

VEDAS

THE BEGINNING AND ENDING OF KNOWLEDGE

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No Scripture Excells the Vedas Mahabharat

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Foreword

Animals fundamentally differ from man. They predominantly work with their instincts (which is another name for divine knowledge) which they receive from their creature and insignificantly by instruction. Almost every member of a species instinctively works in accordance with its code of conduct. A calf does not receive training in swimming. A honey bee does not join an Engineering College to get necessary training for constructing a beehive. Birds, at the right moment, prepare their nests instinctively out of whatever material they get from their surroundings. They need not be trained in their art.

Man comes to this world of activity in a physical body more or less as helpless creature. He cannot even walk on his toes as animals do on their legs. He cannot swim on the surface of the water as fishes do and he cannot soar high in the sky as birds can. He cannot build houses as white ants build their moles or bees their hives. He cannot sing as the cuckoo does. In all these matters other creatures are in a much more advantageous position than man.

Though weak by instinct, man is the most powerful creature in the entire creation. The more evolved a man is the more he works with that he has achieved by a process of instruction. Since man possesses intellect and freedom to will and act, he has to be instructed. He can be distracted to evil paths. Therefore, he needs caution, schooling and tutoring. He very often needs a code of Do's and Don'ts based on experience of those who have gone ahead of him.

Man acquires knowledge by reading books and receiving oral instruction from others. Knowledge is thus imparted through books, through preceptors and through the experience of others. Now, in the beginning of creation there was no system of teaching and learning, nor were there any books to read. How could, then, men acquire knowledge? Thus, a man not being independent in the matter of empirical knowledge, and innate knowledge alone being insufficient for the acquisition of knowledge, the only course left for him was to receive instruction from God, the only pre-existing intelligent Being at the time. Even today we do not learn anything without receiving instruction from our parents or

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teachers. The children of the greatest scholar, philosopher or scientist have to go to school to learn the A, B, C of anything. The proposition of the evolutionary hypothesis that man has from the day of his origin, being progressing in the discovery and application of the laws of science, is belived by the testimony of the experiment made as well as by the excavations going on in different parts of the world. If a child is brought up in the company of beasts or ignorant people; he will remain as ignorant as they. Experiments have been made by keeping human children in a lonely places, taking care, of course, to provide them with food, drink etc., but never communicating with them by means of speech. Even after 10-15 years, such children were found as innocent as ever. All human population would have continued to behave like beasts from the beginning of creation, to the present day, if had not received instruction from someone.

The primeval source of all knowledge is the Supreme Being. It is from Him that we got our first prompting to knowledge. If God had not instructed the sages in the beginning of the creation and similarly, if those sages had not transmitted that knowledge of others, all the people in the world would have remained absolutely ignorant. This knowledge was subsequently codified in the form of four Vedas and transmitted from generation to generation. But we are not all made of the same stuff. The Rishies received knowledge at first hand from the heart of the Eternal. With the passage of time we required simpler material to suit our needs. This was made available to us by later Seers and Acharyas through treatises comprising various forms of literature. Dr. K.V. Paliwal, has taken up himself the arduous task of acquiting the young generation with the vast field of Vedic and allied literature, spread over thousands of years.

The present work is not the product of purely scholarly interest. It has grown out of vital urges and under the pressure of the peculiar situation obtaining today in our schools and colleges. The book is intended to provide, within a short compass, glimpses of the basic minimum which every boy and girl should know. Those who dig deeper will get the maximum of what they may aspire for.

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Vedas Introduced

1. DEFINITION

Q. What are the Vedas?

Ans. The Vedas are the collection of mantras. The word Veda is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Vid' which means knowledge. Hence, the Vedas are the books of knowledge.

Q. How many are the Vedas?

Ans. The Vedas are four only, i.e., Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda.

Q. What are the characteristics of a mantra?

Ans. The mantra, composed in a metre, bears a concept and teaching worth contemplation and adoption. It contains true knowledge, and inspires noble thought and action.

2. VEDANGAS AND SHAKHAS

Q. What are the Up-Vedas?

Ans. The Up-vedas are the texts on the auxiliary themes of the Vedas. The Up-Veda of Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda, is Economics, Military Science, Music and Dance and Medical Science, respectively. These explain the main concepts of the Vedas in details on their respective topics.

Q. What are the Vedangas?

Ans. These are the branches of the Vedas, and are six in number viz., Kalpa or creation, Grammar, Astrology, Etymology, Education and Metres. These all are extremely useful in revealing the secrets of Vedic interpretation, and their knowledge can be taken as a prerequisite for in depth Vedic studies.

Q. What are the Shakhas and how many Shakhas are there of the Vedas?

Ans. The Shakhas of the Vedas are explanation and/or editions of original Sanhitas; and thus are not the original Vedas. They may be even mixed up with the Brahmanas. So they are the creation of later vedic seers. In the past, there were 1127 Shakhas of the Vedas including 20 of

Rigveda, 100 of Yajurveda, 1000 of Samaveda and 7 of Atharvaveda. But at present only a few (8-10) Shakhas are available.

Q. How are other Hindu scriptures viz., Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Shastras, Upanishads, Grihyasutras, Shrutigranthas, Smritees, Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puranas related with the Vedas?

Ans. In the above scriptures, attempts were made by the seers, scholars and devotees to explain the basic tenets of the Vedas in different ways. But the Vedas are the primary sources for all practical purposes, and in case of differences in opinion, the Vedas being Divine revelations, should be finally accepted authentic as pointed out in Manusmrit —

धर्म जिज्ञासमानानाम् प्रमाणं परमं श्रुतिः (मनु, 2.13)

and Jabal Smriti 'श्रुति स्मृति विरोधे तु श्रुतिरेव गरीयसी' and those portions supporting the Vedas are called indirect evidences. Further only the concepts in conformity with the Vedas be accepted, and contradictory views be discarded.

Q. What are Brahman Granthas?

Ans. Brahman Granthas belong to that category of books which can be stated to be the first interpretations of the Vedas. Brihat Parashar Smriti (3.44) defines thus : "A Brahmana is a book which tells the meaning of Vedic mantras and its use".

अस्य मंत्रस्यार्थोऽर्थमयं मंत्रोऽत्र वर्तते ।

तस्य ब्राह्मणं ज्ञेयं मंत्रस्येति श्रुतिक्रमः ।।

Similarly in Vaisheshic Darshan Acharya Kanad says "ब्राह्मणो संज्ञाकर्म सिद्धिलिङ्गम्" "Brahmanas define words of the Vedas and their meaning." But they also carry over-emphasis on rituals and yagyas. In ancient times, there were many Brahmanas. But currently only six are available. Of these, three — Aiteraya, Shakayana and Kaushitiki belong to Rigveda, Shatpatha to Yajurveda, Mahatandya to Samaveda and Gopatha Brahmana to Atharva Veda.

Q. What are the Shastras?

Ans. The Shastras are the books of Philosophy or Darshan. All the six systems of Indian Philosophy of the theists are called Shastras. Vedic seers systematically examined, analysed, elaborated and presented the basic philosophical concepts in six different ways on problems of nature, man and God and their relationships along with creation of universe. These philosophical texts are — (1) Sankhya Darshan by Kapil, (2) Yoga Darshan by Patanjali, (3) Nyaya Darshan by Gautama, (4) Vaisheshik Darshan by Kanad, (5) Purva Meemansa by Jaimini and (6) Uttar Meemansa or Vedanta Darshan by Badarayana. These all are in

conformity with the Vedic philosophical concepts.

Q. What are Upanishads?

Ans. These mostly explain in details Vedic theology including metaphysics, spiritual and mystical powers and concepts of God. The literal meaning of Upanishad itself is the knowledge of realising and visualising God. In some Upanishads, some of the Vedic hymns are reproduced as such. These texts mostly deal with the concepts, characteristics and manifestations of powers of God, nature and properties of soul, its relationships with God, sometimes in a figurative manner or in symbolic stories. In these books, most complex philosophical concepts and spiritual experiences have been presented through lucid dialogues. References in mythological literature indicate the existence of one thousand Upanishads in ancient times. But all of them are not available now; and the following eleven Upanishads have unanimously been recognised by religious seers, philosophers and Hindu saints for their authenticity, philosophical concepts and spiritual attainments in inspiring each enlightened soul not only in India but also in the whole world. Even some non-Hindu scholars and philosophers have whole heartedly appreciated their loftiness and wisdom. These Upanishads are — *Ish, Ken, Katha, Prashna, Mundak, Mandukya, Aiteraiya, Taittheraiya, Shvetashvetar, Brahadaranyaka* and *Chhandogya*. Amongst these, Ishopanishad is most inspiring, innovative and scientific, providing basic tenets of Vedas in brief, for the entire humanity, irrespective of nationality, caste, creed, race and geographical boundaries. Important Vedic concepts relating to God, soul and nature, moral duties, monotheism, life after death and other complex philosophical concepts are clearly dealt therein. Except one mantra, the entire Ishopanishad is the last chapter of Yajurveda. It is the gist of Vedic religion.

Q. Are these Upanishads any way related to the Vedas?

Ans. Yes. Each of them belong to one of the four Vedas viz. Aiteraiyopanishad to Rigveda; Ishopanishad, Brahadaranyak and Taittherayopanishad to Yajurveda, Kena and Chhandogyopanishad to Samaveda and the rest — Katha, Prashna, Mundak, Shvetashevta and Mandukyopanishad belong to Atharva Veda. It is said that in ancient times each Shakha of a Veda had its own Upanishad. But like Shakhas, their Upanishads are also untracable now.

Q. What are Puranas and Smritis?

Ans. The Puranas are the books of ancient Indian history, culture and civilisation along with mythology of Hindu Religion and its several sects. Along with some description of creation of universe, moral education

and history of kings, they emphasise on incarnation of God in different forms and rituals. The Puranas are mainly devoted to different gods and goddesses as Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Shakti and their incarnations; and each Purana is devoted to the main deity of a particular sect, i.e., Vaishnava, Shaiva or Shakta showing supremacy of one over the other reflecting the sectarian approach. On account of gradual additions, alterations and distortions for hundreds of years continuously in the Puranas, particularly under the influence of Buddhist, Islamic and Christian rulers in India, some irrational, illogical, unethical, unscientific, inhumanitarian and antivedic concepts have crept there in. Such concepts as incarnations of gods and goddesses, their feuds for supremacy, idol worship, social discrimination, casteism and several other superstitions are totally unvedic. Therefore, their illogical teachings, unbelievable narrations and unscientific concepts contrary to the Vedas are quite discardable. However, their historical accounts are of great use as ancient culture. Strictly speaking, the present Puranas need a drastic 'purification' through cross-examination before they can be acceptable to human reason and intellect.

Though eighteen Puranas and Up-Puranas each, have been described in Hindu mythological texts, a lot of confusion persists about their names in different sources. A comparison of available literature reveals complete unanimity about the names of following fifteen Puranas viz. Brahma, Vishnu, Brahmanand, Varah, Vamana, Bhagwata, Bhavishya, Matsya, Markandeya, Agni, Kurma, Lingha, Garurha, Padma and Skanda. However, variance exists about the remaining three names.

Similarly, the names of 18 Up-Puranas are : Aadi, Nrisingha, Vayu, Shivadharm, Durvasa, Kapi, Narada, Nandikeshwara, Shukra, Varuna, Saamb, Kalki, Maheshwara, Padma, Deva, Parashar, Marichi and Bhaskar. Besides these names, some scholars count Aatma, Devibhagwata, Mahabhagwata, Yugasaur and Kedar Kalpa Puranas as Up-Puranas also. Moreover, some count Narada, Vayu, Padma and Nrisingha as the main Puranas while others consider them as Up-Puranas. Thus there is no absolute unanimity, like Vedas, on the names of 18 Puranas and Up-Puranas amongst the Pauranic theologians.

Q. What are the Smrities?

Ans. Smrities are the books of social, economic and political laws which are changeable with time and have been composed by scholars from time to time as the need was. Amongst 250 Smrities mentioned, Only some (57) are traceable now.

3. MAIN THEMES OF THE VEDAS

Q. What are the main themes of the Vedas?

Ans. The Vedas are theistic in nature and emphasise to know and adore God and act according to His eternal laws. They possess all true knowledge, and all that which can be known through knowledge. The four Vedas have predominantly four main themes (वेदाः साङ्गश्चत्वारः) viz., knowledge, activity, worship and human conduct including scientific and management technology or Vigyanam. They provide all primary and causative knowledge about God, human beings, nature, their activity and relationships. All sorts of knowledge in every field of human activities, physical sciences and technologies, are dealt therein, in brief. The Vedas contain all basic, moral, ethical and logical principles inspiring practical teachings and ideals for daily needs which can help human beings in elevating them to the supreme state, i.e., Moksha, individually and in discharging social responsibilities. Broadly speaking, there are two types of knowledge in the Vedas i.e., Para and Aparā. Para deals with the concepts of God, His manifestations of powers and spiritualism while Aparā is concerned with worldly matters and pleasures — thus covering the entire field of knowledge.

Maharishi Vyas says "Whatever texts of different subjects are in the world, they owe their origin to the Vedas" (Maha. Bh. Anu., P. 122.4).

