

ELITES SHOULD COME FORWARD TO MANAGE THE RELIGIOUS SET-UP

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First Edition

2000

Price:

Published by:

Yugirth Shantikunj

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Printed by:

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Progress of an individual and the society depends on their right thinking and right way of working. A needy man can be offered some immediate help but such support does not bring about a permanent solution. Medicines alone cannot cure a patient unless he also exercises self restraints in his overall way of living. If we follow only the treatment part of prescription and ignore the restrictions advised by the physician, the disease will continue to recur again and again. Therefore just offering doles to the poor is not the real solution of poverty. By giving food, we can, temporarily satisfy a poor man's hunger, but it is not at all possible to go on feeding such a man indefinitely. Poverty will vanish only when the poor become industrious and put an effort to earn their livelihood. This holds good for all problems. Self help is the real help.

Mental sickness is the root cause of the miseries and deprivations in the life. The only remedy is to reform and refine the thinking process of man. In fact there cannot be a nobler task than purifying one's thinking and correcting one's erroneous beliefs and wrong notions. Acquiring knowledge and awareness of soul and God and imparting these to others are the noblest of boons. The Brahmins of old use to take a vow to do so throughout their life, were respected as God. Today such persons

have become a rarity. To make up for this deficiency elites should come forward to take up this noble task. For the welfare of this world, dedicated workers who can perform the true Brahmin's rite awakening the masses, are the urgent need of the hour.

THE ONLY BASIC CAUSE FOR THIS ILLS OF SOCIETY

Now a days, everybody is suffering from troubles and tensions. Everyone seems to be falling an easy prey to the onslaughts of disease, worry and financial crisis. Mistrust, suspicion, apprehension, deception,, defiance, ingratitude and undiscipline are the order of the day. The vices like corruption, black marketing, bribery, cheating, dishonesty, self-gratification, addictions, selfishness and gangsterism reign supreme in society. Groupism, nepotism and manipulation are becoming rampant in politics. Civil war-like conditions seems spreading fast on the basis of caste, language, region etc.

We don't find even an iota of austerity, sacrifice, restrain and moral retribute in the religious field; only trickestry, ostentations and hypocrisy dominate the scene. Moral degradation is fast spread in every walk of life. The so called pundits, Mahants, priests and monastics have become the privileged class. No one is ready to dedicate his life for the good of society. Internationally, exploitation and subjugation of one country by the other through diplomacy and deceit are openly practised. When evil

forces have ascendancy manifesting as injustice, crime, idleness, undiscipline and violent passions, we can expect only unrest and conflict to reign this world, making the globe a veritable hell. If this state of affairs continues unchecked we will be forced to commit mass suicide through deadly nuclear weapons resulting in the total extinction of human species (homosapiens) and all other forms of life. In such dire circumstances, those who really care for human civilization and human survival, must contribute their mite towards warding off this catastrophe.

ONLY MATERIAL PROGRESS IS NOT SUFFICIENT

Despite the fact that it has been an era of stupendous material development, tragically mental peace and satisfaction in an individual as well as community life have suffered a severe blow. This is the result of the lack of simultaneous expansion and growth of inner self. Simultaneous enrichment of material and spiritual aspects are indispensable for the integrated life of man. Abundance of material comforts alone does not bring happiness; it also needs refined emotions and clear seeing vision. Erroneously, in modern time attention has been entirely focused on material growth and the means thus acquired have been utilised in increasing the creature comforts. The result is an insatiable greed, gross self-indulgence, an inflated ego, deceit and crass self-centredness.

A weak donkey cannot carry a load of heavy decorations for a very long time, similarly, the body also cannot survive the unrelenting pressures of excessive material facilities and sensual indulgence. If education and intelligence are used only for satisfying the ego, the mental level is bound to deteriorate. Science has endowed us with material progress, but the spiritual growth has been totally ignored. Had the soul also grown along with the piling up of luxuries, the humanity would have been spared from the prevalent ills of immense suffering, quarrels and malice. Had the available resources been used in a wise manner for healthy progress, this world would have become a heaven.

ONLY RIGHT THINKING AND RIGHT EFFORT CAN REVERSE THE DOWNWARD TREND

If the money, labour, resources and mental capabilities engaged in unwarranted activities, are diverted to constructive tasks, they will surely transform the world. Forty crore persons round the globe are associated with military activities. If the huge funds spent on the maintenance of a large number of soldiers and the people engaged in manufacture of armaments are utilised for eradicating disease, poverty, unemployment, and in the spread of education and improvement of medical, it will produce a miracle.

If the various mass-media like cinema, drama, dance, literature, radio and television etc. which contribute im-

mensely towards the moulding of thoughts and feelings, stop propagating vulgarity and try to promote righteous feelings, cooperation, idealism, morality, amity and humanity, then within a few years nobility and divinity will manifest in the human scene. If large sums of money being spent on intoxicants like tobacco and liquor are diverted for production of organic fertilizers, nobody will ever starve in this world.

If the criminals, thieves, killers and dissolute persons divert and utilise their talents energy for the welfare of the community, every wicked man would emulate *Balmiki* and every immoral woman would become *Amrapali* and thus diffuse happiness and radiant zeal themselves all around. If all news-papers and the print media utilise their influence in promoting global fraternity, morality and idealism, millions of people living in this world will adopt a life of high idealism, enabling them to perform noble deeds. If the administration earnestly sets its goal to serve mankind, these countless number of leaders can ensure a bright future for the public. If the huge religious network of 8 million saints, hermits, sermonising priests, ritualists and merchants of religions who now exists as parasites in a poor country like India, take up the responsibility of propagating righteous values and ideals, religion will transform itself from a bane into a boon.

THE GREAT ERROR

Looking at the all pervasive lack of peace and harmony in humanity, despite the creature comforts produced by scientific advancement, it is evident that something is basically wrong somewhere. If this is not identified and corrected, misfortunes and calamities will increase in the same proportion as will the material progress (materialistic advancement). The senseless accumulation of nuclear weapons has created the danger of causing total extinction of civilization evolved over the ages. Criminal offences have proliferated with an alarming momentum. People instead of extending mutual help are after each others blood. The widely noticeable tendency of duplicity and deceit "honeyed tongue, a heart fall of gall" has rapidly grown. Man's utter selfishness has poisoned all relationships and now even people in the same family look at each other with suspicion and distrust. The intimate and generous human relationships, the feelings of mutual trust, are gradually vanishing. Mere religiosity of hollow exterior pomp and show have risen like effigies of *Ravan*.

These symptoms of utter dissolution are making the fate of human race more and more grim. The scientific and economic advances which should have made the world happy and radiantly alive, have actually made health, harmony and fraternity their victims. If this situation continues, the future would be gloomy indeed.

