like a mother, a perfect trainer. He shares his own experiences with the audience. He illustrates the points with the help of simple examples and short stories while also maintaining the spontaneity and focus of the talk....

It is amazing to note that the esoteric topics of the spiritual sciences and *yoga*, including - "*Shaktipāta*" and "*Kuṇḍalini Jāgaraṇa*", could be explained so perspicuously, at such elementary level, by a great *yogi* who has reached the highest realms of knowledge and accomplishments in these *sadhanās*? But, as we see here, Acharya Sharma indeed does that, quite adeptly, leaving no room for illusions and misconceptions in the minds of the audience and the readers. In his writings, he elucidates the deeper depths and gigantic grandeur of the science of spirituality and its practical implementation in human life. With equal ease and effect he explains in his talks, this rather 'inexpressible' field of hidden knowledge and subtle experiences....

People often limit the meaning and use of religion in narrow peripheries of - specific expression of faith in *thy* manifestations, modes of worshiping, rituals and rites. They think this is how a religion is to be practised to please the Almighty God..... Acharya

Sharma's teachings have given due importance to eradicating such misconceptions and illuminating the masses with the righteous interpretation and knowledge of religion, theism, and spirituality, and propagating prudent conceptualization and realization of the eternal, omnipresent existence of God....

The set of his lectures compiled in this volume would be of excellent use in enlightening the masses - especially in the societies like India, and teaching them to worship the God existing in humanity. His conceptualization of *thee*, as - the perpetual cosmic order..., the limitless, eternal ensemble of absolute virtues and divine tendencies...., - is universal and naturally gives righteous direction to people's faith. His talks convey his ideas more clearly and trenchantly.

What is the practical science of spirituality and how it can be followed in daily life to attain spiritual refinement of personality, illumination of intellect and gradually accomplish ultimate success in life? How to awaken and improve hidden talents and potentials? How to be graced by the divine blessings of *thee*? Acharya Sharma's sagacious discussions here would answer such doubts and queries of most people and motivate them to read his books and volumes with greater interest to know more about their own selves and about the origin and purpose of their lives.

The last section of this volume is devoted to his prophecies and guidance on the future of the world. It also throws light on the common curiosities like -" In what form, the divine incarnation, if any, would descent in the new era?" "What will be the future of human civilization and humanity in the next millenium?".... Acharya Sharma highlights the possibilities of revolutionary changes in the world order and the advent of a bright era, which would be achieved by the collective genuine efforts of the masses, dedicated to the needs of the time.... He assures us of an auspicious future, which will bestow 'divine boons' upon us worth our endeavors in this critical juncture of change of an era....

Acharya Sharma's verbal guidance, his speeches and discourses had motivated millions of people and inspired sublime transformation in their thinking, aspirations and conduct. The present volume has offered this rare opportunity to us too. Reading it would make us feel as if, we are sitting near him and receiving the nectar of his divine guidance by listening to him alive....



Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 68, An Introduction

One thing that I have intensely desired is to be able to give away my all to those who have overwhelmed me with their priceless gifts of love, so that at the time of withdrawal to the invisible astral realm I could put the dust of their foot-prints on my head and say: "This is what has been possible for me to do for you in this life. I wish I am given the opportunity of going through the whole cycle of 84-lakh life-forms again so that I could serve you all to my utmost capacity and thus gladly repay the debts I owe you for the gifts of love and cooperation that you have gratefully and unconditionally showered on me."

QUOTABLE QUOTES AND EXCERPTS-

(*Vichāra Sāra Evam Sūktiyān - I*)

Quotable quotes and phrases have a significant place in literature. These are easy to remember and help concise expression of specific points or thoughts. Sayings of great personalities and opinions of authentic experts of different disciplines of knowledge are quoted with distinct honor in speeches and essays to enrich the validity and impact of the concerned topic and expression of thoughts.....

The sayings and quotes, which contain the expression of the inner feelings and messages of saintly scholars and spiritually elevated personalities, often generate magical enlightenment and offer instant guidance in difficult moments. This is why they have been given special place in religious and philosophical scriptures. They also offer remarkable help in psychological treatment and counseling.

