

Gayatri Mantra

The Genesis of Divine Culture



— Pt. SHRIRAM SHARMA ACHARYA

Let us begin with the collective chanting of the Gayatri Mantra:

*“Om Bhūr Buvah Swah, Tatsaviturvarenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi, Dhiyo Yonah
Prachodayāt ||”*

Sisters and Brothers,

A mother is the highest manifestation of God in human form. Our scriptures say “*Mātri Devobhav, Pitri Devobhav, Āchārya Devobhav*” Indeed there is no one greater than a mother. We all know that each one of us is born and is surviving because of mother’s grace. She bears the offspring for nine months, nourishes the embryo in the womb by her own blood and continues to do so after the

infant is born, by generously feeding her milk which is formed by her blood and other vital elements. At every stage of his growth, it is the mother who nurtures and takes care of the child. Our life is incomplete without mother's love, affection and protection.

There is one more mother whom many of us don't know. The mothers we know give birth to our bodies and help raising our worldly lives. The Mother Supreme nurtures our soul. She is referred as "*Kamdhenu*" – 'celestial cow' of the heavens, whose 'milk' nourishes divinity, empowers the gods, and enables them to shower enormous boons on the world.

I have never been to the heavens – I do not know where it is! Whether there could ever exist a *Kamdhenu* cow there, is also uncertain. But one “*Kamdhenu*” I do know – the Supreme Mother of the gods and also of all living beings. She is the primordial cosmic force of life and the origin of all existence. She is “*Gayatri*” She is also “*Ritambhara Pragyā*” -- pure discerning intellect, prudent foresight, enlightened thought power. This *Ritambhara Pragyā* (*Gayatri*) is the soul of the Indian Culture – also referred as the Rishi Culture, the Culture of Divinity.

A seed is so tiny! But the structure of a mighty tree, all properties of its leaves, flowers and fruits, are encoded in its seed. The negligible sperm & ovum cells contain the hereditary information of uncountable number of ancestral generations. Similarly, all the divine knowledge and science of the cosmos is compiled in the 'seed' of unique configuration of twenty four specific syllables known as the "Gayatri Mantra" The Vedic scriptures mention that Lord Brahma had obtained the absolute knowledge and power of cosmic creation by the *upāsanā, sādhanā* of Gayatri Mantra for thousands of years.

Lord Brahma had generated the holy Vedas by attaining the transcendental knowledge encoded in four parts of this majestic mantra – The **Rig Veda** originated from *Om Bhur Buvah Swah*; **Yajur Veda** from *Tat Saviturvarenyam*, **Sama Veda** from *Bhargo Devasya Dhīmahī*; and **Atharva Veda** from *Dhiyo Yo Naḥ Prachodayāt*.

This is why Gayatri is also revered as "*Vedamātā*" – the mother of the four Vedas, which are the source of entire deciphered and undeciphered knowledge, which are the foundations of our religious philosophy and culture. The absolute

knowledge described in the four Vedas is the Light of Gayatri only.

All divine powers, enlightenment, creative and evolutionary forces emanate from the Gayatri Mantra, the very mantra which is the nucleus of all my spiritual *sādhanās* and which I teach you. I have devoted every moment of my life, every beat of my heart to (disseminate the super science and philosophy of) this preeminent mantra.

The mystic science of how Lord Brahma manifested Nature and succeeded in cosmic creation with the support of Gayatri *Sādhanā* is beyond the grasp of most of you.

Therefore our revered *rishis* (Vedic saint-sages) had elaborated the philosophical interpretations with detailed examples. They explained that the twenty-four letters (basic words) of the Gayatri Mantra symbolize the twenty-four divine incarnations of God. Every incarnation of Lord Vishnu is a manifestation of the divine force indwelling in the cosmic vibrations of (the 'sound' of) the corresponding 'syllable' of this mantra. What is the spiritual, devotional, scientific meaning and philosophy of the Gayatri Mantra? How can its teachings be adopted in different circumstances of human life? How

the spiritual seekers and ordinary mortal beings could benefit from its *sādhanā*?