TRANSFORMATION IS POSSIBLE

The question now arises whether the existing trend can be halted, reversed and turned towards creativity? Whether the depending darkness can be converted into a glowing dawn? Whether this hell can be transformed into a heaven? The answer can be a strong 'yes' but the precondition is that the elites take up the responsibility of diverting the tides of time into constructive channels?

***NAR-PASHU* (THE ANIMAL-MEN) - A BURDEN ON THE PLANET**

The elites whose thoughts and feelings are committed to basic (human) values, are the life of a society. Undoubtedly such persons are few, but whatever number, they have the capabilities to work wonders, once they plunge themselves into this noble task with necessary zeal and determination.

By and large, people exhaust all their energy in just earning their livelihood and bringing up their children. Pressure of high soaring prices and rising expectations together with the limitation of skills and resources, render the poor fellows fully drained off. With passage of time, the number of children increases and gradually the load becomes more than what a man can carry. The unbearable burden of heavy family responsibilities coupled with the difficult task of arranging the means to discharge them satisfactorily, does not allow them to think about com-

munity development or to contribute for the upliftment of society. Their thoughts encompass only the bodily comforts, sensual gratification and maintenance of family, vast majority of humanity belongs to this category and they can be termed *Nar-Pashu* (the animal-man). They live animal like lives.

This section of society merely increases the population, and does not make any meaningful contribution for the upliftment of society. They simply add to the already daunting problems of humanity. Poverty and unemployment in the society increases due to them. Superstitions, irrational traditions and evil tendencies are fostered by them. The society and Government, spend lot of energy in just maintaining their present level of living. Therefore, it cannot be expected from these people that they will be instrumental in bringing any transformation.

EVEN LESS CAN BE EXPECTED FROM *NAR-PISHACH* (THE MONSTER-MEN)?

Another section of society is that which is endowed with both intelligence and strength, but they use these only for self-aggrandisement. They draw pleasure in accumulating wealth, exhibiting it, recklessly indulging in the luxuries money provokes. They are not satisfied with what they deserve but are avaricious like demon to snatch other people's share. To this end they use all sorts of foul means of cheating, tricks, exploitation, abduction, torture etc. They are extremely miserly and cruel. They have the ma-

nia for amassing wealth and possessions not only for themselves, but also for their coming generations, mindful of pains and miseries of the world. They have no concern for h society. They are confined only to their petty selves and 'self interest' is the decisive factor for them to undertake any task. They worship God only to seek worldly favours. They lack the feelings of generosity and courage. Though such people are not many, but even in small numbers they are a source of great harm to society.

The first group can be called the *Nar pashu* (the animal-man) and the second *Nar Pishach* (the monster-man). Being parasites on society, these two feed on and ruin the society. Therefore it can not be expected that they will be useful for any reformation process. Instead, they violate the rules and norms of society and thus are the problem creators. They do not have any fear of law. All the evils connected to muscle and money power grow and are nurtured here only. If the first group can be made a little more thoughtful and the second can be controlled and disciplined, it would be a real significant achievement.

CENTRE OF HUMAN HOPES

The third and a small group is that which can be called the elites, whose thoughts and feelings extend beyond the animal desires and vested interests to the higher realms of religion, society and culture. Elites are those who are moved by the prevailing pains, problems and evil ten-

dencies plaguing the society and come forward to contribute their mite for their elimination. Only this elite group thinks sincerely and seriously about God, religion, benevolence and patriotism. They are by nature wise, visionary, generous kind hearted and broad minded. They too face the problems of earning their livelihood, but consider them of primary concern. They are satisfied with the minimum that is essential for leading a simple and healthy life of an average citizen and for this reason they require much less to earn their livelihood and the rest of the time is used in doing something good for society. They do not carve for a luxurious living and feel contented by living like the millions of common persons in the country. Their sole aim is to live a life of high and shining character which acts as a light-house for others in rough seas of life.

This elite group is the conscience of human race. A body with a dormant soul turns lifeless. If the soul becomes morbid, undoubtedly, the body feels sick. And if the soul leaves the body, it dies. If the elites are of high character, enlightened, capable and active, the society advances rapidly. In contrast when elites think a lot, have high ideals; but do not translate their thoughts and ideals into action, the society is doomed to dissolution and decline. When the elites misuse religion for their selfish motives, the public loses faith in religion, falls prey to charlatans, misses the direction and goes berserk. Where the committed elites are not much in sufficient number, the evils

flourish, the system decays and the society is in for disaster. Therefore, since times memorial, the true strength and prosperity of a society or a nation has been determined by the quality its elite.

THE GLITTERING STARS OF HISTORY

The Ancient History of India has been glorious, and the basis of this honour was the contribution from the versatile giants, philanthropist, devoted religious teachers and visionaries. Our history has lauded *saints like Vashishth, Bharadwaj, Atri, Yagyavalkya, Jamdagni, Narad, Vishwamitra* etc.; religious dutiful kings like *Harishchandra, Shivi, Karn, Dadhichi, Moradhwaj, Yudhishtir*, ; sages like *Buddh, Mahavir, Shankaracharya, Ramkrishna, Vivekanand, Ramdas, Nanak, Kabir, Govind Singh*,; reformists like *Gandhi, Dayanand, Ram Mohan Rai, Ishwar Chandra*; leaders of freedom struggle like *Gokhale, Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Malviya, Das, Subhash, Nehru, Patel*,; revolutionaries like *Azad, Bismil, Bhagat Singh, Savarkar, Arvind*, ; the women like *Laxmibai, Ahilyabai, Sarojani, Gandhari, Sita, Ansuiya*, without whom there would have been no history, no honour. No nation is adjudged great on the basis of its wealth, literacy, art or architecture. It is adjudged great on the basis of a galaxy of noble, great men and women of clear vision and heroic deeds which has produced. It is such men and women of high and noble ideals, endowed with great vision, who achieve something abiding and worthwhile.

Any perceptible change or reform is possible at this juncture only by multiplying the number of dedicated elites. If some one is moved by the plight of the nation, religion, society and culture and if he has the will to uplift them, he must, with all his might, start identifying, organising and activating this class. If this becomes possible, all the problems in every field will be satisfactorily solved.