यानी हागम शास्त्राणि याश्च कश्चित् प्रवृत्तयः

तानि वेदं पुरस्कृत्य प्रवृत्तानि यथाक्रमम्।

Similarly Yagyavalkya Rishi says "All Shastras have originated from the eternal Vedas only, and no book is comparable to the Vedas."

न वेद शास्त्रादन्यतु किञ्चिच्छास्त्र हि विद्यते।

निःसृतं सर्वशास्त्रं तु वेद शास्त्रात् सनातनात्॥

वृद्धयोनि याज्ञवल्क्य स्मृति (12.1)

Manu reiterates the same view with emphasis that prime source of all past, present and future knowledge, is Veda. This knowledge is eternal, truthful and authentic.

पितृदेवमनुष्याणां वेदश्चक्षुः सनातनम्

अशक्यं चाप्रमेयं च वेदशास्त्रमितिस्थितिः। मनु. (12.94)

भूतं भव्यं भविष्यं च सर्वं वेदात् प्रसिध्यति। मनु. (12.97)

विभर्ति सर्वभूतानि वेदशास्त्रं सनातनम्। मनु. (12.99)

Q. What is the main theme of Rigveda?

Ans. Rigveda's main theme is basic knowledge covering a wide

range of topics as concepts, qualities and characteristics of God, soul and primary source of nature. It also covers properties of visible and invisible world, and some basic aspects of physical sciences as Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Astronomy, Cosmology etc. It also contains human ideals and principles to be adopted in all walks of life. In the words of Sayana

ऋचन्ति स्तुवन्ति पदार्थानां गुणकर्मस्वभावाननया सा ऋक्।

Rigveda contains nature, properties and activities of all types of materials, i.e. physical, metaphysical and spiritual.

Q. What does Yajurveda deal with?

Ans. It mainly deals with mode of conduct, human psychology, activity and ways and means for infinite improvement in order to achieve the highest goal of life. It emphasises how to convert knowledge gained into useful activities and impart the same to other human beings as pointed out by Sayana.

यजन्ति येन मनुष्याः ईश्वरं धार्मिकान् विदुषश्च
पूजयन्ति, शिल्प विद्या संगतिकरणं च कुर्वन्ति,
शुभविद्या गुणा दानं च कुर्वन्ति तद् यजुः।

Q. What is the subject matter of Samaveda?

Ans. It deals with that knowledge and activity by which the soul of human being is relieved from the cycle of life and death (स्यति कर्माणीति सामवेदः). It is devoted to the adoration, praise and worship of God; manifestations of His powers and mode of worship for spiritual attainments. Its devotional hymns engulfed with sublime thoughts, attuned with emotional touch leave human mind and soul in tranquility. It emphasises for human beings to develop their mental and spiritual powers to their highest order.

Q. What subjects are dealt in Atharvaveda?

Ans. According to Nirukta (11.18) "That by which all sorts of doubts and imperfections are removed; and expertise is achieved, is Atharvaveda." The knowledge, activity and practice lead to the state of perfection in all branches of knowledge, whether social or physical sciences. So Atharvaveda deals with science, technology, applied social sciences and human behaviour covering Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Astrology, Cosmology, Medical Sciences, Agriculture, Engineering, Military Sciences, Aeronotics and Creation of Universe. It also includes social sciences as Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, Economics etc. but not the history of past, kings and queens, and mankind as we find

in the present man-made History books.

Q. Does Atharvaveda contain detailed scientific knowledge and technology for immediate use?

Ans. Detailed scientific knowledge of all the above mentioned branches of physical sciences is not practically possible in a single text like Atharva-Veda. However, it certainly carries all basic principles, in brief. And on that basis, detailed texts have been developed in a number of branches which have been recognised as the first scientific documents by the world over. Truly speaking, all scientific secrets of Atharva Veda are yet to be explored because of lack of understanding of Vedic scientific terminology and its practical application simulating the modern science. Several unique scientific advancements hinted in the Vedas, are yet beyond the scope and comprehension of modern science.

In this context, Sayanaacharya writes in the introduction of Taittiriya Sanhita's commentary thus, "Whether is not known by vision or visualisation, that is certainly known by the Vedas; and this is the Vedicness of the Vedas." On this aspect in, "Dayanand and Veda" Shri Aurobindo writes thus, "There is nothing fantastic in Dayanand's idea that Veda contains truths of science as well as truths of Religion. I will even add my own conviction that Veda contains the other truths of Science which the modern world does not at all possess; and in that case, Dayanand has rather understated than overstated the depth and range of Vedic wisdom." Similarly, Shri N.B. Pavagi writes in "The Vedic Fathers of Geology", "I may take this opportunity to remind the readers without any fear of contradiction that the Vedas contain many things not yet known to any body as they form a more of the inexhaustible literary wealth that has still remained unexplored". Moreover American Scholar Wheeler Wilcox writes : "It (India) is the land of great Vedas the most remarkable works, containing not only religious ideas for a perfect life but also facts which science has since proved true. Electricity, radium, electrons airships, all seem to be known to the seers who found the Vedas." Unfortunately, voluminous, precious scientific Vedic literature was consumed to flames by fanatic and superstitious Islamic rulers during their invasions and ruling period. And yet whatever is left, gives ample proof of Atharvedic scientific supremacy as referred in Ramayana, Mahabharata and other sanskrit literature.

Q. Is there any specific order of the Vedas, and what is its significance?

Ans. Yes, the sequential order of the Vedas is — Rigveda, Yajurveda,

Samaveda and Atharva-veda. This specific order is very sound, logical and scientific as per the need of human development, i.e. knowledge, activity, spirituality and technology. And this is the same order of the main themes of the Vedas. Kathak Sanhita (40.7) approves this order viz.

ऋग्भिः शसन्ति यजुर्मिञ्जन्ति सामाभिः स्तुवन्ति अथर्वार्भजन्ति

This order is a quite rational as one must acquire knowledge first for judicious activity. Later on one should acquire supremacy and expertise by hard work and continued practice and utilize it for human welfare according to his moral, ethical and spiritual background. Purification of mind and soul by daily prayers, devotional songs, worship, judicious activity and rational behaviour further strengthen one's physical, mental and spiritual powers. This enables to serve the cause of society better in one's own field of activity whether social or physical sciences. Thus a proper combination of knowledge, activity, spiritually and technology followed according to the Vedas will undoubtedly lead to an immense development in the life of an individual and the society as a whole in a constructive manner. This rational and pragmatic approach will lead to an all round welfare of the humanity which is the ultimate objective of the Vedas, through this specific sequence.

4. VEDIC MANTRAS AND THEIR CLASSIFICATIONS

Q. How many mantras are there in the Vedas?

Ans. There are 10552 mantras in Rigveda, 1975 in Yajurveda, 1875 in Samaveda and 5977 in Atharvaveda with a total of 20379 mantras in all the Vedas.

Q. How are these mantras classified in the Vedas?

Ans. The mantras are classified differently in different Vedas. In Rigveda, they are classified simultaneously in 10 Mandalas, 8 Ashtakas, 64 Adhyayas, 2006 Vargas and 1028 Suktas. But in practice, they are referred in other texts etc. in mandala, sukta and mantra number. All mantras of Yajurveda are classified in forty Adhyayas. In Samaveda, the mantras are divided in three main sections as Purvarchika, Mahanamni and Uttararchika and further classified separately along with Adhyaya, Prapathaka, Khand and Dashati. Purvarchika has four Kaands viz. Aagneya, Aindra, Pavamana and Aranyaka with six prapathakas and six Adhyayas while Uttararchika has nine Prapathakas and twentyone Adhyayas. Atharvavedic mantras are classified in twenty. Kaands with 111 Anuvakas and seven hundred thirtyone suktas. But in practice, a

mantra is referred in Kanads, Sukta and mantra number.

Q. What is the significance of adopting different classifications of Vedic mantras?

Ans. Its primary objective is to maintain the single identity of each mantra of each Veda. Different classifications help in distinguishing and quoting the correct reference of a mantra from different Vedas. This procedure also helps in judging the main theme of the mantra even if it is repeated in another Veda. But in such repetitions, the Devta or Rishi of the mantra may be different.

5. RISHI, DEVTA, CHHANDA AND SVARA

Q. What is the significance of associating Rishi, Devta Chhanda (metre) and svara (notation) with each mantra?

Ans. Each of these four indices refer to some of the main characteristics of the mantra, and each one of these characteristics contributes significantly in exploring the secret and true spirit of the mantra.

Q. Who is a Rishi?

Ans. A Rishi is a person who according to Rigveda (10.107.6)

“तमेव ऋषितमु ब्राह्मणमाहुः। यज्ञन्यं सामगाभुवथ शासम्”

performs Yagya every day, recites Samavedic hymns, knows and instructs Vedas according to the true spirit of the mantra; who is well versed with satva, rajah, tamas and their relationships, has attained **Siddhi** or perfection by his own penance and ability; is rational in his acts and judgement, is free from all vices and remains cheerful and calm. According to Shatpath Brah. (4.3.9) —

‘यो वै ज्ञातोऽनूचानः स ऋषिः’

“a Rishi is one who possesses true knowledge and preaches the same to others.”

Q. What is the significance and relationship of the Rishi's name quoted along with the mantra?

Ans. It simply signifies that this particular Rishi was the first savant and expert who by virtue of his deep meditation and penance had revealed the true spirit of the mantra or group of mantras in their literal, metaphysical and spiritual sense, and had further explained the same in details to other human beings. So by virtue of his contributions in the study, interpretations, propagation and exploration on the true meaning of his mantra, later scholars associated his name with that particular mantra, in his memory, as a matter of respect.

Q. Is that Rishi the author of that mantra?

Ans. No, he is certainly not the author or composer of that particular mantra. The mantras were prevalent even before that Rishi. Yaskacharya nicely clarified this point in Nirukt (7.3) thus :

- (i) साक्षात् कृतधर्माण ऋषयो वभू युस्तोऽजरेभ्योऽसाक्षात् कृत धर्मस्य उपदेशेन मन्त्रान् सम्प्रादु (1.20)
- (ii) ऋषीणां मंत्रं दृष्टयो भवन्ति (7.3)।

'whichever mantra's meaning was revealed by a particular Vedic scholar first, the same was explained to others traditionally, and just to keep alive the history of contribution of that Rishi, his name was linked with that mantra. Therefore, that Rishi should be accepted as the first visionary and revealer of the true sense of the mantra.' Yaska further explained this point by quoting Acharya Aupamanyava who also believes :

ऋषयो मंत्रं द्रष्टारः। ऋषिर्दर्शनात्। स्तोमान् ददर्शे त्वीपमन्यवः। तद यदेनां स्तपस्यामानान् ब्रह्म स्वयम्भवम्यामपत्। तदऋषीणां ऋषित्वमिति विज्ञायते। (नि. 2.11)

"That one being the interpreter and revealer of true meaning of a Vedic mantra, is known as the Rishi of that mantra. While meditating through penance, they had a vision of true knowledge of Veda-an eternal Divine revelation. They were called Rishies as interpretation of true original sense of the vedic mantra is their true Rishiness."

Q. Why does the Rishi called mantra kratah, if he is not the author of the mantra ?

Ans. Mantra Karatah does not mean the author of mantra as misunderstood by some readers. Pt. Yudhishter Meemansak quoting several ancient and modern scholars opined (Vedic Sidhanta Meemansa, p. 338) that the word mantrakratah has three meanings: (1) visionary, (2) teacher, and (3) coordinator of mantra's true meaning. Besides this, the words like **Brahma Kritah**, **Mantravan** and **Mantra Karah** are also used in the above three senses. But in the entire Vedic literature, none of the oriental Vedic scholars have ever taken the meaning of mantra kratah as composer of the mantra except the occidental indologists who are totally ignorant of traditional interpretation of the Vedas, or have intentionally coined this concept of authorship and thus misinterpreted the Vedas to distort the Vedic wisdom. Bhatt Bhaskar Mishra in the commentary of Taitteraiya Arayank writes thus :

अथ नम ऋषिभ्य मंत्र कृद्भ्यो मंत्राणां दुष्टुभ्यः दर्शनमेव कर्तव्यं
(Mysore Ed., Part III, p. 1)

"Visualisation of true and secret sense of the mantra is also a sort of creation of mantra". As a matter of fact, Rishis are not the original composers of the mantras. They are simply the first visionaries of the secrets of the mantras. Further Kark Rishi (Katyayana's Shrouti Sutra fifth proof) also writes that the word mantra kratah — a Rishi, is said to be a visionary of true meaning of mantra. Otherwise even the eternity of the vedic mantras will not exist (Ashta 7.3.77).

Q. What is the opinion of Brahmanas and other Vedic literature about it?

Ans. A critical examination of Taitterieya and Kanva Samhita, Aiterieya, Shatapath, Tandya and Kositiki Brahmanas, Sarvanukramani, Anuvakanukramani, Atharva-Brihat sarvami Kramani etc., which are the most ancient texts on the manifestations of the Vedas, provides twentynine supporting evidences on this topic. While summarising them, Yudhisther Meemansak explicitly concludes — "Rishis are only the revealers or interpreters of the Vedas only, and never the authors of the vedic mantras (Vedic Sidhanta Meemansa, p. 339). Moreover in the entire vedic literature, no reference is visible supporting authorship of mantras by the Rishis. On the contrary evidences are, showing name of the Rishi as revealer of true meaning of a particular mantra, and not the author. According to Mahabharat —

स्वयम्भूरवे भगवान वेदोस्त्वया पुत्र
शिवाद्या ऋषि परियन्ताः स्मर्तसेऽस्य न कारकाः।

"O God! you have revealed the Vedas first, and from Shiva onwards innumerable Rishis have been their reciters and devotees. But none of them is their author."