Our *rishis* had created a wide range of Vedic scriptures (Upanishads, Darshanas and Puranas) to guide the *sādhakas* and the masses. While the 108 Upanishads and 6 Darshanas represent the deeper philosophy and spiritual aspects, the 18 Puranas – pertaining to the descriptions and devotional teachings of different incarnations of the Almighty – provide practical guidelines for the masses in a rhetoric and narrative style.

Like the twenty-four Gurus of Bhagvan Dattatreya, the twenty-four

letters of the Gayatri Mantra are source of inner illumination. The Holy Ramayana written by Maharshi Valmiki consists of twenty-four thousand *shlokas*. He has prefixed/suffixed each of these by (at least) one of the twenty-four letters of the Gayatri Mantra. "*Param Dhimahi*" is purely a description of "*Dhimahi*"

What "*Devi Bhagvat*" and other Holy Scriptures of the Hindu religion preach is essentially the knowledge emanated from and about Gayatri. The (original) Indian Culture is also an elaboration of the universal guidelines of the Gayatri Mantra. It is majestic in all respects. Our *rishis*

have warned that – you may forget everything (all other teachings), but must not forget the Mother Gayatri, which is the ultimate savior.

As some of you would know, we do have a body other than this physical one. The second body is the subtle body. It is predominantly our mental body, the body of our thoughts. We should enshrine Gayatri in this mental body. We perceive our thoughts in the head (brain), so this should be the shrine of the divine light of Gayatri. Keeping *śikhā* (hair knot) on the top center (of the head) symbolizes this shrine. Mother's hands are said to be always there (as blessings) on our head. Mother

Supreme Gayatri is *Chidrupiṇi*, *Mahāmāyā*, its illuminating inspirations should also be awakened in our minds. The *śikhā* reminds us of this fact. A goad is used on the head of an elephant to control it. Tying the *śikhā* reminds us of accepting the disciplines of Gayatri (the Goddess of divine intelligence) and controlling our thoughts and emotions accordingly.

Śikhā and *sutra* (*yagyopavita*) are two principal symbols of the disciplines associated with the Indian Culture. Thread ceremony is an important sacrament of the Hindu religion after which one wears the sacred thread (*sutra* or *yagyopavita*) on the left

shoulder. This thread represents an idol of Gayatri. *Yagyopavita* has nine threads tied by three knots, which symbolize respectively the nine words and three components (*padas*) of Gayatri Mantra. These imply adoption of nine disciplines, virtuous talents and social duties. One who cultivates these qualities and follows the teachings is a true devotee of Gayatri.

The *rishis* have laid down, in the form of religious norms, some percepts for our righteous development; the most essential of these are – sincere practice of Gayatri *Upāsanā* twice a day. The ideal timings for doing these

are the two *sandhyā* times – around sunrise and sunset. Muslims offer sacred prayers of *namaz* five times a day. If you regard yourself as a Hindu, you should also do *Gayatri Upāsana* twice a day.

This mantra is also referred as “Guru Mantra” In the ancient times the gurus used to initiate a child’s education by writing the *Gayatri Mantra* on a blank slate. The disciple was taught its pronunciation and asked to enunciate it repeatedly while also moving his fingers (or pencil) on its written version. *Kalama* is like a *Guru Mantra* for the Muslims, *Baptisma* is for the Christians; similarly, *Gayatri Mantra* is for the

Hindus, followers of the Vedic Culture. This mantra is also a Guru Mantra in the sense that its *sādhanā* awakens you from within and also takes you to a noble Guru for your spiritual growth.

It is pathetic to see our decline since the medieval times. We have lost all our ancient science, artistic talent, economic riches, prosperity, and global influence in that dark period of religious delusions, blind customs, lethargy, mutual mistrust and conflicts and allowed the handful of invaders to rule over us. Not only that, we even forgot our Mother! The children, who leave their mother and ignore to recognize her, ruin their

own fate. We have also done that. We have separated ourselves from the Light of Mother Gayatri, which loves, nurtures, strengthens and awakens our souls. It is the radiance of Gayatri that had once upon a time illumined us like the divine humans (*deva mānavs*).