It has been an historical fact that whenever these elites have deployed themselves with commitment, the outcome has been miraculous. Buddha with his disciples stood up firmly to change the environment which brought an end to the ailing and corrupt trends of that time. Thousands of persons could emerge from the masses which were engrossed in luxuries. Severing themselves from luxuries, they abandoned the worldly ties and preached Buddhism not only in India but throughout Asia. The enlightened disciples of Christ could baptise one third of the world population only within a span of 2000 years. Gandhi, in an India crushed and subdued by a thousand years of slavery, could charge the atmosphere, with only a handful of companions, so much, that it forced the British to quit. The followers of Karl Marx were able to establish his concept, his thoughts, in the one third of the World and the rest of the world is being influenced by it in one way or the other.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ELITES :

It were only a few elites behind all the political, social, religious and economical revolutions the world has witnessed. We owe them all the scientific inventions and discoveries too. The selfish and self centred men, who remain engrossed in merry making and fulfilment of their base desires, never feel moved to commit their lives for high purposes. Soldiers, only after overcoming the greed and fear, develop a strong sense of patriotism and win the battle. Despite the best of artillery and means, a frightened army loses. In all walks of life the elites are seen inspiring and leading men to achieve wonders.

A man is capable of far more than what he normally does. Mostly he spends his energy in fulfilling the demands of the body and for petty selfish gains. A human mind always remains engrossed in the twists and turns of desires and fancies. Cherishing and accumulation of worldly prosperity may be an indicator of social status, but most of the men fail even in this. Even those who are able to pile up and enjoy the wealth, are left empty handed at the end of life, leaving their accumulations behind as bones of contention for their inheritors. If an intelligent man could take a lesson from transient nature of all created things, it would take very little of his time and energy to earn his livelihood. And then the rest of his energy can be channelised for better and greater goals of well being of humanity and rather than wasting it in the routine trifles and follies. In fact this is the best use of life. Whosoever

has marched with a commitment towards it, has realised that his life has become worthwhile and purposeful.

COURAGE IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

In the last freedom struggle, the people, could overcome their personal interests, faced imprisonment, participated boldly in agitations and sacrificed their lives for the sake of the country. They were the people amongst whom many became our national leaders and glory was bestowed on them. Gandhi, Patel, Nehru, Das, Malviya etc. were just ordinary lawyers by profession. Had they remained in their professions only, they could have managed a small house and a meagre saving for their children. Kabir, Raidas, Dadu and Tulsi would have remained poor people with no identity, had they hesitated in leaving their parental profession. Truly wise do have to sacrifice in the beginning but in the long run they are in no way the losers. What they ultimately receive is much more than what they have sacrificed.

Today's greatest need is to arouse and rear wisdom in human beings. The virtues of nobility, compassion and kindness should be inculcated and encouraged to bloom. The moulding of men into good human beings is of far greater importance than establishing nuclear reactors. If we could build up an army of ideal social workers, the whole environment will gradually be transformed. If these committed men stand up and resolve to bring about revolutionary changes, the irrational customs, evil traditions,

narrow-mindedness and crass selfishness will be washed out of the social system. When the zest for high ideals and feelings of fallowness will pervade the society, the circumstances which today appear so difficult to cope with, will turn favourable.

THE CALL OF THE HOUR

Those who love idealism, a quest for ethics, a longing for basic values along with a deep strong spiritual urge, should tenderly nurture these urges. If one understands the true aim of life, and thinks it right to follow the foot steps of great men, he should venture out. Only altruism leads to greatness. Those who only think and do nothing can simply be dubbed as hypocrites. If we have faith in basic values, we should adopt them in our practical life. This will further strengthen our faith. Today the human race is at the crossroads which a choice to determine its destiny. It has to choose, without delay, either the path of integral development or the utter disaster. There is no more time to waste. The choice has to be made immediately. Times are critical. We must awaken to our duties, put our intelligence to task and gear up to do something worthwhile without any further delay.

The first step towards it is to restrict our desires and ambitions, shake off laziness and get rid of fear. The minimum that meets our basic needs should be considered as sufficient. Our time slot for various activities must be fixed as eight hours for sleeping, eight for earning,

four for the miscellaneous activities and remaining four hours for the welfare of the society and we must follow it strictly. This can be done by all the busiest person as well as one who has minimum resources. We will fall in the category of *Nar Pashu* if we waste all the twenty four hours in toiling and indulging in the lower craving of the flesh. One must set a part time and resources for wellbeing of the community.

For those who have inherited more than enough to meet their basic needs, it becomes irrational to work for remuneration. Such a privilege has been granted by the Almighty, so that they utilise their life for the service of mankind, without bothering for their livelihood. If they do not do this, they will be treated as culprits in the eyes of God. Those whose children have become independent or who get pensions, should also spend all their time and energy for the society. Those who are unmarried and those who have few children, should consider seriously before adding to their responsibilities. They should think of the futility of additional burden and should wisely choose to adopt a purposeful life of service to the society. This is the crying need of the hour.

ABANDON THE GREED OF WEALTH AND POSSESSIONS

The amount of time, energy, ability, knowledge and wealth which is at our disposal should be mainly used for the welfare of the society, considering these assets as gifts of

God and ourselves as trustees. It would be in our own interest and in the interest of future generations, to uplift the society and make it full (a visible manifestation) of peace, love, harmony and understanding. Even if we ourselves are cultured and prosperous, it is not possible to live peacefully in a vitiated and polluted environment full of hatred turmoil and turbulations (turbulence). In contrast, in a cordial and civilised society we can live happily and merrily even in a state of material scarcity. Therefore, even from the view point of our own enlightened self interest it would be appropriate that we utilize a part of our resources for the welfare of the community and thus further the objective of social reconstruction.

The foundation of *Yug Parivartan* (the change of era) will be laid by the visionaries whose conscience feels concerned about the society and true religion. Rather than enjoying more and more facilities such people should learn to share and care. They should root out of their psyches the cravings for self indulgence and wealth and join the ranks of the elites. Where there is will there is a way; so goes the saying. If something great captures our imagination, we will feel no dearth of time or means to achieve our noble goals. Leave aside the ignorant masses, even the elites spend lot of energy simply in making grand plans, debating, arguing and criticising others. And when crucial time arrives demanding their positive contribution, they grin, make lame excuses and run away from their responsibilities. This state of affairs needs to be changed.

Dedicated and enlightened people should not only talk about ideals and values but should also come forward to match their words with deeds. Thus alone will the new era dawn.

DETERMINATION MAKES EVERYTHING POSSIBLE

When a firm-willed person can attract many companions, associates and friends so easily, when gamblers, drunkards and cheats can have many friends, why can't the elite do so. If the small groups of dacoits can create terror over large areas why the groups of right thinking people cannot do something. Ember of devotion is very potent, wherever it starts burning, it spreads fast like jungle fire. The celebrities who resolved to reform the society, have always marched alone. People raised voices against them. They were humiliated and criticised but by their firm determination they could work wonders. This is the path open to all those possessing devotion. "The time is unfavourable, the people are not good, the society is backward, nobody listens to us", are the words which reflect the despair, dejection and lack of determination.

Those, who are committed, can do wonders. Nothing is impossible for them. They are able to grow plants on rocks, can extract oil from sand, and grow vegetation on barren land. A man who is determined can do any work in any sort of circumstances.