Further Kulluck Bhatt writes in the commentary of Manusmriti :

ब्रह्माद्या ऋषि परियन्ता स्मरकाः न तु कारकाः।

"Since Brahma, all Rishis are the reciters and not the authors of the vedas. The following references explicitly support the view that Rishis saw (अपश्यत्, ददर्श) and did not compose (अरचयत्) the mantra.

1. स पूषा एतं मंत्रपश्यत्-सूर्यस्यत्या चक्षुषा प्रति परयामिति।
तैत्तरीय सं. (2.6.8)
2. स वामदेवः एतं सूक्तपश्यत्-कुणुष पाजः प्रसिति न पृथ्वीम्।
काण्व सं. (10.5)

3. तेदेहा एतद् यजुरपश्यन् अजोऽसि महोऽसि। काण्व सं. (17.7)
4. महीं गगिति काण्वो हेनां ददर्श। शत. ब्रा. (6.2.3.8)
5. इन्द्रं क्रतुं न आभर इति वसिष्ठोऽपश्यत्। ता. ब्रा. (4.7.3)
6. गृत्समदो द्वितीयं मंडलमपश्यत्। सर्वाणु. (2.1)
7. गाधिना विश्वामित्रः, स तृतीयं मंडलमपश्यत्। सर्वाणु. (3.1)

On the basis of ancient texts and commentaries of the Vedas, Swami Dayanand – an ardent scholar of modern era and enthusiastic revivalist of the Vedas, has mentioned in Satyarth Prakash “**The Rishi who for the first time revealed the true sense of the mantra and explained the same to others and none else before him revealed the meaning of the mantra. In the memory of that Rishi his name was associated with that mantra. And if any body suggests that Rishi is author of that mantra should be considered untrue**”. Thus Rishis are only the revealers of the true meaning of the mantras, and not the authors.

Q. Do the Vedas also support the above view any way?

Ans. Yes, a critical examination of the Vedas also support the visionary concept and contribution of the Rishis, on the basis of the following arguments :

(i) Despite of one topic in a Sukta of a Veda sometimes there are several Rishis of its different mantras. Had these Rishis been the authors of the mantras, there should have been only one Rishi of a Sukta well versed in that concept and not so many. (ii) The style of language in a Sukta is nearly the same which is not possible, had there been several authors of a Sukta comprising of several mantras on a single theme.

Q. Why are several Rishis associated to a mantra in some cases?

Ans. In some mantras, more than one (2 to 100) Rishis are associated. It simply reflects that a group of seers had deliberations on the secrets of a particular mantra and they all unanimously arrived at a truthful conclusion. Such a practice appears to be quite possible as is done even today during conferences on issues of complex nature where large number of experts examine the problem from different points of view and finally arrive at a rational conclusion. This also confirms that the associated Rishies are not the authors of the mantra because it is quite unconceivable to have a group of authors of a mantra or even a Sukta.

Q. Is there repetition of a Mantra in the Vedas?

Ans. Yes, there is a repetition of some mantras in the Vedas. But they differ mostly with respect to their main theme or Rishi or both. Sometimes the repetition is to emphasise a particular noble concept as we find in

case of Gayatri mantra.

Q. How many are the Rishis of the Vedas?

Ans. There are about three hundred Rishis who revealed the secrets of the Vedas. Viz. Vashishta, Vishwamitra, Atri, Aaditya, Indra, Kashyap, Narada, Bhrigu, Manu, Bhardwaj etc.

Q. Why do the Western Indologists believe mantra's Rishis as its author?

Ans. There are several reasons for this : (i) They are totally ignorant of the traditional Indian system of revelation, interpretation and propagation of the Vedas; (ii) Even if they know anyhow, they are not to accept the same as their basic objective and strategy had been, and still persists, to establish the Vedas as ordinary books, composed by human beings in the primitive age; and that too not by a single person but by several persons at different times; (iii) Their intention is to establish and extend evolution concept to the Vedas also; (iv) As the Bible — the religious scripture of these western indologists, was compiled by several saints much after the death of Jesus, so they conceived similarly and applied the same to the Vedas also; (v) Since the name of the author of the Vedas is neither mentioned along with them nor any reference is visible about their authors in the entire Vedic literature, it became quite easy for them to coin this unvedic concept about mantra's Rishi as its sole author; (vi) It was under the theo-political plan of the western Indologists to malign the Vedas. During the later part of nineteenth century when the Britishers were struggling hard to establish their faith, they hatched many vicious plans through Macauly — Max Muller axis to malign the Vedas — the main Holy Scriptures of the Hindus. Along with other political plans to crush Indian nationalism, one of them was to misinterpret and distort the true spirit of the Vedas and create confusion, suspicion and disrespect for them amongst their believers. Britishers employed Max Muller for this nefarious task who dubiously and shrewdly coined several new theories about the Vedas and Vedic literature including Rishis as the sole author of the mantras. Their biased and distorted literature on Vedas was constantly and repeatedly published from each and every possible platform during the British rule, and even today by people of vested interest, in the theopolitical circles. And whatever diversity between Indian traditional and western approach and its effect on the socio-religious-political system, we witness today, in India, under the garb of secularism, is the result of that long term vicious planning and false propaganda by distortion and misinterpretation of Vedic texts.

Q. Why is Devta's name associated with the mantra?

Ans. Here devta reflects the main theme of the mantra which is extremely useful in revealing the secret sense of the mantra, and should be kept in view while interpreting it.

Q. How does 'devta' mean subject matter of Mantra?

Ans. In the strict literal sense, the word devta does mean divine, luminous, adorable, giver, supreme etc.; but when associated with the mantra, according to traditional Vedic system, it really means the subject matter or central theme of the mantra. According to Sarvanukramani (2.4.5) and Shad Guru-Srishya Vedarth Deepika (p. 60) —

तेन वाक्येन यत् प्रतिपाद्यं वस्तु सा देवता, या तेनोच्यते सा देवता ।
सर्वानु. (2.45)

"The devta inducted with the mantra reflects its main theme." Maharshi Shonack says "One should find out the devata or subject matter of the mantra, and one who knows the devta of the mantra, only he knows, its true meaning":

वेदितव्यं देवतां हि मंत्रे प्रयत्नतः ।

देवताज्ञो हि मंत्राणां तदर्थं भवगच्छति ।। बृहदेदवता (1.2)

Swami Dayanand also believes devta to be the subject matter of the mantra and says "when a devta forms the chief subject of the exposition in a mantra, it is called Devta. The names of substances and their explanations occurring in a mantra became the signs of marks of a devta." (Rigvedadibhashya Bhumika, p. 49).

Q. How does devta help in revealing the secret sense of the mantra?

Ans. The words of Vedic mantras are compound, or compound-derived and not rigid. Therefore, the meaning of a word has several meanings with respect to its root. When a word is translated into its material, metaphysical and spiritual senses, the true sense of each word is derived, if the devta-the central theme of the mantra, is considered. And thus devta helps in arriving at the rightful meaning. Whatever wide vivicity, irrationality and sometimes contradictions we find today in Vedic interpretation, is mainly due to totally ignoring the guidance of devta and following the preconceived biased approach of the author. Devta controls the central theme of the mantra, and thus it leads to a coherent, rational and logical interpretation in a rightful manner. And when such translators, ignoring the devta, are engulfed in confusion being incapable of arriving at a rational, logical and coherent interpretation, they simply disappointedly conclude that Vedic hymns are childish, tedious and suspicious; while the fact is that they are on a wrong trek

ignoring traditional Vedic interpretation. Dr. S.K. Gupta, while critically examining the available translations of the Vedas, pointed out this lacunae and emphasised that Dayanand's approach of including devta as the central theme in Vedic exergies, was quite reasonable and extremely useful; and be positively adopted.

Q. Why are words like Agni, Vayu, Indra, etc. mentioned as devta frequently in the mantras?

Ans. Since the meanings of Vedic mantras cover a wide range of topics, it becomes easier to select such words as devta which can be interpreted widely. And words like Agni, Indra etc. possess such qualities of multiple meanings. For example, the word agni, means, heat, energy, light and knowledge in their material, meta physical and spiritual sense. This type of vivictly and simplicity in different senses comes only on adopting such words as devta to convey the central theme of the mantra. But the translator should keep strict harmony in the entire mantra while taking the same word in different senses.

Q. What is Chhanda or metre, and how many types of metres are found in the Vedas?

Ans. A metre is a composition in a particular syllabic system either in prose or poetry. Mainly there are 26 types of metre in the Vedas Viz. Gayatri, Ushnik, Anushtap, Brihati, Pankti, Trishtup, Jagati, Atijagati, Shakwari, Atushakwari, Ashti, Atyashti, Dhriti, Atidhriti, Kriti, Prakriti, Aakriti, Vikriti, Sankriti, Abhikriti, Utkriti, Maa, Prama, Pratima Upama and Sama. However, Patanjali accepted four times of this number with a total of 104 metres. Of these 26, first fourteen metres are found in Rigveda, but the rest in other Vedas.

Q. What is the maximum and minimum number of words in these metres?

Ans. There are 4 words in the smallest, and 104 in the biggest metre.

Q. What is the significance of the metre in the mantra?

Ans. Primarily it refers the specific metre in which a mantra is composed, and consequently the number of words it is likely to have as every metre has certain characteristics. The type of metre also indicates the manner to be adopted for its recitation, particularly during the rituals and prayers.

Q. Is there any utility of metre in the interpretation of a mantra?

Ans. The metre of the mantra helps in understanding the secrets of the mantra. Pt. Yudhisther Meemansak while quoting 12 references from Vedic works emphasised the importance of metre (Vedic Chhanda Memansa, p. 23) without which the true spirit of the mantra is not fully

understood. Further, the knowledge of metre helps in checking the number of words or alterations in the mantra, if any.

Q. What do the horizontal and vertical lines or numbers on the words of the mantra indicate?

Ans. These lines or numbers (1, 2, 3) indicate the svara or notations of the words in the mantra. Pronunciation and recitation of the words should be according to these notations.

Q. How many types of notation are there; and what is their significance in the mantra?

Ans. There are three types of notation, i.e., Udatt, anudatt and twart. These indicate the levels of emphasis while reciting a mantra. Primarily these notations control the methodology of pronunciation and recitation of mantras during rituals. Secondly they are very useful in the interpretation of the mantra as they decide the priority of meaning of a word. For example, if the word is udatt, its meaning is prime and if anudatt, it is of secondary nature. While discussing in details the significance of notations, Pt. Yudhishter Meemansak concluded that meaning of the mantra should be based on the order of words (mantra-pada-krama) and the meaning of each word should be shown separately by giving due importance to the notation of the word. By following this procedure, the meaning of the mantra is further refined (Vedic Svara Meemansa). Moreover, the knowledge of metre and notation both contribute in the precise interpretation of Vedic mantras. Further recitation of a mantra without proper notation leads to wrong meaning and effect as pointed out in the Astha Adhyayi Mahabhashya (1.1.1) by Patanjali. Venkat Madhava also says "As one can walk freely even in dark with the help of a lamp, same way, one can have a true meaning of Vedic words using the knowledge of notations"

अंधकारे दीपिकाभिगच्छन् स्वलति क्वचित् एवं स्वरेः प्रणीतानां
भवत्यथाः स्फुटा इति।

Swami Dayanand revived the traditional Vedic interpretation following the order of pada and using the science of notation.

6. DIVINE REVELATION

Q. Who has composed the Vedas?

Ans. God Himself revealed the Vedic mantras.

Q. How can Formless God composed the Vedas as there should be bodily organs like mouth, tongue etc. for the recitation of the

mantras?

Ans. God being Omniscient, Omnipotent and Omnipresent, pulsating the soul of every living being can induct knowledge into any other soul by His own will. Bodily organs like mouth, tongue etc. are needed only by human beings to explain something to other beings. God being All pervading does not need them, and so He enlightened knowledge initially into the soul of four Rishis.

Q. Who were these Rishis through which Vedas were revealed?

Ans. Rigveda was revealed by Agni, Yajurveda by Vayu, Samaveda by Aditya and Atharvaveda by Angira Rishi as supported by Shat Path Brahman (11.5.8).

त्रयो वेदा अजायन्त अग्ने ऋग्वेदो वायो यजुर्वेदः सूर्यात्सामवेदः।

शतपथ (11.5.8)

Further in Atharva Veda (10.7.70), 'अथर्वङ्गिरसो मुखम्' But the Vedas are not the creation of these Rishis.