These quotes also provide excellent food for righteous thinking and ideal tips for correct actions accordingly. Recalling such sayings and contemplating on the essence of thoughts of the sagacious minds and illuminated personalities is also an effective mode of training and illuminating our minds. The present volume together with the next in the series offers comprehensive collection of golden sayings and excerpts from religious scriptures with brief but perspicuous explanation wherever necessary. These two volumes also enshower the nectar of Acharya Sharma's teachings.

The contents of this volume include - hymns from the Vedas, quotes from the scriptures of different religions of the world, prudent thoughts of the *rishis* of yore and great personalities of the later ages. The comprehensive collection here brings us the essence of in-depth knowledge on almost all topics concerning human life. The multifarious approaches to - the search of absolute truth, culmination and sublime transformation of humanity, ethics and secrets of success in different walks of righteous life, ..., etc, presented at one place, make this volume preciously useful for each one of us. The "easy to

understand", and "ready to follow" style of presentation of the quotations add to the importance of this volume.

The volume begins with the inspiring sayings of the *rishis*, *yogis*, sagacious saints, noted philosophers and other revered personalities, on the topics pertaining to self-realization and spirituality. Successive sections enlighten us by the knowledge of the divine goal of human life, the origin and limitless expansion of truth, eternal importance of - the natural sentiments of love and compassion,, noble tendencies, self-restrain, righteous behavior,etc. Marvellous representations of the fundamental elements of the Indian culture are reflected here in the expressions quoting the experiences and comments of the glorious men and women of the ancient and the modern times.

Collection of the preaching of different religions is quoted here to elucidate the realities of "Multiple Paths to Common Goals". This is a rare compilation evincing the fundamental similarities of the objective and the coherence of different philosophies on the existence of the unique, universal, ultimate power of God, decipheration of absolute truth, and realization of eternal liberty..... This would serve as an authentic treatise for the ideal human religion, unifying the best teachings of different religions and schools of thoughts.

Excerpts from the teachings of the Vedas, Upanishadas, Mahabharata, Manusmriti, Nitisara, Shabdārtha Chintamani, Smiriti Grantha, Bhagawat Purana, Ramacharita Manas, etc, - of the Hindu religion, Kodhvaggo, Dandavaggo, etc, of Buddhism, Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh), the Jewish scriptures like Midrash, Yalkuta, etc, Tao, Theh King, Luca-Matte, etc, the scriptures of Christianity, and the holy Kuran Sharif, etc, of the Muslim religion, are presented here with short commentaries. Ethics of humanity, Principles of nonviolence, honesty and amity, Duties of a person in married life, in the society, etc -- are conveyed in these sacred quotes, which have remarkable impact on human psychology.

The essence of the science and philosophy of *yoga* - in every dimension of human life is highlighted in the guiding quotations of Sutra Grantha, Nitishataka, Yoga Vashishtha, Subhashita Ratnabhandagar, Charaka Samhita, Sushtura Samhita, etc. These would serve as

compact guide book for all those who want to know, learn, and practice in daily life, *yoga* - as a perfect art of living.

Illuminated sayings of the spiritually refined great personalities and eminent thinkers like Swami Ramatirtha, Swami Ram Krishna Parahamhans, Swami Vivekananda, Lala Hardayal, James Ellen, Lev Tolstoy, Spinoza, Victor Hugo, Goethe, Johnson, Tenneson, etc, are cited here which offer us an invaluable source of enlightenment and motivation. Recalling and following their sayings would be equivalent to being in the noble company of these great personalities. The inspiring impulses of these messages and guidelines would inculcate the seeds of virtuous tendencies in our minds and hearts as well.

The treasure of *rishi chintan* - "ideal thoughts for the day", is also presented here. It consists of small paragraphs or guidelines on - How to react in which situation?, How to activate and use specific potentials and talents?, How to take right decisions at the right moments?,,etc. These reflect the essence of Acharya Sharma's thoughts, which would work like afflatus for the awoken minds and also vibrate and illuminate the otherwise dull and dormant minds..... The topics covered here, may be classified under the headings - "Scientific Aspects of Spirituality"; "Practical Science of Spirituality"; "Spirituality and Yoga in Daily Life"; "Spiritual Power of Thoughts and Sentiments"; "Spiritual Endeavors of Sublime Transmutation of Vital Force"; "Scientific Basis, Relevance and Importance of Religion";,etc.