Those who have the courage and determination, should solemnly pledge to do everything they can towards awakening the masses. Time is fast changing now. Gone are the days when eloquence alone could influence. Now a person will be adjudged by his actions. Therefore we should immediately get down the field and begin the service of mankind from platform of transformed religion.

IMPACT ON EMOTIONS

There are only two ways of influencing the public mind at large; one is politics and the other is religion. Both have their own limitations and utilities. The administration, economic policy, curbing crimes, enforcement of law, education, public transport, scientific researches, development, construction of roads and bridges etc. which influence our material life, fall under the purview of politics. The political leaders remain busy with all these activities. Religion touches the emotions, develops faith in ethical values and inspires people to adopt them as a way of life. Observance of celibacy, fasting and worshipping cannot be imposed by Government through framing rules to the effect. Such inspiration can be inspired by religion only. The Government can send thieves to jails but only religion is capable of transforming them into saints and seers like *Valmiki* and *Angulimal*.

POLITICAL SYSTEM VERSES RELIGIOUS SET - UP

Guided by the political imperatives, political leaders have to quite often adhere to unfair ways and means like crookedness, cruelty, false propaganda, hypocrisy, discrimination and clandestine operations etc. And that is why the public may recognise their usefulness in smooth running of society, but never accepts them their guides so far as their faith and emotions are concerned. This need is met by the religious leaders. Generation of trust in idealism, promotion of virtues and motivation to cooperate and serve humanity can only be done by religion. Its set-up is meant to meet this end.

Due to the lure of power and pelf, a large number of people are tempted to join politics. Quite often the number is much more than required. Today political field witnesses such a huge rush of aspirants for seats of power. It presents the spectacle of an overcrowded train in which there is no scope of any new passenger getting in. On the contrary true religious orders are notable to attract persons of impeccable character and devotion to their ranks. The elites should use this avenue to fulfil the great need of the hour, by joining the large numbers and authentic religious movement.

The original vision and set-up of spirituality inspired religion is so flawless and systematic that on its basis, we can confidently nurture the inner self to pursue the path

of high idealism. The judicious use of religion and its philosophy can influence the public mind and emotions to enable them to practise high ideals and observe basic values in daily life. The fundamental problem of today is how to wean away human beings from the grip of crass materialism and generate interest in them for holiness and spirituality. None of the profane views, philosophies, concepts, doctrines or theories are capable of accomplishing it. Only the true religion can do it.

FROM VICIOUSNESS TO VIRTUOUSNESS

It is true that today gangsterism is dominating even the religious scene. Frauds and hypocrisy are conspicuous here. Scoundrels are in majority and treat religion as a cheap business. The innocent public is being exploited for their faith and religious sentiments. Rather than getting any benefit, they are trapped in the mesh of illusions. That is why educated and thoughtful persons are hesitant in associating themselves with religion, and hence maintain a safe distance from it. A thoughtful analysis will reveal that just decrying or ignoring religion, is not a solution. Elites should come forward and launch an campaign for driving out these wicked elements. They are entrenched because sincere and intelligentsia not enter the field. Viciousness will vanish when virtuousness makes an appearance. The entry of morally strong and inspired people in this field will expose and drive away the cheats. The society will also not take any time in rejecting them. If the righteous people will keep on hesitating to join, the

forum will remain open for misuse by the vultures who will make it all the more stinking.

It is not enough just to point out the defects, some fair alternative has brought forth. There can not be a vacuum. If a good thing is not available, people are bound to adopt whatever rubbish is in front of them. If we want to create a dislike for the vices, we should present the virtues. Many people feel disgusted and grumble about the malpractices prevalent in the religious field but they are not able to come-up with a noble alternatives. An alternative is a must.

What is the true spirit of religion? How should the religious leaders and preachers plan and how should they run their organisation? If an example of this is presented before the people, they will themselves be able to distinguish the bad from the good. Today in the absence of an alternative, the people are forced to accept whatever is available and remain complacent with it.

SHED HESITATION

The educated and learned are hesitant to associate themselves with religious affairs because of two reasons, firstly due to fear of being categorised as idlers and deceitful by the public; and secondly, because they will have to waste much time in the absurdities of *Karmkands* (religious rituals). If we go a little deeper, both these apprehensions unfounded. The spinning on *Charkha* (Wheel)

was considered a menial job, as it was done by the poor, the widows, weavers etc. But when Gandhi ji took it into his hands, people like Nehru and Patel started doing it and *Charkha* became the symbol of nationality, pride and patriotism. When the personages like *Buddha*, *Shankaracharya*, *Gandhi*, *Mira*, *Surdas*, *Tulsi*, *Vivekanand* and *Ramtirth* joined the ranks of religion, millions were overwhelmed with religious fervour. We feel grateful to them while following their foot-steps. The followers of Buddha included *Ashok*, *Amrapali*, and *Angulimal* etc. They were earlier leading unrighteous lives and they did not have any faith in the religion, but the influence of the enlightened one (The Buddha) transform them into saintly persons. Non-violence and religion had no place in Nehru's life, but he was transformed under the magnetic influence of Gandhi and eventually became his right hand in the struggle for freedom.

Today the field of religion is considered as very inferior and worthless because it is full of notorious people. They have brought disrepute to religion. Due to this, people raise eyebrows and look at this useful and holy field of human aspiration with disdain and distrust. The only way to bring about a change in this scenario is for the noble people to enter this field and cleans it of all choss. This will help remove the misgivings about religion in the public mind and establish that religion is not just a bundle of superstitions and tricks but is a training ground for inner growth. Freeing religion from the grip of charlatans will

be possible only when they are exposed by the right persons taking their rightful places in the religious field. If this is not done, the deceitful and addicted *Sadhus* foretelling the lottery results and the priests claiming to provide the passport for Heaven, will go on exploiting and misleading the masses. Until true saints, true Brahmins and true religious leaders, do not come up, we will not be able to dethrone these liars and frauds.

THE STRENGTH OF MASSES AND ITS UTILISATION

The energy and resources of the public are utilised in plenty for so-called religious programmes. Millions are spent in the name of temples and monasteries every year. Expenditure incurred on religious fairs and feasts comes to crores. 80 lakh people depend on this sector for their livelihood. If vast network of religion and the abundant resources available at its disposal, could be utilised constructively, religion would become the most favourite, glorious and honoured institution in this world. Then one will be proud of being called a religious person. It is a different job to collect money for any community work, but if we, through religious platform, undertake the task of refining the human souls, the public would not let us feel any scarcity of funds for this noble purpose.