We, the Indians were most capable and talented leaders and guides of the entire world. Our *rishis* had disseminated knowledge across the globe; they roamed around from North to South, distant East to West for the welfare of mankind and helped humanity's cultural ascent and civilization. Archeological

evidences also affirm it. The Sun-temple and ancient calendar found there show that the Indian Culture had reached in North America and Latin American countries much before Columbus or even the Red Indians. This was the Indian Culture, the divine culture that had shown the path of global peace and progress. This was the great culture derived from the Gayatri Mantra!

What went wrong then? After the Rishi Age, several generations of our forefathers sincerely followed their teachings. But gradually, (post Mahabharata war), the extrovert attitude, charm of worldly possessions, sensual pleasures, ego

and selfishness pulled us off the track and drove us in the thick smog of illusion. The darkness increased and we lost our way, confused our identity and forgot our very origin. What happens in the darkness of night without any ray of light? Thieves, thugs, owls, scorpions, snakes, bats etc come out to 'rule' over the land. We can't even walk properly on the routine road if it is plunged in darkness. We have remained astray for over two thousand years of this dark phase.

Why all this happened? Because, we shielded ourselves from the Light of Gayatri. The Gayatri Mantra is eternal and universal. Its grace is

there for everybody, like that of the sun, soil, and air. But some of us chose to misinterpret and distort the true knowledge given by the *rishis* and made a hierarchy of the four *Varnas* (social groups) and linked them with one's birth. The distortion did not end here; it deprived three of the four *Varnas* of the *sādhanā-upāsanā* of Gayatri. Not only that, even in the 'privileged class', women were not allowed to chant this mantra. Thus only one-eighth of the human population was allowed by the so-called priests and protectors of religion to know this universal mantra.

Sharp but selfish intellect finds ways to justify its wrongs. Some mighty swamis, the heads of some self-styled cults further exploited the faith of innocent masses by claiming that because of a curse of Lord Brahma, the *japa* of Gayatri Mantra cannot be practised in the present era (*Kaliyug*). Some Pandits were still ahead of them in further strengthening the superstition. They spread the rumors that *rishi* Vashishtha and Vishwamitra have blocked this mantra to prevent its misuse! So, only few deserving devotees, initiated by 'authorized' gurus can do the *japa* of the Gayatri Mantra. No logical mind, no seeker of spirituality can

ever accept such preposterous arguments.

“How could Lord Brahma, who did Gayatri *sādhana* for thousands of years, curse it?” I once asked the propagators of misconceptions. I also had a genuine doubt – “If he had to ‘restrain’ the *sādhana* of Gayatri Mantra, why Maharshi Vishwamitra rediscovered this mantra and disseminated its knowledge on the Earth?” Obviously they had no answer. They can’t show a single line from the Vedic texts in support of their preposterous statements.

On the contrary, a little research would show that the facts are quite

the contrary. For example, you may find ample number of citations of *rishikas* (women sages and saints) of the Vedic times, who accomplished devout *sādhanās* of Gayatri and thus qualified to enunciate Vedic hymns with commentaries. Many of the mantras discovered by them appear in the Vedic Literature and stand as immortal evidence against the distortions of the medieval times.

Once a Panditji came to me and objected to my allowing people chant the Gayatri Mantra loudly. "This mantra should be whispered silently in the right ear of the deserving disciple" — he argued. I said good

things are always said and spread loudly. Is this mantra not good? Or, is it a lie, a secret of war-strategy, or an untoward or obscene statement that one would hide?