Q. Why did God reveal this Divine knowledge through the souls of these Rishis?

Ans. It was so because the soul of each of these Rishis was absolutely pure, pious and supreme by virtue of their noble acts of the earlier life. These Rishis obtained the above unique and extra-ordinary qualities by continued process of eternity. Their souls were capable of retaining and transmitting the same knowledge as such to other competent Rishis. Swami Dayanand explains the improvement of the soul through the eternity of acts. Soul, actions of the soul and the prime cause of the physical world, are eternal; and one can purify the soul of its maximum through one's pious and noble acts in a continuous process.

Q. How is Vedic knowledge Divine?

Ans. By virtue of speciality and contents of the Vedic mantras, one can be convinced about the Divinity of the Vedas through logical tests. For a knowledge to be Divine, the following characteristics are prerequisites and should pass through these logical tests :—

- (1) Such a knowledge should have been imparted along with the creation of the Universe and living beings so that people could be able to judge the priority of their actions;
- (2) That knowledge should be available before the creation of human beings and therefore, should not involve the history of human society as we find in Ramayana, Mahabharat, Quran, Bible and other scriptures;
- (3) That knowledge should be true, rational, logical, scientific and

- obey the laws of nature. It should help explain the secrets of nature for further development of science and technology;
- (4) That knowledge should be rational, ethical and non-controversial. It should not show exaggerations, omissions and self-contradictions as we find in books authored by human beings;
 - (5) That knowledge should truly explain the nature, properties, powers and manifestations of God. As God is Omniscient, Omnipotent, Supreme, Just, Kind, Truthful and Unbiased, that knowledge should also be truthful and complete in all respects of God, humanity and nature.
 - (6) That knowledge should be eternal, universal and uniform to all human beings, irrespective of caste, creed, gender, race, geographical boundaries and nationalities, and free from the boundary of language, dialect etc. It should be inspiring, thought-provoking, pious, blended with lofty ideas and ideals so that each human being could be able to develop himself to the fullest extent in all the faculties, and attain the maximum heights of humanity and supremacy in his own life time and make himself free from the cycle of life and death.
 - (7) Further the initial causative knowledge can be obtained only from God, and none else can create it. On the otherhand, a person with the help of that causative knowledge can further develop ones natural knowledge as we see wonderful developments and discoveries in the field of science and technology. But the causative, initial knowledge cannot be created by natural knowledge as one cannot see in darkness without any external source of light even by one's own good eyes.

All the above characteristics of knowledge are found only in the Vedas, and certainly not in any other scripture of the world sects or in books composed by a single or a group of religious scholars. but the fact remains that to understand the true spirit and secret of the Vedas, one should follow translations of Swami Dayanand Saraswati — an ardent scholar and a great revivalist of the Vedas according to the ancient traditional system of Vedic interpretation.

Q. Do Vedas also indicate themselves to be Divine revelation?

Ans. A serious study of the Vedas themselves clearly indicate that Vedas are Divine revelation. Some references from Rigveda only are

presented below :—

- (i) . I have revealed knowledge. (Rv. 10.49.1)
'अहं ब्रह्म कृण्वम्'
- (ii) Recite Vedic knowledge revealed by God. (Rv. 1.36.4)
'देवत ब्रह्म गायत'
- (iii) May God and His ordained knowledge be bestowed upon us.
(Rv. 1.40.3)
'प्रेतु ब्रह्मणस्तिः प्र देव्येतु सूनुता'।
- (iv) Well explained truthful knowledge revealed by God opens the dumb ears. (R. 4.23.8)
ऋतस्य श्लोको वधिरा ततर्द कर्णी बुधानः शुचमान आयोः।
- (v) O Leading Persons endowed with Divine virtues! Give us that Wonderfull speech which is like the rain shower from the cloud, because it is free from evil ideas and satisfies to all. It is equally good, intellectual and beneficial to all man kind. O Omnipresent and Omniscient God! We desire to lead ideal home life endowed with noble intellect who can beget noble progeney. Grant us all that. (Rv. 3.57.6)
या ते अग्ने पर्वतस्येव धारासश्चन्ती पीपयद्येय चित्रा तामस्मभ्यं प्रमतिं जातवेदो वसो रास्य सुमतिं विश्वजन्याम्।
- (vi) O Omniscient God! Awaken in our souls the wisdom of the four Vedas which gives new knowledge, which consists of Gayatri and other metres and which confers happiness on all things as Thou revealedst to the meritorious souls (Agni, Vayu, Aaditya and Angira) in the beginning of the creation.
(Rv. 1.27.4).
इमं तु त्वमस्माकं सनिं गायत्रं नव्यांसम्। अग्ने देवेषु प्र वोचः।
- (vii) That God who is Protector of all true knowledge, doer of noble acts and Possesser of knowledge, Purifier of all, provides Divine knowledge in the hearts of Rishis in the beginning of creation. That knowledge is not to harm or trouble any body. (Rv. 9.73.8).
ऋतस्य गोपा न दभाय सुक्रतुस्त्री य पवित्रा ह्यन्तरा दद्ये।
- (viii) From that most Adorable God, for whose sake men perform bounteous acts, the Rig-Veda and Samaveda were produced. There from, the Atharva Veda derived its existence and the Yajurveda had its origin. (Rv. 10.90.9).

तस्माद्यज्ञात् सर्वहुतः ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे। छन्दासि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्य
जुस्तरमादजायत।

Besides these, many more other references viz. 3.26.9, 4.23.9, 4, 23, 10, 8.101.16, 10.3.26, can be quoted from the Rigveda in support of Divine Revelation.

Q. Do other Vedas also support Divine Revelation?

Ans. Yes, here are some references from Yajurveda and Atharvaveda as below :—

- (i) O mankind! as I address this propitious speech of mine (the Vedas) to all people, i.e., Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas Shudras, and to those who are men of low dignity (Yaju. 26.2)
यथेमां वाचं कल्याणीभावदानि जनेभ्यः। ब्रह्म राजन्याभ्याः शूद्राय
चार्याय च स्वाय चारणाय।।
- (ii) That God with eternity has created subjects, Vedas, and immortal souls (Yaju. 40.8)
स्वयम्भूर्याथा तथ्यतोऽर्थान्य दधाच्छाश्वतीभ्यः समाभ्यः।
- (iii) That God is the revealer of that knowledge of Vedas, and He is the only source of the same (Yaju. 23.62)
ब्रह्मायं वाचः परमं व्योम।
- (iv) I reveal this inspiring knowledge to the entire humanity (Ath. 6.69.2)
यथा भर्गस्वर्ती वाचमवदानि .जनां अनु।
- (v) I reveal this pragmatic knowledge to be adopted with reverence by learned people and masses alike (R. 10.125.5)
अहमेव स्वमिदं, वदामि जुष्टं देवे भिरुत मानुषेभिः।
- (vi) I have revealed His Divine Knowledge for the people after proper discrimination between truth and untruth. (Ath. 6.62.2)
अहं सत्वमनृतं यद् वदाभ्यहं देवीं परिवाचं विशश्व।
- (vii) Who is that Deva from which all the four Vedas are revealed, and Rigveda is like his life, Yajurveda like heart, Samaveda like hairs and Atharva Veda like his mouth? The reply is in the next hymn thus :

"The God who sustains this universe; His name is 'Skambh'.
You accept Him as the revealer of the Vedas (Ath. 10.7.20).

यस्मादृचो अपारक्षन् यजु यस्मादपाकपन्।
सामानि यस्य लोमान्यथर्वाङ्गिरसो मुखम्।।

Further, "I have created those compositions viz. Rigveda, Yajurveda Samaveda and Atharvaveda which contain three types of knowledge. (Ath. 5.11.3).

'काव्येन सत्यं जातेनास्मि जातयेदाः

Hundreds of such mantras can be quoted in favour of Divine revelation of the Vedas.

Q. Why is God addressed as a Poet?

Ans. Because the God has been mentioned as the first Preacher and Teacher of the Vedic knowledge; and by virtue of His poetic and mystic composition of the Vedas, He is addressed as a Poet. For example —

- (i) 'He is the best Poet amongst the Poets' (Rig. 2.31.1).
'कविः कवीनाम्'
- (ii) He is revealer of knowledge and a Poet amongst the common people. He is immortal amongst the mortals and sensitive living beings (Rv. 7.4.4).
अयं कविरकविषु प्रचेता मर्त्येभ्य निरमृतो निधायि।
- (iii) O Agni! you are the Bestower of all knowledge, Omniscient and Poet by virtue of your knowledge and poetry (Rv. 10.11.3).
'अग्ने। कवि काव्येनासि विश्ववित्'।
- (iv) He is a Poet of deep knowledge (Ath. 5.12.1)
'कविरसि प्रचेताः'
- (v) None else Poet is like you. (Ath. 5.11.4)
न त्वदन्यः कवितरः।
- (vi) See the poetry of God whose composition is neither ever-stopped nor it becomes stale. (Ath. 10.8.32)
पश्य देवस्य काव्यं न ममार न जीर्यति।

Hence by virtue of giving knowledge in a lucid and poetic way, one of His names is Poet.

Q. Why is God addressed as Brahaspati and Brahma Kritah?

Ans. God is addressed with such names because, He is the Commander and also the First Preacher of knowledge. Some references are as follows :

- (i) O Brahaspati, the Lord of Speech! Thou art the original source of the earliest speech which is the most excellent, unique and flawless. (Rv. 10.71.1)

ब्रह्मस्यते प्रथमं वाचो अग्रं यत्परत प्रेरत नामधेयं दधानाः।

यदेषां श्रेष्ठं यदरि प्रमासीत्प्रेणा तदेषां निहितं गुहाविः॥

- (ii) Certainly Brahamanspati — the master of knowledge has preached the mantras of adoration and worship (Rv. 1.40.5).
प्र नूनं ब्रह्मणस्पतिः मंत्रं वदत्युक्थ्यम्।
- (iii) May the Master of the Vedic knowledge and Protector and knower of the four Vedas come to our Yagya (in the form of studying and teaching) which gives us perfect physical and spiritual power. (RV 1.40.3)
'प्रेतु ब्रह्मणस्पतिः प्र देव्येतु सूनृता'
- (iv) Brahaspati-the God reveals Divine knowledge in the beginning of Kalpa. (Ath. 20.88.4)
बृहस्पतिः प्रथमं जायमानः महः ज्योतिषः परमे व्योऽमिन्।
- (v) Brahaspati is the only first Erudite. The Rishis gained knowledge from Him. (Yaju. 7.15)
स प्रथमो ब्रह्मस्पति शिचिकित्वान्।

Q. What is the opinion about the author of the Vedas, in other Hindu Scriptures?

Ans. Vedas have been mentioned as Divine Revelation in all the Hindu Scriptures, including Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Smritis, Puranas, Mahabharat etc. as shown below :

- (i) स (प्रजापति) श्रान्तरस्तपन् ब्रह्मैव प्रथममसृजत् त्रयीमेवविद्याम्।
(शतपथ ब्रा.)
- (ii) स तथा वाचा तेनात्मनेपदं सर्वमसृजत्।
यदिदं किञ्च ऋचो यजूषि सामानि छन्दासि॥
(बृहदा. 3.1.25)
- (iii) तत्रापरा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेद।
(मुण्डको. उप. 1.1.5)
- (iv) एतस्य वा महतो भूतस्य निश्चसितमेतत्।
यत् ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववत्॥ (बृहदा. 5.4.11)
- (v) अग्निमूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्र सूर्यो दिशः श्रोत्रे याग् विवृताश्च वेदा।
(मुण्डको. उप. 2.1.4)
- (vi) तस्माहवः सामयजूषि दीक्षाः। (मुण्डको. 2.1.5)
- (vii) अग्निवायुरविभ्यस्तु त्रयो ब्रह्म सनातनम्।
दुदोह यज्ञ सिद्ध्यर्थमृग्यजुः साम लक्षणम्॥ (मनु. 1.23)

- (viii) एवं वा अरेऽस्य महतो भूतस्य निःस्वसितमेतद् ।
यद् ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्वान्विरसाः ।
(सत. पथ., 14.5.4)
- (ix) न वेद शास्त्रादव्यक्तु किञ्चिच्छास्यं हि विरक्तो
निःसृतं सर्वं शास्त्रं तु वेद शास्त्रात्सनातनात् ।
(याज्ञवल्क्य स्मृति)

The above references clearly confirm that all the Vedas have been revealed by God, and their names are Rig., Yaju., Sama and Atharva Veda

Q. What is the evidence that Vedas are revealed with the creation of Universe?

Ans. There are several evidences in Vedic literature, both ancient and modern, that Vedas are since the creation of Universe. First the knowledge should be in the beginning of creation as is clear from the query of a human being in Rigveda. It says, "I know not fully what I am in reality for I am placed within the wander with fettered mind; when I will be able to attain to the primordial product of the eternal law, then and then only I will obtain a share of this (Divine) word. (RV. 1.164.37)

न वि जानामि यदि वेदमस्मि निष्यः सन्नद्धो मनसा घराभि ।

यदा मागन्प्रथमजा ऋतस्यादि द्वाचो अरनुवे भागमस्याः ॥

(ऋ. 1.164.37)

Further, "The God who enlightens the enlightened and introduced knowledge and virtue to the scholars as sweets to sweet lovers and who later on revealed Divine knowledge worth contemplation and adoption by soul — the master of sensitive organs. (RV. 10.54.6).