Gandhiji fought the battle of independence after becoming Mahatma. His declarations of *Gau-Raksha* (protection of cows) and foundation of *Ram Rajya* (Kingdom

like that of Lord Rama where everybody was happy), were part of the freedom struggle. He included *Kirtan* and *Bhajan* (Chanting of religious songs) in his movement, as he feel the pulse of Indian society. And thus, by adopting suitable ways, he could win the battle of independence. Since others could not do the same, they kept on beating about the bush while Gandhiji could correctly identify the problems and unerringly marched towards the target. To fulfil the need of a revolutionary transformation of individuals as well as the society and the nation, no other medium will be as effective, efficient and swift as the religious set-up.

RELIGION BE USED FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

True religion is the best and the easiest tool for the development of a person, a family and the society. There are many ways to influence the mind. Through the teaching of subjects like, Economics, Sociology, Politics etc. the particular knowledge can be imparted, but if we want the teachings to touch the heart, spirituality is the only answer. The science which has the capacity to touch the human heart, and mould it by sublimating the emotions is known as spirituality. Nothing else can be effective in elimination of erroneous beliefs and establishment of righteousness in life. We must appreciate the importance of spirituality and religion and use these as major tools for the regeneration of society.

According to materialistic economics the keeping alive old and unproductive animals is a losing proposition, hence such animals should be slaughtered so that meat so obtained will be a direct profit in addition to the indirect savings on the expenditure which was being incurred on their feed and fodder and the value of the occupied space. Where money is the sole concern, the services rendered by such animals in the past have no meaning, i.e.- “if gratitude is a losing proposition, we should prefer to becoming ungrateful”. Materialistic economics will emphasize on this point. Killing of old and unproductive animals should not be stopped on the pretext of kindness or religion. If we go by this concept, our old parents would meet the same fate. Something akin to it actually happened in Hitler’s Germany and Mao’s China. Today all this is not being done openly because by a large masses still have respect for the so-called old values and concepts. But later, when the materialistic economics will have the final say, the butchering of old persons of society will be strongly recommended, the way it is being advocated for the old cattle now.

If material benefits are accorded primacy in life, the scope for propagating spiritual and ethical values become limited. Man’s materialistic interests and merry-making is adversely affected, once he begins practising basic values, exercises restraints and dedicates himself to the service of the community. Materialistic concepts of sociology, economics and history can support these values only

half hearted. They do not promote the virtues of sacrifice or sharing. These concepts do not accept even the existence of soul. They dismiss as figments of imagination belief in the existence of God, the theory of *Punarjanm* (re-birth), *Karmaphal* (law of sowing and reaping) and the *Parlok* (astral relms) and propose that life ends with death, and hence why should one be prevented from doing anything wrong for the sake of bodily comforts? Why should not a man hoodwink the law and enjoy luxurious life? How can such persons be persuaded to live by ethical values of universal good, service to man kind, contentment, sacrifice and foregoing one's rights to help others? The materialistic theory, though it propounds the interests of the nation and development of society is unable to explain why at all a man should take pains for the good of the society. According to this prevented view human beings are basically individualistic and therefore they naturally put their own interests above those of society.

Having denied the existence of soul, materialism cannot nurture the inner consciousness and can not encourage a person to follow the noble ideals and aims. The only weapon left with it is to force a person to do something for the welfare of the state or society is coercion or by making man a slave of the rules, the pressure can be exerted on him to undertake reluctantly some steps for community welfare. But it will lack the deep emotions, profuse warmth, and the bubbling enthusiasm which be-

come part of the nature of persons practising ethical and spiritual values voluntarily.

If we seriously ponder over these basic questions we will have to admit that only the religion and spirituality can influence and inspire a man to create an idealistic environment in the society. Therefore fundamentals of religion should be the foundation for all our activities, all our teachings and all our plans. Whatever is to be established as tradition, should have religion and spirituality at its core. To lay the foundation of a new world order, to reverse the evil trends of the times, the first necessity is of emotional refinement transmutation. This is the purpose behind the *Gyan Yagya* and initiation of *Bauddhik Kranti*. This entire framework of thinking, planning and execution can be raised on the basis of religion and spirituality only.

If we miss this fundamental point, and follow the materialistic approach, all our efforts will abort like Government's social welfare plans and we will also end up with advertisement and paper work only. If the implementers are selfish, immoral and narrow-minded, their greed will gobble up all plans, however attractive they may be on paper. There is no guarantee of success of any plan in such a situation. Any great deed can be completed successfully only by people imbued with ethical values. If this is absent, all the ability, talent and education will be wasted for amassing personal gains, at the cost of society. We see this happening every day in this world. If our

mission also functions on the same pattern, despite a different label on it, we will also follow the same gloomy end.

It has been said thousands of times, and need repetition again and again that to create an ideal man and society, to establish moral values, there is no other way except spirituality. It is not unlikely for this materialistic attitude even to suggest in the not too distant future to poison our old parents like unproductive old cattle and bury them in a manure pit. People with such perverse attitudes would suggest that we should not cremate or bury the dead as the cremation requires wood and burying requires land and labour. Financially, they would argue, both these ways of disposal are uneconomic and hence it would be logical to put the dead in a dung heap to convert the bodies into manure. We must confine such views only to the materialistic affairs. When the questions of faith and basic values arise, spirituality and ethics are the only sure guides.

The promotion of *Gyan Yagya* is the first step towards sensitising and ennobling dull emotions. Only the emotionally sensitive people can be motivated to join the creative and missionary programmes. Whatever we teach or promote should have the elements of faith and reverence in it. The philosophy of life and spiritual concepts propounded by the *Rishis* could be of immense help in our campaigns. The emotionally sensitive people can be easily influenced, convinced and motivated. There is no ob-

jection to use of intellect to make people emotionally sensitive, but glorifying intellect as the supreme instrument for enlightenment will not be able to kindle the noble emotions and inspire people to live altruistic lives fired by loving kindness and compassion. Here only faith and idealism can be effective.

It is not right to think that religion and spirituality are not progressive and are just a bundle of superstitions and conservative traditions. It is true that such perversions do exist in these fields, but progressiveness is far more extensive than blind orthodoxy. We should not think that the practices of our forefathers do not warrant any rethinking as to their relevance or otherwise in today's conditions. Like Swan who can separate water from milk, we must scan all old traditions and accept only those which are useful and progressive. With such a midset, even in the so called conservative scriptures and sects, we can discover progressive elements in plenty, which support and promote the enlightened aims of *YUG NIRMAN YOJNA*. Only useful portion of the ancient literature and old customs should be highlighted and the irrelevant, useless and meaningless portions should be ignored. The problems are bound to crop up if whatever has been written in old scriptures or has been in practice, is conceded as a gospel truth, showing utter contempt to logic rationality and the needs of the hour. Blind faith involves many risks. With a catholic outlook and attitude, we will come across nuggets of truth in all faiths

and philosophies which we can incorporate in our vision for global unity. Swan is the carrier of *Ma Gayatri* (the presiding deity of (righteous) knowledge). It is a saying that swan possesses the capability to separate the milk from water. Once we develop a similar outlook, all the religious faiths and scriptures will have much in common with the doctrine which we are proclaiming.