The guidelines presented here would be useful for each one of us in one form or the other..... Because, these would educe righteous attitude, courage, positive thinking and offer immense moral support and enliven guidance in different situations and ups and downs of our lives and under different psychological conditioning of our minds. Be those the high tides of triumph and joys, the low tides of failures, agonies and despair, or the steady flow of routine chores....., these quotable quotes and prudent thoughts would guide the small boats of our deeds to the righteous destinations through the gigantic ocean of life....

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 69, An Introduction

QUOTABLE QUOTES AND EXCERPTS-

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(*Vichāra Sāra Evam Sūktiyān* - II)

This volume is a continuation of volume no. 69 of the vangmaya series. It contains quotable quotes and sayings of great saints, thinkers and social reformers. Essence of thoughts and experiences of other glorious persons, who have achieved ideal success in different walk of life, are also cited here.

The previous volume cites the quotations, sayings and excerpts on the philosophy of life, spirituality, and related topics pertaining to the inner world of sentiments, thoughts, convictions, and intrinsic tendencies of mind. The topics covered in the present volume deal with the behavioral aspects and worldly activities. The list includes those concerning - adoption and practice of chastity, modesty, integrity of character, mutual cooperation, etc; healthy body and healthy mind; elimination of evil tendencies and habits; refinement of talents for viable materialistic progress; ideal modes of using wealth and prosperity; social development; civilization and culture; etc.

It is interesting to see what the sayings and excerpts of the Vedas, Upanishadas and other scriptures of the different religions of the world convey and teach about the gamut of duties, activities and attainments of life. The unity of objective and essence found here in the diversities of the different approaches..., enlightens our faith in the universality of true knowledge.

The quotations, extracted from the ancient treatises and the views of the erudite scholars and noted personalities of different ages, presented here, reflect different colors of the eternal glow of knowledge under different shades of human psychology and changing patterns of human life - its social prospects, and civilization, with the flow of time..... Experienced guidelines for

what is most suitable and applicable in the present circumstance of life, are also available in the selected "thoughts for the day" conveyed by the author.

Wide varieties of questions, on topics ranging - from "how to eat and what to eat?" to "medical and psychological aspects of chastity"....; from "religious conducts in married life" to "management of family".....; from "glory of women" to "social and national progress"....; from "secrets of prosperous life" to "economic development"....; from "personal elevation" to "culmination of human culture"....; etc, are trenchantly answered in these short but precise quotes.

The selection, sorting, and compilation of great many thoughts and sayings on multifarious aspects of human life is indeed remarkable. The condensed presentation of the essence of the seemingly limitless amount of knowledge in this volume together with the previous one materializes the apparently impossible task of "collecting an ocean (of knowledge) in a small bucket (of a compact volume).....".

The two volumes together will serve to be "Concise Encyclopedia" of the ideas and opinions of the great spiritual masters, erudite scholars, distinguished experts and glorious personalities. This would be a precious collection of references for thorough research in the broad areas like - "Comparative Study of the Ancient and Modern Schools of Philosophy/ Psychology/ Sociology /etc"; "Unified Approaches of Different Religions...."; "History and Trends of Cultural and Social Developments...."; etc.

The quotations being small are easy to remember. They work like "pocket guides" extracted from copious treatises of knowledge... 'Food' for righteous and creative thinking is available here in a 'ready-made, delicious and easy-to-digest' form. It is up to us how we benefit from this nectar.

Be those the problems of day-to-day life, social interactions, management of personal and professional domains of life, or the

endeavors of enlightened elevation and progress ... in specific direction, the quotable quotes, sayings, and essence of thoughts presented here will provide instant solutions and timely guidance....., which perhaps will not be always available from any other source.