यो अदधाज्ज्योतिषि ज्योतिरन्वो असृजन्मधुना संमाधूनि ।

अथ प्रियं शूषमिद्राय मन्म ब्रह्मकृतो बृहदुक्थादवाचि ॥

In Mahabharat, it reads thus — "With the creation of universe, God revealed such a unique, eternal and Divine Knowledge of the Vedas which had neither beginning nor end; and all sorts of knowledge and activities in the world followed it later on. (M. Bh. Shanti Parva 232-24)

अनादिनिधना निरया वागुत्सृष्टा स्वयम्भुवा ।

आदी वेदमयी दिव्या यतः सर्वाः प्रवृत्तयः ॥

The names of materials and activities were taken from the Vedas. Even the names of Rishis and knowledge at the beginning of creation was from the Vedas. (M. BH. Shanti Parva. 230.25-26)

नानारूपं च भूतानाम्, कर्मणां च प्रवर्तनम् ।

वेद शब्देभ्य एवादी निर्गमिते स ईश्वरः ॥
नामधेयादि धर्षीणां याश्च वेदेषु दृष्टयः ।
शर्वयन्ते सुजातानां तान्येवेभ्यो ददात्यतः ॥

Manu very clearly says that "Veda is the prime source of knowledge, religion and activity". (Manu. 2.16)

वेदोऽखिलो धर्म मूलम् ।

Despite of a Christian missionary's approach, Max Muller confessed that Rigveda is the oldest book. He writes in the introduction of Rigveda thus, "After the latest researches into the history and chronology of the book of old Testament, we may now safely call the Rigveda the oldest book, not only of Aryan community, but of the whole world". Further in "Reason and Religion" he writes, "If there is a God who has created heaven and earth, it will be unjust on His part if he deprives millions of his sons born before Moses, of His Divine knowledge, Reason and comparative of Religions declares that God gives His divine knowledge from his first appearance on earth". Thus Divine knowledge has been given with the creation of human beings.

Further Pt. M.M. Vidyasagar, after quoting a large number of mantras (Vedon Ki Antah Sakshi Ka Mahatva) concludes that there is poetry in metres of that Erudite Poet who is creator of this universe, which contains three types of knowledge. This is classified in four sections as Rig, Yaju, Sama and Atharva, while creating the Universe, God Himself, with different names as Yagya, Brahaspati, Purushah, Poet etc. imparted this knowledge in the hearts of Rishis capable of receiving it and those Rishis preached the same to all human beings of the world. Supporting this, Jacolliot writes in "Bible in India" thus — "Ashtonishing fact! the Hindu Revelation, Veda is of all revelations the only one whose ideas are in perfect harmony with modern science". In Vedic India-Mother of Parliaments, Shri N.B. Pavgi writes, "The Vedas are the fountain head of knowledge the prime source of inspiration, nay the grand repository of Divine wisdom and even eternal truths".

Q. What is the opinion of Darshan Shastras on Divine revelation of Vedas?

Ans. All the six, thiestic systems of Indian Philosophy believe that the Vedas are Divine Revelation and they are unanimous in this respect. For example, in Vedant Darshan, (1.1.3) Vyas Muni says:

शास्त्र योनित्वाद् ।

(i) "God is the prime cause of the Vedas". Acharya Shanker also

believes the same and explains it further in Brahma Sutra Bhashya (p. 18) thus — "Brahman is the Yoni (i.e., material and efficient cause) of great scriptures (Shastras) like the Rigveda etc. which are supplemented by other scriptures (Siksha, Kalpa, Vyakaran, Nirukta, Chhandah, Jyotish) that the themselves sources (of various kinds) of knowledge which revealed all things like the lamp".

- (ii) In Sankhya Darshan (5.51) Kapil Rishi says :—
 निज शक्त्याभि व्यक्तो रयतः प्रामाण्यम् —
 "God revealed the Vedas by His own natural powers and therefore, they are eternal and self-authentic"
- (iii) In Vaisheshic Darshan, Kanad Rishi says :—
 तद्वचनादान्नायस्य प्रामाण्यम्।
 "The Vedas are Divine Revelation. They contain truthful — knowledge and judicious moral teachings; so all the four Vedas are eternal" (V.D. 11.3).
- (iv) In Yoga Darshan, Patanjali Rishi says :—
 स पूर्वेषामपि गुरुः कालेनानवच्छेदात्।
 "He is the teacher of the ancients also, because He is not limited by time" (Y.D. 1.1.26).
- (v) In Nyaya Darshan, (2.1.67) Gautam Rishi says:
 मंत्रायुक्तेषु प्रामाण्यवत्त्वं तदप्रामाण्यमाप्तं प्रामाण्यात्।
 "The authoritativeness of verbal proof is like that of the Veda and the medical science (Ayurveda) and it has been declared by the Aptas (trust worthy persons)". Dayanand comments that its purpose is that all men should acknowledge the authenticity of the Vedas which are eternal and are the words of God.

Q. Is the relationship between the words and their meanings also Divine?

Ans. Certainly yes. The words-meaning relationship is also eternal as none else can explain it.

Q. Is the knowledge of Vedas eternal?

Ans. Certainly yes. Because the Vedic knowledge is free from additions, omissions, subtractions, contradictions, and changes with time and space; and has been revealed by Eternal God Himself.

Q. How can the words, sentences and their meanings in a mantra be eternal?

Ans. It is because the words are of two types — one is eternal, and

the other developed by human activities. Amongst these whichever words and their meanings are within the revealed knowledge of God, they are eternal; while those developed by the imagination of mankind are the result of human activities. Since the knowledge and activity of God is perfect by nature in all respects, His whole powers and capabilities are also eternal. Consequently the Vedas, in the form of knowledge and their words-meaning relationships are also authentic because only truth is eternal and eternity is truthful itself.

Q. How did Divine Knowledge transcendent upto the common people?

Ans. Initially the God revealed all true knowledge to the first four Rishis with the beginning of the creation of the universe. Later on, these Rishis explained that knowledge alongwith its true meaning to other Rishis like Brahma etc. This is why the Vedas are known as Shrutis also being transmitted through hearing. After learning from Rishi's like Brahma, other seers explained this Divine knowledge to their disciples in their true spirit in the traditional teacher-taught system who further explained in verbatim to the masses. Following are the evidences from the Vedas themselves.

- (i) "The devotee says, "My father and grand father obtained the Divine knowledge and activities contained in seven metres. I, the novice, while reciting the same, preached it upto the fourth generation as per the ordain of the benevolent God (Rv. 10.67.4).
इमा धियं सप्तशीर्ष्णीं पिता न ऋत प्रजानां बृहतीमविन्दत्।
तुरीयं सिञ्जनयद विश्वं जन्वोऽयास्य उक्थ मिन्याय शंसन्॥
- (ii) O Brahaspate! (Lord of Speech) The original source of the earliest speech which is the most excellent and flawless and which the learned men pronounce by giving name (to all existing objects), remains treasured with the cave like heart (of sages) the very same becomes manifest by their force of love (Rv. 10.67.4).

7. NUMBER AND CREATION PERIOD OF THE VEDAS

Q. Was there only one Veda which was divided later on into four Vedas?

Ans. The Vedas were four only since the creation of the Universe. But in some Puranas as Vayu, Vishnu, Matsya and Agni, it is mentioned that initially there was one Veda only and at the end of Dwapara, Krishna Dwapayana Vyas divided it into four parts as four Vedas. Such a statement

reflects only the variation in the method of expression. Divine knowledge is one only which is confined in the four Vedas. Vyas Rishi explained the same to common people. However, he was certainly not the author of the Vedas because the Vedas existed even before Vyas Rishi of Dwapar Yuga. All Hindu scriptures, viz. Brahmanas, Aranyas, Upanishads, Mahabharata etc. describe the number of Vedas as four only. What these Puranas mean there Veda as a knowledge which can be one only. However evidence of four Vedas are visible in the Vedas themselves as follows :

- (i) (a) Rig, Sama, Yaju and Mahi (Skambh Sukt. 15)
 (b) Rig, Sama, Yaju and Atharva (Skambh Sukt. 20)
 (c) Rig, Sama, Yaju and Brahma (Odan Sukt.)
 (d) Rig, Sama, Yaju and Udgitha (Ucchit Sukt.)
 (e) Rig, Sama, Yaju and Chandogya (Uchhist Sukt.)
- (ii) चत्वारि ऋग्ना त्रयोऽस्य पादा द्वे शीर्षो (R.V. 4.58.3)
 This Mantra is also in Yajurveda (17.91) and Gopatha Brahmana (1.16). meaning thereby is that Vedas are four as interpreted by Vedic seers.
- (iii) तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुत ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे।
 छन्दासि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुरत्समादजायत्।
 (ऋ. 10.90.9, यजु. 31.7)
- (iv) स्तोमश्च यजुश्चऽऋक् च साम च बृहच्च
 रथन्तरञ्चा स्वर्देवा अगन्म। (यजु. 18.29)
- (v) ऋक् साम यजुरुच्छिष्ट उद्गीथः। (अथर्व. 11.7.5)
- (vi) यत्र ऋषयः प्रथमजा ऋचः साम यजुर्मही। (अथर्व. 10.7.14)
- (vii) तत्रापरा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेद। (मुण्डको. 1.1.5)
- (viii) विज्ञानेन वा ऋग्वेदं विजानाति यजुर्वेदं सामवेदं मथर्वणं चतुर्थम्।
 (छान्दो. 7.7.1)
- (ix) वेदेश्चतुर्भिः सुप्रीता। (म. भा. द्रो. 51.22)
- (x) यज्ञा वेदाश्च चत्वारः। (म. भा. वन. 214.22)
- (xi) वेदाश्चत्वार एव। (ब्रह्मवैवर्त पु. 14.64)
- (xii) चत्वारो वै इमे वेदा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदो ब्रह्मवेद इति।
 (गोपथ. पू. 2.16)

Besides these clear four names of the Vedas, wherever Veda is written in plural (वेदाः), it has been interpreted as four Vedas as in Rig (4.35.6) and Ath. (19.9.12). Besides these evidences, four Ritwajas

are needed for the success of rituals in the Yagyas, and according to Gopath Brahmana (1.1.16 & 3.1), the scholar of Rigveda is called **hota**, of Yajurveda, **Udgata**, of Samaveda, **Adhwaryu** and of Atharva Veda is **Brahma**.

ऋग्वेदेमेव होतारं वृणीष्य यजुर्वेदं विदमध्वर्युं सामवेदं मुद्गातारम् अथर्वाङ्गिरसे विदं ब्रह्माणम्। तथा हास्य यज्ञः चतुष्पात् प्रतिष्ठति।

Thus, four scholars, one of each of the four Vedas, are needed for the success of Yajya for a particular purpose. There should not be an iota of doubt about four Vedas in the light of above and hundreds other references in Hindu scriptures.

Q. Some believe that Vedas were three only. Has Atharva Veda been added later on?

Ans. This is absolutely untrue. As concluded above, the Vedas were four only from the very beginning. But a sort of confusion has been caused by misunderstanding the word **triyividya** mentioned in Vedic literature for Vedas or sometimes only Rig, Yaju and Samavedas are mentioned, and not Atharva simultaneously. This has been clarified in Mahabharat and Sath Path Brahmana by stating that three types of knowledge or triyividya exists in the four Vedas thus :

त्रयी विद्यामवेक्षेत वेदेपूक्ता मथाङ्गतः।

ऋक्सामयजुर्वाङ्गिरसो यजुषोऽथर्वणस्तथा।। (म. भा. शा. 2.35.1)

It is also explained in Shat Path Brahmana (4.6.7),

त्रयी वै विद्या-ऋचो यजूषि सामानि इति।

While giving four names of Vedas in Shat Path Brahmana (14.5.4) and Brahadopanishad (3.4.10), they all contain three types of knowledge mentioned above. So the fact remains that three types of knowledge is spread in all the four Vedas. Firstly due to emphasis on (1) knowledge, (2) action and (3) worship in the Vedas, they are called of Triyividya. Secondly, according to Yaskacharya the interpretation of the Vedas should be threefold or in three senses, i.e., material, metaphysical and spiritual. Thirdly, the composition of the Vedic hymns is in three style, i.e. prose, poetry and recitation. These three types of knowledge are found scattered in all the four Vedas, and thus Triyividya is not related with three names or, three numbers of the Vedas but with the types of knowledge. Further Atharvaveda has been expressed by different names viz. **Chhandasi**, **Chhandoha**, **Chhandoveda**, **Mahi**, **Udgitha**, and **Brahma** (Rig. 90.9, Yaju. 3.17, Ath. 10.7.19; 11.7.5) quoted earlier. Further Shad Guru Shishya

writes in Sarvanukramanis introduction that "Though Vedas are four, but they have been classified in three ways, i.e. prose, poetry and recitation. Therefore, it can not be concluded that Vedas are three only".

विनियोगस्तस्य रूपस्तत्र त्रिविधः स प्रदर्शयते।

ऋग्यजुः सामरूपेण मंत्रो वेद चतुष्टये ॥११॥

अहे बुध्निय मंत्रं मे गोपायेत्य मिधीयते

चतुश्चपि हि वेदेषु त्रिधैव विनियुज्यते ॥१२॥

So the Vedas are four in number from the very beginning which contain three types of knowledge; and Atharva Veda is certainly not a later addition.