To create an emotionally charged environment, *Karmkands* (religious rituals) have their own importance and the teachings imparting during this time have a lasting effect, like iron which can be easily moulded when hot. We will have to train a force of competent and efficient persons who are well versed in decorating the site aesthetically, in creating a charming environment and in addressing the gathering, keeping in mind their receptivity. Responsibility lies with the branches of the mission to train such volunteers. In order to fulfil these needs, the relevant books on *Karmkands* and lectures have already been published by *Yug Nirman Yojna*. Thus, it just needs a little practice and study to develop the skills to perform the *karmkands*.

If the various celebrations like birthdays, marriage anniversaries, *Sanskars* of children, marriages and *Vanprastha pravesh* etc. are solemnly performed in a religiously surcharged environment and the significance of these rituals and their close relation with the enfoldment of human life is carefully explained, we can educate

people effectively. These teachings can guide, both the individuals as well as families to uplift their lives.

Usually people are at leisure during the holidays for festivals. Full day may not be off, but the morning hours before going to office or shops, and the evenings are usually free for everyone. As per the convenience, the time slot and the venue of the celebrations can be decided. If a person attends regularly such functions on all the festivals of the year and attentively listens to the discourses, he can find answers to a number of work-a-day problems of life and inspiring them to solidly contribute toward eradicating social evils.

Sanskar ceremonies would be quite useful in providing knowledge to those who usually remain ignorant of their duties and responsibilities towards their families. Every now and then, in one house or the other in a village or Mohalla, such *sanskar* ceremonies should be organised motivate people to understand better the nature and ideals of family life. To infuse a new zeal, celebration of birthday has its own significance in a person's life. *Sanskar* ceremonies of marriage anniversary can inculcate better and deeper understanding between husband and wife.

Beside these, there are many other established ways to elevate people's morality in an emotional atmosphere. The *SATYA NARAYAN KATHA* is very popular in Hindu Society. The Pandit highlights the story only. What Lilavati, Kalavati and king Tungadhawaj actually did and

which story they actually heard, is nowhere narrated. *Yug Nirman Yojna* has interpreted it in a refined manner that Truth (*Satya*) be taken as God (*Narayan*) and stressing that truth be actually practised in daily life and a vow is taken to follow the ethical values. This teaching is already present in the story. This should be narrated by an impressive speaker in a way that it touches the hearts of the listeners and enlightens them.

If during a *Ramayan week* in the morning and evening sessions, the collective recitation of the text is done and a discourse on the illustrious life of *Ram* is given, it will certainly motivate the masses to led righteous lives .

Likewise *Gita Week* can also be observed. It is not possible for everyone to recite and understand the Sanskrit *Shlokas* properly. Its poetic translation suitable for collective recital has already been published. If one *Shloka* is explained properly every morning and evening in the *Geeta Week*, we have the advantage of listening to 14 *shlokas* during the week with commentary there in. This would not only reveal the essence of *Gita* but also of human life. The book ‘stories of *Gita*’ has already been composed to meet this purpose.

The great scriptures like *Gita* and *Ramayan* are testimony to our rich cultural heritage. If these weekly religious celebrations of seven days become popular in society, it will pave the way to cultural and moral rejuvenation. Instead of long and windy speeches in huge gather-

ings, the teachings in such a small gatherings may prove to be more effective. People may come willingly to listen to a *Satyanarayan Katha* while they may not exhibit much interest for a political rally. The conservative Pandits who are afraid of losing their *Dakshina* (offerings) may create hindrances but they must be made to understand that our aim is not to snatch their livelihood but to create a religious environment in the society.

80% of India's population lives in the villages and majority amongst them are uneducated. The epic stories and legends are the only means of education for these illiterates. It is useless to deliver them a scholarly lecture on economics, politics or sociology. Their receptivity would be the best if knowledge given to, has a religious flavour. The mental level of the vast majority of population is such that if they are told about today's problems in a religious background, and are exhorted to practise high values and ideals in daily life, the efforts will bear fruit. *Gandhiji*, had understood this secret, so he lived and stressed saintly virtues in the political field and it enthused the masses. Contemporaries of *Gandhiji* were equally competent, but due to his saintly virtues he enjoyed a special place in people's hearts.

The Indian public had high esteem for *Maha Manu* and *Mohan Malviya* and *Lok Manya Tilak*, which can be attributed to their religious conversions and conduct entwined with their political activities. Even if, we do not agree in principle about the significance of religion

for a common man, looking to the mindset of the Indian public, we will have to consider it a vital determinant for the successful implementation of any policy. Pandit Nehru did not agree with the principle of non-violence, but he accepted it as the right policy, after watching the success of Gandhiji's *Satyagrah* movement. Even those who have a difference of opinion on the use of religion for awakening the masses, should at least agree to the fact that it will not be possible to impart any effective teaching to the backward public and rural masses of our country without having a religious fervour in it.

In order to bring a complete renaissance in the nation, the desired orientation must have a religious flavour in it.

RELEVANCE OF RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS

There must be no hesitation in spending time and money to promote and maintain religious outfits and *Karmkands*. It is like a capital investment in agriculture or a business which ultimately leads to profit. Mere sermonising will not help in refining the thoughts and feelings. For this a creative and psychologically effective planning has to be done. People launching agitations often organise huge processions and rallies. When they are questioned about the rationality of such heavy expenditure, wastage of time and labour on leaflets, pamphlets, big posters and cut outs etc., they say that they use these as mediums to arouse public emotions in their favour. Similarly *Satyagrah* and

civil disobedience observed during freedom struggle could also be dubbed as futile because the value of salt produced was not even one fourth of the cost of the wood consumed to boil the brine water. But all this was essential to motivate the people and stir-up their feelings and the aim was not doing salt business.

Congress has been spending approximately fifty lakhs of rupees on its annual general body meetings and so do the other parties. The religious functions are also very costly, as are the exhibitions, in which lot of money and resources are spent. Many tools used by the Government for awareness generation about its rural uplift programmes e.g. cinema shows, are no less expensive. If we take into account the expenses being incurred on meetings, conferences, organisation of various games and sports events, we may call it a wastage, but in reality it is not so. It will not be a bad bargain if large amounts of money and time are spent for inspiring noble ideas. Very little money is spent on organising *Yagya*. It has its scientific benefits too. Even if we do not consider them and just view it as another public function for religious purpose, the expenditure incurred will be far below that on other gatherings. People overlook the amount of money they waste on addictions and ostentations, and a little expenditure on religious chaos their flak. The reason is that they do not understand its utility properly. If these religious activities are made as mediums to awaken the society and rebuild the nation, the expenditure incurred will be welcomed by

all sensible men and there will be no question of calling it a waste.