If we develop a habit of reading, recalling and obeying even a single quotation per day, our intellect, talents, creativity, mode of working, and overall conduct, will soon begin to glow with excellence and open up the doors of success along the righteous path of progress.

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Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya Vangmaya Vol. 70, An Introduction

Rest assured that the debt that I owe to my parijans will be repaid. I do not desire either Heaven or liberation. I ardently pray to God that I may be again put through the whole cycle of 84-lakh life-forms as a blade of grass, a blooming flower, a tree, a sheep, a cow etc., so that I am able to amply discharge the debts I owe to my parijans, who have showered on me their gifts of love, affection, reverence, faith, goodwill and understanding. Sometimes, I wish I become a heavy-laden cloud and could repay each drop of these gifts with showerful of rain. I do not know whether, and if so how far, these ardent aspirations of mine will be fulfilled. I can only assure my parijans that their love will never be forgotten.

LIST OF VANGMAYA TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE SERIES

- Vol. 71 Psychological Basis of Mental Disorders
(*Manovikāron Ki Vagyanik Priṣṭhabhūmi*)
- Vol. 72 Causes and Remedies Of Mental Stress -
Comprehensive Analysis
(*Tanāva Ke Karaṇa Evam Unke Nivāraṇa Ke Upāya*)
- Vol. 73 Projections of Attitude and Thoughts
(*Chintan Kā Vidheyātmak - Niṣedhātmaka Swarūpa*)
- Vol. 74 Immense Potentials of Zeal and Mental Vitality
(*Puruṣārtha aur Mānavī Jijīviṣā*)
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(*Vyaktitva Ke Vikāsa Kī Prakriyā*)
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- Vol. 82 Viable Solutions to The Social Problems of Today
(*Sāmājika Samasyāyen Aur Unkā Sāmādhāna*)
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(*Samāja-Nirmāṇa Ke Vibhinna Charaṇa*)

- Vol. 84 Intimacy of Ethics and Social Order
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(*Nārī Jāgrati Kī Bādhāyen Evam Unke
Nirākaraṇa Ke Upāya*)
- Vol. 87 Family Life: Best Phase for Ascetic Endeavors
(*Pārivārika Jivana : Ek Tapa-Sādhanā*)
- Vol. 88 Collective Responsibilities of Married Life
(*Dāmpatya Jivana Ke Sanyukta Dāyitva*)
- Vol. 89 The Science of Ethics and Morality in Practice
(*Nīti Vigyāna Aur Naitikatā*)
- Vol. 90 Foundational Principles and Progressive
Modes of Agricultural and Industrial Development
(*Kriṣi, Vyavasāya Aur Udhhyoga Kī Unnati Ke Ādhāra*)
- Vol. 91. Sagacious Thoughts of Gurudev
(*Pūjya Gurudeva Ke Sfuta Vichāra*)
- Vol. 92 Talks and Speeches of Gurudev - II
(*Pūjyavar Kī Amritvāṇī - II*)
- Vol. 93 Divine Experiences of Gurudev
(*Pūjya Gurudeva Kī Divya Anubhūtiyān*)
- Vol. 94 Treasure of Inspiration -- Letters from Gurudev
(*Pūjya Gurudeva Ke Likhe Smarṇīya Patra*)
- Vol. 95 The Great Science of Tantra -- Elucidation of the
Hidden Forces of Nature
(*Tantra Māhāvīgyāna Vivechana*)
- Vol. 96 The Great Science of Mantra -- Evolution
and Illumination of Life
(*Mantra Māhāvīgyāna Vivechana*)

- Vol. 97 Enlightening Memoirs of Great Lives
(*Māhapuruṣon Ke Preraka Jīvana-Prasanga*)
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- Vol. 100 Pragyā Abhiyan - The Noble Mission of Shantikunj
for Spiritual Transmutation of Intellect
(*Śātikunja kā Pragyā Abhiyāna*)
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(*Yuga Nirmaṇa Mission Kā Kramika Itihāsa*)
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- Vol. 103 The Essence of Puranas
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Guidance of Gurudev
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Note: Vol. nos. 71-108 are in print. The introduction to these is not covered in this book.