Q. Has the creation of the Vedas been from four mouths of Brahma, as some believe?

Ans. It is written in the figurative language in some Puranas that the Vedas were created from the four mouths of Brahma. But actually it means that the Vedas are revealed by Brahma, i.e., the God Himself "ब्रह्म ब्रह्मं ददातु, (Ath. 10.43.2). "Let the God impart knowledge of us" (Ath. 4.32.3). Further "The Brahma-God possessing all knowledge reveals this knowledge in different metres" (Rv. 9.113.2)

यत्र ब्रह्मापवमान छन्दस्यां चाचं वदत

According to Manusmriti (1.23) "The Rig, Yaju, Sama and Atharva possessing three types of knowledge was learnt by Brahma from Agni, Vayu, Aditya and Angira Rishis who later explained and preached them to others."

अग्निवायुरपिभ्यस्तु त्रयं ब्रह्म सनातनम्।

दुदोह यज्ञसिद्धयर्थमृग्यजुः सामलक्षणम्। (मनु. 1.23)

Thus it is clear that the Vedas were not composed by Brahma Rishi; but he simply preached them first to later seers and this first teaching of Vedas to human beings has been expressed as creation of the Vedas by Brahma.

Q. If the Vedas are since the creation of universe, is Vedic Sanskrit also that much old?

Ans. Yes, Certainly the Vedic sanskrit is the oldest language as all have been derived from it.

Q. How did the Vedas come in the printed form?

Ans. Since ancient times, the Vedas were learnt by heart and propagated orally; and with the development of printing facilities, the

Veda Pathee Brahmanas were asked to recite them in different ways. According to their mode of recitation, pronunciation and notations, they were noted down. The svaras or notations as udatt, anudatt and twarit were marked on each word. After checking each word of the mantras, the Vedas were composed, compiled and printed in the press.

Q. Could the man not compose the alike Vedas scriptures of other religions?

Ans. No. It is never possible. Because the Vedic knowledge possesses all those characteristics which are absolutely beyond the capabilities, comprehensions and scope of human knowledge. It is the supreme, logical, scientific and universal knowledge beyond the limit of time and space, and therefore, it is not possible by any human being possessing limited knowledge to prepare such a text of eternal knowledge. No human mind can ever encompass all fields of knowledge including social and physical sciences with such precision and authority which could be of universal application.

Q. Can the unbelievers of divinity of the Vedas be not scholars?

Ans. Certainly the human beings, believing in the divinity of the Vedas or not, can be profound scholars if they derive the truths of the Vedas, and expand and elaborate the same as emphasised in the Vedic texts. And millions of such scholars in innumerable branches of knowledge do exist and will exist on the earth even without believing in the revelation of the Vedas. But it is also a fact that in addition to their own dedicated and devoted studies and research, they received the prime knowledge from their teachers; and their teachers in turn also gained it from their teachers through the teacher-taught system during a long period of study, experimentation and realisation. And ultimately that prime, basic and causative knowledge was of the Vedas. Several saints and philosophers unbelieving implicitly in the Vedas, do admit that the prime source of prime knowledge is God and God alone, and the man has gradually developed it in different branches of science and humanities. And whatever truthful knowledge and successful technology developed by scientists today is the result of continuous improvement and application of that true prime knowledge of the Vedas.

Q. When were the Vedas revealed?

Ans. The Vedas were revealed with the creation of universe and human beings. According to the Vedic astrological calculations it comes out to be one thousand nine hundred seventy two millions nine hundred forty-nine thousand eighty-eight (1,97,29,49,088) years. And according to cosmologists also, the age of creation of universe comes out

to be about two thousand million years by different modern dating techniques. This is in conformity with the Vedic astrological calculations put forward by Swami Dayanand Saraswati about the period of creation of the Vedas.

Q. Why do some western Indologists believe Vedas to be of about two to four thousand years B.C. only?

Ans. The creation of the Vedas has been accepted as 1,400 years B.C. by Hogg, Whitney, Wilson-Griffith etc. and 4,000 B.C. by Jacoby. The European Indologists who proclaimed these dates of creation of the Vedas were either non-convertant with the Vedic traditions and literature or were biased with their ulterior motives. Probably their concepts are based on Bible where human activities are confined within eight thousand years. Since they believe Vedas as human creation, their sole attempt is to establish human activity and history in the Vedas. Consequently, the period of creation of the Vedas may be earlier than the Bible, but not too much earlier. Even on the basis of Geology, N.B. Paragi in 'Vedic Fathers of Geology' has accepted the creation period of the Vedas two lakh forty thousand (2,40,000) years and astrologist Deenanath Chillet accepted three lakh years. But Acharya Vaidyanath, on the basis of geology, astrology, and Vedic literature has concluded (Vedic Yug aur Aadi Manav) that revelation of the Vedas was along with the creation of universe and human beings.

8. PRESERVATION OF ORIGINALITY OF THE VEDAS

Q. Is there no alterations in the Vedas since their revelation millions of years ago?

Ans. Certainly there is no alterations, additions and subtractions in the Vedas since their revelation. Ancient Rishis foresighted the possibility that there could be alterations in the Vedas with laps of time. So they developed and adopted various methods to preserve the originality of the Vedas viz. (i) They learnt all mantras by heart along with their Rishi, Devta, Chhanda and Svara following teacher-taught tradition and kept them in tact, unpolluted and unchanged in the bosom of their hearts; (ii) They counted the number of words and recorded them; and (iii) They developed the lists of mantras called anukramanikas.

Q. Could there be no mistakes by mispronouncements and omissions?

Ans. Yes. There could be such mistakes. But in order to check that sort of error, they developed different modes of recitation for cross-checking.

Q. What were these modes of recitations adopted to preserve the originality of the Vedas?

Ans. The history of preserving the originality of the Vedas is very very old, and there had been gradual developments with time in this gigantic task, particularly when facilities of printing and sound recording were not available as we have today. Madhu Sudan Muni describes the history of preserving the originality of the Vedas in Madhu Shiksha as follows :

भगवान् सहितां प्राह पद पाठं तु रावणः।
ब्राह्मव्यधिं क्रम प्राह जटा व्याडी खोचत्।।1।।।
माला पाठं वसिष्ठश्च शिक्षापठं भृगुर्व्यधात्।
अष्टावक्रोऽकरोद्रेखां विश्वामित्रोऽपठदध्वजम्।।2।।।
दण्डं पाराशरोऽयोचत् कश्यपो रथमद्रवीत्।
धनमत्रिर्मुनिः प्राह विक्रतीनामयं क्रमः।।3।।।

God revealed the Sanhita, Ravana provided Pada Patha, Vabhraya gave Krama Patha, Vyadi Rishi initiated Jata patha, Vashistha introduced Mala Patha, Bhrigu Rishi developed Shikha Patha, Ashtra Vakra propagated Rekha Patha, Vishwamitra Rishi introduced Dhvaj Patha, Parashar adopted Danda Patha, Kashyapa Rishi developed Rath Patha and Atri Rishi adopted Ghana Patha in order to preserve the originality of the Vedic mantras with respect of each letter, word, alongwith Rishi, Devta, Chhand, Svara and their sequence. Thus each mantra was learnt by heart in thirteen different ways. These modes of recitation can broadly be classified into two main categories i.e. Prakrati Patha and Vikrati Patha.

Q. What is Prakrati patha?

Ans. In Prakrati Patha the sequence of the words of the mantra remains in the original form. Even in this system, mantras are remembered and pronounced in five different ways viz. (1) Sanhita Patha, (2) Pada Patha, (3) Vyutkrāma Patha, (4) Mandukaplut and (5) Krama Patha. In Sanhita Patha a mantra is recited continuously as it is. In Pada Patha, the words are separated by dejointing (Sandhivichhed) and remembered. In Vyutkrāma Patha all words are remembered in the reverse order from the last to the first word. In Mandukaplut Pada Patha, the words are remembered by persons alternatively leaving the next word for the other reciter. This is called Charcha. In Krama Patha, the words are remembered in pairs and the second word of the former pair forms the first part of the next pair. This maintains the sequence of words. Even today these modes

of recitation are adopted, though by a few Vedic scholars, in South India.

Q. What is Vikrati Patha?

Ans. In Vikrati Patha, the relative position of the word in the mantra is changed. Such changes could be numerous depending upon the number of permutations and combinations of mathematics. These Pathas are quite complex, but simultaneously more precise to control any addition, subtraction or alteration. Rishis have broadly divided vikrati Pathas in the following eight classes viz. Jata, Mala, Sikha, Rekha, Dhwaja, Danda, Ratha and Ghana. Some of them have further been sub-divided for more precision, e.g. Jata into 2, Mala in 21 and Ratha in 10 classes. Pt. D.V. Satvalekar and Pt. Veer Sen Vedasharami have given several examples of these recitations in their works.

In view of the above modes of recitations and learnings by heart, a mantra is learnt at least by 13 different modes; hence there remains no iota of doubt about the originality of the mantras checking and cross checking by different modes of recitation taking care not only of each word, but all its letters, sandhis, halants etc. of each mantra including its Rishi, Devta, Chhanda and Svara. Therefore, it leaves no scope for any infinitesimal error introduced in vedic mantras. And this unique tradition of preserving the originality of the Vedas was whole heartedly appreciated even by western critics of the Vedas. Implicit faith in Divine Revelation and deep rooted dedication and devotion of the Aryans for their holy scriptures have kept the Vedas in their purest and original form in every sense of etymology every after millions of years. Max Muller confirms it in his Origin of Religion (p. 131) thus **"The text of the Vedas have been handed down to us with such accuracy that there is hardly a various reading in the proper sense of the word or even an uncertain accent in the whole of the Rigveda"**. Similarly Kaegi writes in Rigveda (p. 22), **"Since that time nearly, 3000 years ago, it (the text of the Veda) has suffered no changes whatsoever with a care such that the history of other literatures has nothing similar to compare with it"**.

9. COMMENTARIES ON THE VEDAS

Q. How could one understand the true meaning of the Vedas?

Ans. Ancient Rishis have laid out the broad guide-lines for Vedic interpretation to arrive at a truthful meaning of the mantra. Yaskacharya has indicated in his Nirukta that words of the Vedas are composite and not roorhi or underived. Each word should be translated in three-fold senses, i.e., material, metaphysical and spiritual according to the subject matter of the mantra. While deriving the nature of composite word of the

mantra, its devta, metre and notation should also be kept in view. Swami Dayanand critically reviewed all approaches of Vedic commentaries, revived this traditional procedure, adopted the same in his translations of the Vedas and laid out the basic principles of Vedic commentary, in his treatise "Rigvedadibhashya Bhumika"

Q. Why is there so much variations amongst the commentaries of the Vedas available today?

Ans. There are several reasons for this, viz. (i) vivacity in the meaning of Vedic words, (ii) knowledge of Vedic sanskrit language of the commentator, (iii) familiarity of the commentator with the traditional Vedic interpretation and other auxiliary Vedic texts as understood in ancient times, (iv) objective of the commentator and (v) whether motivated with some preconceived notions. Any one or more of these factors can cause deviations in Vedic interpretation.

Q. What are the different approaches of Vedic interpretation since ancient times?

Ans. While critically examining all approaches of Vedic interpretation, Yudhishter Meemansak (Vedic Sidhanta Meemansa, p. 62) classified them into four groups according to the periods :—

- (1) Prag Yagyic period (since revelation upto beginning of Dwapar)
- (2) Pre Yagyic period (upto end of Dwapara)
- (3) Post Yagyic period (from Kalyug to end of 19th century)
- (4) Modern period (1901 onwards).

During the Prag Yagyic and Pre Yagyic period, the basis of Vedic interpretation was science and humanities. It included three-fold and even five-fold approach of Vedic interpretation with emphasis on material, metaphysical and spiritual approach. But later on i.e., during the Yagyic period, it was proclaimed that the purpose of the Vedas is Yagya and other rituals only. Emphasis hence was laid on ritualistic approach of Vedic interpretation, and several hypothesis were conceived to explain the meaning of mantra which led to a wide diversity.

Q. Kindly enumerate the main commentators of the Vedas.

Ans. Some available names of ancient Vedic scholars are : Maharishi Brahma, Kapil, Marichi, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Pulah, Ritu, Bhardwaj, Vashishtha, Bhrigu, Dakshya, Manu, Jatukanya, Vishwamitra, Kashyapa, etc. During the last 1,300 years the main commentators have been Skand Swami, Narayana, Udgiha, Hastanalak, Venkat Madhava, Bhatt Govind, Laxmana, Yajwa, Anand Tirtha., Atmanand, Sayana, Ravana, Mahidhar, Mudgal, Bharat Swami, Bhatt Bhaskar, Ubbat, Shaunak, Gaurdhar, Hari

Swami, Deva Swami, Anandboh, Venkatesh etc. Besides these, Swami Dayanand, Shri Aurobindo and their followers, Pt. Satvlekar, and several western Indologists (Max Muller, Griffith etc.) and others have translated the Vedas in Sanskrit, English, Hindi, German and French. The above names are not necessarily complete in a chronological order and these commentators have adopted different approaches to reveal the secrets of the Vedas (Vedic vangmaya Ka Itihas: Bhagwatatt).