THE FOCUS MUST BE ON THE AIM

The aim of all religions is to infuse noble thoughts and feelings among men and rituals are just its symbols. Nowadays, aimless rituals dominate the religious scene, hence voices is raised against their uselessness. If these rituals become capable of uplifting the society, and are used for instilling values of morality, good conduct and patriotism, they will be supported and welcomed by one and all.

Today, variety of religious festivities like *Ramayan Sammelan*, *Gita Samaroh*, *Bhagwat Katha*, *Satyanarayan Katha*, *Kumbh*, *Tirth Snan*, *Shodash Sanskar*, *Ram Lila*, *Ras Lila*, *Yagya*, fasts, festivals, fairs etc. are organised from time to time. If the significance of these rituals is properly explained it will serve the aim of moral regeneration of society. Public education relevant to the present times can also be fitted in these religious activities. Indeed the *Rishis* having prophetic vision, not only by putting their spiritual insights in the scriptures, but also popularised the significance of religious festivals and rituals to enable the common masses to assimilate their spiritual insights. It is very beneficial to public gatherings on such occasions. The mindset of people in these religious gatherings becomes more receptive, to the teachings of basic human values and ideals. Such gatherings

are of paramount importance for upliftment of society by sublimating their feelings and emotions.

The way in which these religious functions are arranged these days, is really deplorable. The atmosphere lack solemnity. These are organised by unenlightened and uneducated people who have no understanding of true religion. Naturally, therefore, the environment in these religious functions lack solemnity and piety. If the management and planning of these functions is undertaken by progressive minds having faith in and reverence for the religion and the arrangements made aesthetic refinement and culture, even a small function will be extraordinarily attractive, enjoyable and a source of inspiration. It is a fact that where the volunteers of *Yug Nirman Yojna* have started celebrating birthdays, marriage anniversaries etc. in an appropriate manner, an environment of religious fervour promoting unity has been witnessed. If all other ceremonies are also observed, the public mind will experience a new enthusiasm and vigour. For setting the background for *Vichar Kranti* (upliftment of thoughts) these programmes are of immense value. This can be realised only by attending these functions and listening carefully to what is said.

Based on my experience of the past forty years, I can empathically state that only this will be the most effective method for awaken up and sensitising the emotions of the masses for the rebuilding of the nation. From my experience, of remoulding the life styles and personalities

of lakhs of people I can say with confidence and conviction that if more and more elites join this field and plan to use religious set-up for awakening people, unimaginable miracles will occur, which can not be even thought of today.

THE EMERGING LEADERSHIP

The responsibility to lead the nation in the right direction has to shift from the political leadership to the elites, intelligentsia, religious teachers and nation builders who will not only deliver sermons, but will also concretely manifest the high ideals, and values of religion in their lifestyles. The time is not far off when religion will lead politics. Once these religious teachers are able to influence and inspire the public minds, they will guide politics on righteous lines.

Religiously, sacrifice is to dedicate oneself to the noble task of awakening the society after managing one's basic needs. Those who want to devote their whole life to such a noble cause, are assured that they will not starve. The Indian society which can provide money in plenty to the 80 lakhs idlers, claiming to a loft the flag of religion, will not keep its true servants, mentors and guides hungry. Those who cannot afford full time, can spare at least few hours daily for the service of society. After spending 8 hours in sleep, 8 hours in earning livelihood and four hours for other activities, four hours are still left. If they resolve firmly to dedicate these four hours for awakening

the masses using religious set up as a tool, it will work wonders. They can train many more like themselves and can launch many constructive campaigns.

Tormented humanity is craving for such learned, motivated and dedicated workers to come forward to perform their role in nation building. Among such persons the most important are you, the reader. Go through these lines and endeavour boldly to do something concrete. Further guidance and help can be obtained from *SHANTIKUNJ, HARIDWAR*.

MAY HIGH IDEALS AND ASPIRATIONS FLOURISH

Man, by nature, is discontented. He wants to rise to the highest heights of his cherished ambitions and uses various ways and means to achieve his ends. He strives to earn more and more money, indulges in endless sense gratification, to exhibit his superiority by pomp and show and tries to earn cheap popularity. But the noblest endeavour is to devote his God gifted talents for the welfare and upliftment of the individual and society. The only way of Communion with God is to make our maximum contributions towards making this world a better and a happier place. Such spirits of sacrifice and service to mankind is the highest attribute of a true devotee of God. The people who devote lot of time in singing prayers, chanting of *Mantras* and telling of beads but remain unmoved by the pain and suffering of humanity, are not the true devotees of God. Their belief that God is pleased by

flattery and eulogies is false. God loves purity of feelings, the only manifestation of which is to contribute more and more towards the welfare of human beings. To serve humanity and to promote moral values, is true austerity and the real service to God.

There cannot be a better compliment for a man than to say that he has dedicated his life to the service of humanity. Such great men make their lives exemplary and become a source of inspiration to others. Majority of the talented people waste their lives in just earning livelihood, indulging in sensuous pleasures and pathetic attachment to the family. How one wishes they had not have wasted their lives in these childish acts, and had done something to make it meaningful. There are many unfortunate people, who despite of enough resources, facilities and time, do not possess the greatness and generosity to share these God-given gifts with their less fortunate fellow human beings. They do not leave behind any trail of good deeds to make them memorable.

Every awakened person should endeavour to let loose the bonds of selfishness and also earnestly pray to God to help him in the process. This is true *Mukti* (salvation) in this life and to achieve this, is equivalent to attaining God. Wisdom demands that we make proper use of our time and resources. Our surplus resources, after meeting the basic needs of family, should be utilised for altruistic purpose. In fact, the rituals like pilgrimages, dip in the holy waters, visiting shrines and *Brahma Bhoj* are not

the true acts of piety and charity. In today's context the best form of charity will be the efforts put to awaken and sensitising the society which has lost its vigour as well as wisdom.

An emotionally sensitive person is an embodiment of an angel. If something could be done to transform the animality of human beings into rationality and nobility, this will be a real altruism. Today, there is an urgent need of lakhs of dedicated people to take the responsibility of awakening and sensitising the dulled emotions of the public through missionary campaign. The elite must come forward and bear this responsibility and make their lives glorious and meaningful.

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Glossary of the terms used

GYANYAGYA- a movement to spread knowledge

BAUDDHIK KRANTI - Campaign for transformation of thoughts and feelings.

YUG NIRMAN YOJNA - A campaign for several of present day evil trends and transformation of the society for ushering in a new golden Era.