Q. What types of Vedic commentaries are available now?

Ans. Most of the ancient commentaries are not available now. Only their references are visible in Vedic literature. However, some of the post Yagyic and modern translations are available. In Yagyic approach emphasis has been laid on rituals, polytheism and Yagyas along with some contents of spiritualism. The modern approach can be further divided into four classes; viz. (i) Commentaries influenced by Puranas and rituals including Viniyoga; (ii) Yaska-based Dayanand's approach, (iii) Sayana based western approach and (iv) Shri Aurobindo's psychological and philosophical approach.

Q. What are the main characteristics of Dayanand's commentary?

Ans. Dayanand did not propose any new approach of Vedic commentary of his own. But he simply revived the ancient traditional Prayagyic approach of Yaska, based on Nirukta and gave full justification of the same quoting other ancient Vedic texts, i.e., Brahmanas etc. This approach is based on the following principles : (i) The words of Veda mantras are composite, underived and not completely underived or rigid or roortu; (ii) Wherever the subject matter of the mantra is adoration or worship of God, the words Agni, Indra, Vayu etc. mean God; (iii) Interpretation of the mantra should be according to its devta, i.e., subject matter, and metre, alongwith due consideration of notation of the words; (v) A mantra should be translated into four fold-sense, i.e. material, metaphysical, spiritual and practical and intergration of these view points will certainly reveal utmost the secret of the mantra; (v) Since Vedas are Divine revelation, there is no human history written therein and (vi) Vedas should be viewed as texts of complete knowledge to guide humanity for the fullest development of their physical, mental and spiritual powers, and for exploration of metaphysical, cosmic and natural sciences to generate new technology for the welfare of the society as a whole and not destruction. His Vedic exergy is strictly based on Vedic grammer Etymology, subject matter and logic in a coherent manner. Therefore, it is very consistent, reasonable, logical, natural, scientific and non-contradictory in the entire Vedas. Thus he laid a very sound rational

and reasonable foundation of Vedic interpretation. On the basis of these principles, Dayanand examined the available commentaries and vehemently criticised those of Sayana, Ubbat and Mahidhar and all those of western indologists based on them wherever they were unethical, unreasonable and inconsistent. In this context T.L. Vasvani writes : "Swami Dayanand Saraswati was in the first place India's eye opener to the wisdom of the Vedas. I know none in modern India who was so great a scholar as the Swami". Shri Aurobindo also appreciated Dayanand's approach. He writes, "Why should not the foundation of Vedic thought be natural monotheism rather than this new fangled monstrosity of henotheism? Well, because primitive barbarians could not possibly have risen to such high conceptions, and if you allow them to have so risen, you imperil our theory of evolutionary stages of human development. Truth must hide itself, common sense disappear from the field so that the theory may flourish. I ask in this point, and it is the fundamental point who deals most straightforwardly with the text, Dayanand or the western scholars? Further he says "In the matters of Vedic interpretation — Dayanand will be honoured as the first discoverer of the right clues. Amidst the chaos and obscurities of old ignorance and age-long misunderstanding, his was the eye of direct vision which pierced to the truth and fastened on that which was essential."

Q. What are the main features of European commentaries?

Ans. During 1850 to 1930, a large number of European Indologists provided commentaries on the Vedas in German, English and French. Their main source was Sayana's ritualistic commentary which was further distorted by them according to their ulterior motives. While neglecting Sayana's concept of divine revelation, monotheism, and period of creation of the Vedas, they coined new concepts as polytheism, human history, wars of kings, idol worship, composition of Vedas by human beings during the last two to three thousand years B.C. with scant appreciation here and there. Several of these authors as Max Muller, Griffith, Monier Williams, Roth, Keith, Rudolf, Weber etc. were either Christian Missionaries or politically motivated; and certainly not the seekers after truth of these oriental texts of the Hindus; and there appears to be no reason for the same. Their main objective was to malign and distort the supremacy of the Vedas and create suspicion and disrespect for them amongst their believers — the Hindus. Max Muller, a great bigotry clearly wrote in affirmation in a letter to his wife in 1886 thus — "I hope, I shall finish this task and I feel convinced though I shall not live to

see it. Yet this edition of mine and translation of the Vedas will hereafter tell to a great extent on the fate of India and on the growth of millions of souls in that community. It is the root of their religion and to show them what the root is, I feel sure is the only way of uprooting all that has sprung from it during the last three thousand years". On the other hand, he was finding Dayanand's translation of the Vedas as a 'painful source' as expressed in one of his another letter. Max Muller wrote to secretary to State for India on 16 December, 1868 thus: "The Ancient religion of India is doomed now, if Christianity does not step in whose fault will it be"? Similarly M. Monier Williams wrote in the introduction of his Sanskrit English Dictionary thus "That the special object of his munificent bequest was to promote the translation of the scriptures into Sanskrit, so as to enable his country men to proceed in the conversion of the natives of India to the Christian religion." Further in his book "The Study of Sanskrit in Relation to Missionary work in India," he wrote "When the walls of the mighty fortress of Hinduism are encircled, undermined and finally stormed by the soldiers of the Cross, the victory of Christianity must be final and complete."

This is why most of these Vedic commentaries are ill-motivated with preconceived notions engulfed with Missionary zeal and biased approach. Now communist press has adopted the same approach from their literature. Frankly speaking European commentaries are, totally at variance with Indian tradition and true spirit of the Vedas, baseless, inconsistent, unscientific and a stigma on the Vedas and certainly not worth consideration. All national, social and political problems we face today, in India, are the results of this biased interpretation of the Vedas and its propaganda during British rule and even today.

Q. What are the main characteristics of Shri Aurobindo's approach of Vedic interpretation?

Ans. While whole heartedly appreciating Swami Dayanand's interpretation, Shri Aurobindo opined (Secret of the Veda p. 30) that "the Veda is primarily intended to serve for spiritual enlightenment and self culture". In his translations of Veda, he emphasised on esoteric, psychological and philosophical contents of the Vedas and assumed Rishes as philosophical powers. He says : "the central idea of Vedic Rishes was transition of human soul from a state of death to a state of immortality". Further "the Veda is a book esoteric symbols almost of spiritual formula which masks itself as a collection of ritual poems". He does not accept ritualism to the extent of Sayana and criticises

western commentaries also. His spiritual interpretation of the Vedas is very inspiring and has been accepted by several scholars viz. Pt. Madhusudan Ojha, Dr. V.S. Agarwal, Dr. Ganga Nath Jha, Dr. Fateh Singh and others. More research is needed for a most coherent interpretation of the Vedas.

Q. Which Vedic commentary should a common person read?

Ans. Amongst the Vedic commentaries available, those of Dayanand and his followers are quite reasonable and pragmatic. However they need further elaboration on several points, particularly in the meta-physical and spiritual sense. Shri Aurbindo's commentary though available on few Suktas is also quite inspiring in its esoteric, psychological and philosophical view point.

Q. Are Swami Dayanand's commentaries available on all the Vedas?

Ans. No. during his life time, Swami Dayanand could complete the translation of Yajurveda and of Rigveda only upto 2nd mantra of sixty one Sukta of seventh Mandala (7.61.2). However he established his basic principles, concepts and methodology of interpretation in his book Rigvedadibhashya Bhumika on the basis of Yaska's Nirukta. His followers later on completed the translation of all the Vedas which are now available in Hindi as well as in English. Notably amongst these translators are: Pts. Jaideva Meemansak, Tulsi Ram, Kshemkaram, Dharam Deva, Vaidhyanath, Vishwath, Bhuannand, Yudhisther, Meemansak, Priyabrat, Dr. Satya Prakash, Dr. Satya Kam, Hari Sharam, Devi Chand, Dr. Ram Nath and others, who elaborated and refined further Dayanand's approach.

10. OBJECTIVES AND TEACHINGS OF THE VEDAS

Q. What are the objectives of imparting Vedic knowledge to humanity?

Ans. The objectives of God in revealing the knowledge to humanity with the creation of human beings was that the people could know in the beginning itself their do's and don't dos. They could also be familiar with their duties towards their family members, society and nation with ultimate goal of their life so that they can make immense development in their mental and spritual powers. It would have been very unjust and unfair on the part of Omnipotent, Omniscient and Almighty God to punish a person for one's unlawful and immortal acts without advising in advance the consequences of one's acts. Every one should reap the fruits of one's acts in the eternal system of His creation, and for this purpose, it is not only logical and just but also essential that human beings be made

familiar with their duties and responsibilities so that law breakers could be punished accordingly.

Q. What are the ways of self improvement?

Ans. According to Manu every person should try to improve and possess the following ten qualities viz. Patience, Forgiveness, Penance, the theftlessness, purity of body, mind and soul, self control of mind and acts, wisdom, knowledge, truthfulness and serenity.

Q. Why do the Vedas emphasise on Yagya so much?

Ans. Because the concept of Vedic Yagya is very comprehensive. It is not only confined to offerings of some flammable materials to fire as is commonly misunderstood. Literally Yagya means worship, purification, self improvement, study of scriptures, offering of alms and service to society, respect of elders, scholars and guests and welfare of all living creatures. Thus Yagya covers all the noble activities of human life in all spheres of activities. These Yagyas are of five types and are performed through **Brahmayagya, Devayagya, Pitrayagya, Balivaishwa Yagya** and **Atithi Yagya**. The overall purification of body, mind, soul and environment around us, and removal of evils from the society and nation, is Yagya. Therefore, the Vedic concept of Yagya is the overall welfare not only of human beings irrespect of their so-called religion, but of all living beings, in different forms or Yonis.

Q. What is the concept of God in the Vedas?

Ans. According to the Vedas, the God is one and one only. He is Formless, Creator, Sustainer, and Destroyer of universe, Just, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Almighty, Eternal, Erudite, All-Pervading, Everlasting, Immortal, Kind, Senewless, Diseaseless, Imperishable, Unchangeable, Undecaying, Fearless, Pure and Supreme. All visible and invisible objects of the universe are derived from Him and later on, all these are absorbed in the same Creator.

Q. What are the relationships between God, Soul and Prakrati?

Ans. There is a close relationship between God, Soul and Prakrati visible and invisible activities of the world. All the three are eternal, and while working together they have their own independent identity. The Prakrati or matter is the finest uniform element undefined so far by science which is the only source of all physical world like sun, moon, earth, metals, sky, planets, vegetation etc., Thus the Prakrati is inert, lifeless, eternal and inactive. On the otherhand, the soul is also eternal, unborn, immortal, deathless, invisible, sensitive, innumberable, atomic, active, novice and passes through the cycle of life and death of the body. The soul being sensitive, self-judicious and free of act bears the fruit of

one's own actions in continuity of life and death according to the truthful Divine Laws under His control and passes through several bodily species or Yonis by way of life and death cycle. A soul by virtue of ones pious and noble acts can attain the highest state of perfection in purity, serenity and self-control and can attain Moksha. But it can neither achieve all the above mentioned qualities and powers of God viz. Creator, Supporter, Destroyer, Controller of universe, Omnipotent, Omniscient and Almighty etc., nor it can become God Himself. Similarly, the God has not to come down Himself on earth in any bodily form simply to get His own eternal, truthful, social and moral laws implemented, and to punish the law breakers. But the eternal and truthful laws can be maintained on the earth by other ways also. For that, He can certainly urge a pious soul to take a bodily form on earth to protect the truthful, moral laws and a humanitarian religion, and abolish law-lessness and injustice from the society. Being Omnipresent, He is present in each and every soul. Therefore, a person can neither be the God in the true strict sense nor God has to adopt Himself any bodily form to maintain law, order, peace and morality in the world. He can send pious souls for this purpose. Therefore, God, Soul and Prakriti, i.e. all the three, while working together and interacting simultaneously in all worldly activities, possess specific characteristics, qualities, activities and capabilities differently. This concept of Vedic Trinity or Traitwad is very scientific, rational, logical and pragmatic.

Q. Do the Vedas prescribe the worship of many gods and goddesses?

Ans. No. The Vedas are not polytheistic as misunderstood and misinterpreted by some. They are purely monotheistic; and prescribe the worship of one and only one God whose characteristic have been mentioned earlier. Moreover, there can be no two or more gods of those characteristics. The misconception has developed amongst some due to the same word God being used for Deva, Devta and Ishwara in English language while in Sanskrit (Vedic) all are different with some noble qualities common amongst them. According to Nirukta (7.15) the word 'Deva' is defined as :

देवो दानाद्वा दीपानाद्वा द्योतनद्वा द्यु स्थानो भवतीति व (नि. 7.15)।

"The devas are so called because they give light, shine, and instruct or because they have their abode in the regions of light" Thus God is 'deva' who gives the true knowledge in the beginning of creation. Sun,

moon etc. are devas as they give light, and learned people and philanthropists are devas or devtas as they propagate knowledge and give alms to needy people and social organisations, respectively. Thus Sun, Moon, Earth, noble and learned people despite of being devas or devtas, cannot be God in the strict sense mentioned above as there cannot be several Gods or Ishwaras. However, some of the illuminating objects like Sun, Moon, fire etc. have been taken for deva or God as well as for physical forces of nature depending upon the subject matter of the mantra. However, these physical forces of nature also enrich and facilitate human life, reflecting some benevolent qualities of God, and so they are deva or devta. A devotee adores God according to one's own concepts and, qualities, he or she desires to imbibe in one's life viz., Surya for life, energy and knowledge, Laxmi for prosperity, Saraswati for education, Indra for Power and Earth for agricultural production etc. Actually Sun, Moon, Agni, Earth, Indra, Brahma, Laxmi, Rudra, Shiva, Vishnu and other physical, terrestrial and spritual powers possess some of the attributes and qualities of God to some extent. These are also the names of one and the same God. People simply adore the same one God, in different forms and names.

Q. How can a person get ride of the cycle of life and death?

Ans. One can get rid of this by adopting a continued process of self improvement in one's own physical, mental and spritual powers. Maharshi Patanjali has laid out a very systematic procedure for the same in his Yoga Darshan known as Ashtanga Yoga. It includes.

यम, नियम, आसन, प्राणायाम प्रत्याहार धारणा, ध्यान और समाधि

5 Yama (truth, non violence, celebracy, theftlessness and unhoarding of wordly goods), 5 Niyama (Purity, contentment, penance, study of Vedas and scriptures, worship and theism) Asana (posture) Pranayama, Prityahar, Dharna, Dhyan (meditation) and Samadhi, And some sects have stressed only on a few of these for attaining moksha as truth, non violence, celebracy, knowledge, meditation etc. which are a fraction of this yogic procedure. This eight-tier system of Vedic religion is most scientific, rational, beneficial and complete in all respects. This constructive approach leads to an overall improvement in the physical, mental and spritual powers and is ultimately a full-proof approach to attain moksha. This yogic dhyam system has drawn attention of all enlightened persons even amongst the non-Hindus of the world.

Q. Are some of the social evils present amongst the Hindus

supported by the Vedas?

Ans. No untruth, superstition, dogma and social evil is supported by the Vedas. The present system of casteism and untouchability by birth and social discrimination in community feasts, child marriage, dowry, life long widowhood and Sati are certainly not prevalent in the Vedic teachings. There, the entire humanity of the world is considered as one **manav Jaati** while the so-called caste system is according to one's own choice and not by birth. Though there is description of about two hundred different professions in the Yajurveda itself but they are not mentioned as Jaatis or castes as considered today on birth basis. Four-Varna system described in the Vedas is absolutely according to the nature, qualities and activities of a person and not according to the birth with parentage of a particular profession. According to Manu, Varna is changeable as we see today the difference in the profession of father and son sometimes, according to one's qualities. A Shudra is no caste even today; and a Shudra could be Brahmaa by noble acts and knowledge and Brahmaa can deteriorate to Shudra who is defined in Vedas as (सपसे शूद्रम्) one earning livelihood by skilled or hard unskilled labour. There is not a single evidence of untouchability in all the four Vedas. On the other hand, Vedas approve casteless marriage, allow every body to study them, and perform Yajya everyday, There is no social discrimination in marriage, community feasts and religious festivals. Negligence of Vedic studies is the cause of all social and religious evils, superstitions and dogmas, unpatriotism, deterioration of moral character in private and public life and lack of harmony in family life. Therefore, understanding propagation and implementation of Vedic teachings in all walks of life, is the only solution of present problems (for details see author's book — Hindu Dharma Shastron Men Chhua Chhoot?)

Q. Are the Vedic teachings applicable to our modern society?

Ans. Certainly yes. Because all the Vedic teachings are logical, practical, beneficial, rational and scientific. They are eternal, beyond the scale of time and space, and therefore, are worthy of adoption at any time in all spheres of human life. All Vedic teachings are based on humanitarian principles and truthful ideas and ideals; and are therefore suitable to the modern society and will be for future also. They are eternal and universal.

Q. Are the Vedic teachings for a particular caste, creed, race, sect, region or nationality?

Ans. No. The Vedic teachings are for the entire humanity; and are equally applicable to one and all, independent of caste, creed, region,

geographical or political boundaries. They are not meant for a particular group of people as we witness in Quran, or Bible. In the language of Veda, all people of the world are as one class of humanity. Therefore, their teachings are free from all the discriminations of colour, caste, creed, nationally etc. Even the Vedic religion is not after the name of any particular person like Islam after Mohammed, Christianity after Jesus, and Buddhism after Buddha.

Q. Do Vedas prescribe conversion of religion?

Ans. No, there is no mention of religious conversion in the Vedas as we find in Quran and Bible, and a political zeal amongst their followers for conversions. It is because there was no other religion at the time of revelation of the Vedas. Moreover, Vedas emphasise to develop noble character (कृष्यन्तो विश्व मार्गम्) in human beings of the world. But the socio-political condition of India demands now not only to stop religious conversion of the Hindus to other religions but to bring back all those to Hindu faith who were forcibly converted under British or Islamic Rule, or now under socio-economic conditions or otherwise.

Q. What is the ultimate objective of the Vedic teachings?

Ans. The sole objective of the Vedic teachings is an overall development of entire humanity in their personal, social, national and international outlook and also to establish and strengthen mutual love, peace, prosperity and cooperation. Ideally Vedas envisage the concept of universe as one human class, one language and one uniform thought process. This is why there is no sectarianism, regionalism, communalism, fundamentalism, hatred and separatism in the Vedas. The Vedic teachings are inspiring, thought-provoking, constructive, creative, moral, ethical, humanitarian, based on equality and love. They prescribe duties of every living being, male or female alike towards family, society and nation. Vedic teachings are worth adoption in daily life, encourage people to grow and allow others also to grow in all fields of activity. Universal love, equality brother-hood, peace, prosperity, fearlessness and truthful conduct is the gist of Vedic teachings.

Q. Why should one study the Vedas ?

Ans. Everyone should study and adopt the Vedas. Because the unbelievers of the Vedas should read them for comparative study with their religious texts and the believers to seek more and more inspiration for a nobler daily life and for more staunch faith in them in the modern era of science and reasoning. I am convinced, it will add to the quality of life of every reader of the Vedas, help in enhancing moral values, relieve mental tension, and create more harmonious atmosphere in personal,

family and social life. Vedic teachings provide solutions to all human problems, and implicit faith in these Divine texts will certainly prove inspiring for a better moral life. Every one must recite a few mantras daily and read all the Vedas with understanding. Let us be noble and make our progeny noble "मनुर्गम जनया दैव्यंजनम्" through the study, contemplation and implementation of Vedic teachings in one's life. All the four goals of life as dharma, economic prosperity, pleasures of life and moksha are attainable in one's life time through the Vedas.

Q. Can the study of the Vedas help in the integration of Hindu sects and society and humanity as a whole?

Ans. Certainly yes. Like other sects of the world religions, a large number of sects have developed in Vedic religion during the last thousands of years and all these Hindu sects accept Vedas as their prime source. The differences in Vedic interpretations has led to the creation of several sects leading to worship of different gods and goddesses as incarnate of Supreme Lord and their mode of worship. Following of Dayanand's translation of the Vedas will help understanding the true Sanatan Dharma and will lead to the unification of different sects of the Hindus. Moreover, all Indian languages have also been derived from Sanskrit. Therefore, Sanskrit language and the original message of the Vedas can be the only and most important single unifying force and factor in the present environment of separation, sectarianism and regionalism caused by the different languages. Hindu culture is basically the Vedic culture and Bharat is a Hindu state. Therefore, the cultural and religious unity of the Hindus, the majority population of India, through the study and propagation of the Vedas, can be a unique approach of integrating all the Hindu sects in the reconstruction of social order, removal of social dogmas and evils, vicious practices and religious superstitious. Therefore, the prosperity, sovereignty and intergration of Hindu Society and India as a whole, lies in the consolidation of Hindu sects and revival of the Vedas. Even today, whatsoever cultural and national unity is visible in India, its seeds lie in the ideas and ideals scattered in the Vedas and Upanishads, and other Sanskrit texts; and certainly not in composite culture as is misunderstood and propagated by self-motivated politicians saying hypocritically Unity in Diversity. This is basically a misleading slogan which is impractical and has proved disastrous more so in the last 50 years even after partition of the country on two nation or culture theory. The solution of all social, religious and political problems in the country lies in the revivalism of the Vedas in their true spirit and unifying the Hindu society on the basis of Rigveda's last Sukta.

Q. How one should study the Vedas for maximum benefit ?

Ans. In order to gain maximum benefit of the Vedas, one must study first the introductory books on them. This will help to understand the basic concepts, themes, method of interpretation, secrets and visions of the Vedas. After being familiar with the style of presentation of the mantras, one should study the Vedas with full devotion and faith in their true spirit; While reciting and/or performing Yagya or any ritual, one should be clear with the true meaning of the mantras used. Otherwise it would be much less beneficial. Full dedication and implicit faith in the Divine teachings of the Vedas begets pleasure, purification, perfection and salvation. However, any enquiry on the Vedas be got clarified from the Vedic scholars.

Q. Which are those introductory books on the Vedas?

Ans. Some such books are as follows :

1. An Introduction to the Commentary of the Vedas — Swami Dayanand swaraswati.
2. Light of Truth — — Swami Dayanand Saraswati.
3. Vedon Ka Yatharth Swarup — Pt. Dharma Deva Vidyamartant.
4. Secret of the Veda — Shri Aurobindo.
5. Vedic Sampatti — Pt. Raghu Nandan Sharma.
6. Veda Sampada — Pt. Veer Sen Vedashrami.
7. Ved Meemansa — — Swami Vidya Nand Saraswati.
8. Ved Vidya Nirdeshan — Pt. Bhagwatdatta.
9. Vedic Vangmaya Ka Itihas — Pt. Bhagwatdatta.
10. Vedic Sidhanta Meemansa — Pt. Yudhisther Meemansak.
11. Vedic Itihas Vimarsh — Pt. Vaidyanath Shastri.
12. Ecclesia Devina — Pt. Bhumanand Saraswati.
13. Some Positive Sciences in the Vedas — Dr. D.D. Mehta.
14. A Criticial Study of Philosophy of Dayayand — Dr. Satya Prakash.
15. Traitivada Ka Udbhavea Aur Vikas — Dr. Yogendra Kumar.
16. Bhoomika Bhaskar — Swami Vidyanand Saraswti in 2 Parts.
17. Vedon Dwara Saphal Jeevan — Dr. K.V. Paliwal.

Note — 1, 2, 4, 12, 13 and 14 are in English and the rest in Hindi.

11. A GLIMPSE OF VEDIC WISDOM

1. Be a conscious person and make your progeny noble and virtuous.
(RV. 10.53.6)
2. Act according to the Vedas and not otherwise. (Ath. 1.1.4)
3. O man! Live a long life having the life force under control.
(Ath. 19.27.8)
4. O ye mankind! Proceed onward from the existing status and rise utmost by breaking into pieces the net work of evils which degrade you, and even death. (Ath. 8.14)
5. O ye man! The pathway which thou traversed now in different from that of the enlightened persons; may evils walk far from it so that thou mayest be able to persue the supreme path by righteousness.
(Yaju. 35.7).
6. Truth, strong eternal laws, heroism, knowledge, selfcontrol, and service for humanity uphold the dignity of mother.
(Ath. 1 2.1.1)
7. Beware! your nation may not degrade.
(RV. 10.173.1, Yaju 12.1)
8. Let your mind be possessed of noble thoughts and intentions.
(Yaju. 34.1)
9. May we be fearless from known and unknown; friends and foes.
(Ath. 19.15.6)
10. Those who possess self-confidence attain greatness by virtue of lofty enterprises and constant efforts.
(RV. 1.85.7).
11. O man! Enjoy whatever God gave you. Lust not after any one's riches.
(Yaju 40.1)
12. O ye mankind! Let all your activities lead you to one common goal of universal love and equality.
(RV. 10.191.4)
13. Let the son be obedient to his father and inaccordance with his mother. Let wife speak to her husband in calm, gentle and sweet words as honey.
(Ath. 3.30.2)
14. O God! Make me immortal where in happiness and bliss are in abundance, and desires are fulfilled and be gracious for attainment of that state of prosperity.
(RV. 9.113.11).

15. I am invincible.
(Ath. 19.51.1)
16. Let us assimilate the noble thoughts and actions from all sources.
(RV. 1.81.1)
17. Let us be virtuous, excell the others and protect the society.
(Ath. 2.11.4)
18. Let us follow the path of righteousness.
(Yaju. 7.45)
19. O man! Come here, obliterating the fear of death, enjoying longevity and excellent health. May you be pure and virtuous and possess the wealth and progeny.
(RV. 10.18.2)
20. Let us earn by hundred hands and distribute it with the thousand hands.
(Ath. 3.24.5)
21. O men! Assemble at a common place and take decision unanimously. Do not instigate against each other.
(RV. 7.76.5)
22. Be alert and give up inactivity and litharginess.
(Ath. 2.6.3.)
23. Judicious activity and heroism are my two hands.
(Yaju. 20.7)
24. One should wish to live in this world doing hard work for hundred years as there is no other way for one's own salvation. A selfless and detached action keeps the doer away from harm.
(Yaju. 40.2)

REFERENCE

Vedas Introduced

Prof. K.V. Paliwal