VANPRASTHA - The third (50 to 75 years) of the four stages of ideal human life of 100 years, when a person is expected to relinquish all his household responsibilities and devote himself entirely to a life of service, self-discipline, and self-contemplation and detachment from worldly ties of the body.

SATYAGRAH- A campaign for establishment of truth by overcoming falsehood through non-violent means.

YUG NIRMAN YOJNA- A campaign dedicated to bring about an overall change in today's trend.

SANSKAR - A series of religious rituals from pre-natal stage to post-death stage meant for progressive growth (elevation) of the soul.

SATYA NARAYAN KATHA -an established form of worship of *Narayan (Vishnu)* where in devotion to the Lord is preached through legends.

RAMAYAN WEEK -a week devoted to the collective recitation of the Epic Ramayan (Ram Charit Manas) by Saint Tulsidas.

GEETA WEEK - a week during which every morning and evening the Bhagwat geeta is recited and commented upon the gathering.

BRAHM BHOJ - A feast to brahmins at the end of any religious ritual.

EVOLUTION OF A DIVINE MISSION

Chronological Compendium

The divine soul of Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya descended on September 20, 1911 as the son of Pt. Roopkishor Sharma and Mata Dankunvari Devi in Anvalkheda (Dist. Agra). That his saintly heart breathed for the welfare of all living beings was clearly expressed, since his childhood, by his altruist service of the poor, weaker and down trodden ones around him. Mahamana **Madan Mohan Malviya bestowed the initiation of *Gāyatrī Mantra*** on him when he was 9 years old. January 18, 1926, on the auspicious day of Vasant Panchami, the sacred flame of the *dīpaka* (lamp) flashed the subtle body of his Guru – a great *yogi* of the *rishi* age – during his *Gāyatrī Sādhanā*. This had sparked the unfolding of the divine origin and purpose of his life and enlightened it with the grace and guidance of his Guru. [This *akhand dīpaka* is kindled since then and is enshrined at Shantikunj, Hardwar.]

The next 24 years of his life were devoted to ascetic endeavors of 24 *Mahāpuraścarāṇas* — each of 24 lacs *Gāyatrī Mantra Japa* (the highest kind of spiritual *sādhanās* of *Gāyatrī*). He had also sincerely participated in the freedom movement of India¹ under the noble guidance of Mahatma Gandhi during this period while continuing with his altruist services to the society and attending to the familial duties too.

The unique experiment of *Vicāra Krāntī* — gradual refinement of thoughts, righteous transformation of attitude and sublime transmutation of human psychology up to the high realms of spirituality — was initiated by Acharya Sharma from the day he wrote the first issue of *Akhand Jyoti* in 1937. The subscriptions of this magazine (in Hindi and translations in English and tens of regional languages) have expanded exponentially since then....

His wife, Smt. Bhagavati Devi Sharma was also born in 1926 – the year, when the afflatus of his Guru was realized and the year, which is described by Sri Aurobindo as that of the renaissance of divine force on this earth. Ever since their marriage in 1943, this *rishi* couple dedicatedly pursued the noble mission for arousal of human glory and revival of divine culture.

Pt. Sriram Sharma had established the Gayatri Tapobhumi at Vrindavan Road, Mathura and performed the *puṇāhuti* of his *mahāpuraścaraṇas* there in 1953. He had organized a grand *Gāyatrī Yagya* in 1958. This *Gāyatrī Yagya* was a unique experiment towards renaissance of spirituality in human life. This also initiated propagation of the knowledge of *Gāyatrī Mantra* and *Yagya* in scientific light and laid the foundation of *Yug Nirman Yojna* — architecturing of a bright era of moral, cultural, intellectual and spiritual evolution. In another couple of years he had translated the entire Vedika Literature in Hindi and presented the first ever, comprehensive volume on the science and philosophy of *Gāyatrī Mantra* and *Gāyatrī Sādhanās*. Savants like Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Acharya Vinoba Bhave had honored his contributions as historical and recognized him as *Vedaniṣṭha*.

The saintly lives of Acharya Sharma and his wife, the spiritual charge of their personalities and the inner power of their sacred love for all beings, had attracted all the readers of *Akhand Jyoti*, and all those, who had attended this *yagya*, to work for the noble cause of his great mission. This is how the “larger family” kind of organization — called “**Gayatri Pariwar**”, came into existence. This has now expanded across the globe beyond the barriers of religion, creed, caste, sex, socioeconomic status or educational background.

Acharya Sharma — the *rishi* of this age, had projected the **Yug Nirman Yojna** in 1962 as determined plans of his divine mission of ushering into a bright era. The period of 1971-1990 has witnessed remarkable accomplishments of his life on multiple facets. He had climbed the arduous and mystic heights of the Himalayas several times and stayed there for specific *sādhanās* as per the guidance of his Guru. He pioneered the resurrection of the *rishi* culture by simultaneous renaissance and expansion of the reformatory and constructive endeavors of all the *rishis* of the *vedik* age.

He instituted the mission’s fraternity at Shantikunj, Hardwar as an academy for moral and spiritual awakening and training and its research wing Brahm Varchas as a center for creative integra-

tion of the modern science with spirituality, in 1971 and 1979 respectively. Regular short-term and long-term interactive training programs for — personality development, spiritual refinement through *Gāyatrī Sādhanā* and perfection in the art of living, commenced at Shantikunj in the early eighties. The 2400 Shaktipithas spread across the country also became functional as distributed centers for social reforms and training of *Pragya Yoga* under the banner of the mission with this advancement.

Around the same time, Gurudev Shriram Sharma wrote the *Pragya Purana* as the 19th in the series of the eighteen Puranas of the Vedika Age. This was another remarkable addition to his monumental contribution of over 3000 books and volumes on the gamut of topics concerning human life. Mass education from religious platform and efforts for uplifting the status of women in India gave revolutionary boost to the reformative and constructive programs of the Yug Nirman Yojna in this period.

During 1984-1986, he endeavored the unique spiritual experiment of *sukśmīkaraṇ* —subtization and sublimation of vital force and physical, mental and spiritual powers. He authored a special set of 24 books (*Krāntidharmī Sāhitya*) highlighting the future of the world and conveying the message of time to prepare us for the realities stored in the distant depths of the 21st Century..... On the 2nd June, 1990, he left the physical sheath of his being and magnified his sublime powers up to the higher realms of divinity in order to enlighten the subtle world of people's thoughts and sentiments.....

There after, Mata Bhagavati Devi had guided the series of *Ashwamedha Yagyas*, which accelerated the global expansion of the mission with great impact, in the critical juncture of the decade of change of a millennium and change of an era. She too joined Acharya Sharma in the subliminal domains of divinity after leaving the physical body on the 19th September 1994.

The light of righteous knowledge and human glory kindled by them continues to illuminate the excelling path of their great mission and promises the descent of “The Age of Truth” in the years to come.....

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