So you see how the dark phase of history had confused, distorted and destroyed the truth and maligned the most precious source of knowledge and super-culture of humanity? This dark phase also ruined the edifice of the philosophy and original values of the Hindu religion. In no religion, be that Christianity, Islam, Sikh or others, will you find such divisions as you see among the Hindus today. It is divided in the name of caste, creed, communities and hundreds of

such mindless concepts and offshoots of selfish attempts of the self-styled mighty religious heads or social 'leaders' It is a pity that a society endowed with rich treasures of preeminent heritage was virtually turned into a beggar and a blind follower of superstitious customs.

But there is always the dawn of a new day after every dark night. The roots of divine culture cannot be eliminated from this land of the great *rishis'* culture. It is bound to grow and blossom again with the rise of bright sun that is peeping through the cradles of 21st Century. With sunrise one begins to see rejuvenating natural light everywhere. Thieves, owls,

scorpions, snakes, bates, etc all run away. Birds chirp with joy, peacocks begin to dance, lotus opens its petals and soothing cold breeze flows everywhere. Night's sleep is over and one feels energetic and enthused in the freshness of morning.

I perceive that we are also very soon going to see the emergence of a bright era with the advent of the new century. This will also be the sunrise of revival of the glorious past. The knowledge of Gayatri Mantra will spread in all direction. This will strengthen and uplift the backbone, the foundation, of the Divine (Indian) Culture.

Views of Mahatma Gandhi:

Once Mahatma Gandhi was invited to address the academia at the Jamia Millia University. He spoke for about half an hour but mostly on the Gayatri Mantra. This was annoying to the Islamic members of the management, as they considered it as a mantra of the Hindus. They expressed their resentment after the function was over. Gandhiji cleared their doubt saying that this is not a mantra of a Hindu priest; neither does it belong to any particular cult or religion. It is universal; it is the mantra of all human beings. It is a mantra of pure intellect,

foresightedness, a source of divine illumination of the inner self. It is a mantra of awakening humanity in people's heart.

I fully agree with what Mahatma Gandhi said about the Gayatri Mantra. I feel that I have found our lost golden heritage in this mantra, found the invaluable gem that was lost in the vicissitudes of time. Some old snakes are known to have a special kind of gem (*maṇi*) in the crest of their hoods. They are said to possess special powers, which vanish if this gem is lost. Some elephants are said to have pearls (*gajamuktā*) in their heads. If this pearl is lost, the

elephant goes mad. I do not know how far this information is correct. But I can talk about the Indian Culture, which was endowed with supreme powers of the "Kamadhenu"

We have neglected and forgotten it, deformed it, and thus doomed our prestige and thrown away the crown of being the preeminent guide to the world and have also soiled our prestige. It is high time we awaken and do something to retrieve our lost treasure of divine culture and wisdom. I have tried my level best to revive our ancient, glorious culture that was enlightened by the Gayatri Mantra.

Gayatri Mantra enfolds the Science and Philosophy of Divinity:

Gayatri Mantra is the philosophy and also the science of spiritual evolution. It is an art of living with illumined joy. It is the source of elevated thinking. It is the seed mantra of social uplifting, global peace. It is worshipped as "*Vishwamātā*" (Mother of the World). If we adopt it (its philosophy) in our thoughts and deeds, the world would once again prosper and shine with the glory of Vedic times. Gayatri is the mantra of divine knowledge. Its *sādhanā* can purify and transform an ordinary character into a revered one.

It is 'worshipped' as "*Devamātā*" (Mother of Gods).

I keep explaining to you the philosophy of Gayatri. You will live a fulfilling life, a memorable one if you could grasp and follow it through heart.

Now let me tell you something about the science of Gayatri. Are you aware that you are full of enormous powers, extrasensory capabilities? But these remain unexpressed and dormant. The vibrations generated by devout *sāadhanā* of Gayatri Mantra, stir and gradually activate the nuclei of power hidden in your subtle and physical body. Awakening these

endows you with supernatural powers. Gayatri Mantra also enlightens your intellect and inspires divine virtues in your inner self. Thus it can transmute an ordinary individual self into a divine self. This is how a divine incarnation, angelic being is 'born' in human form.

Lord Ram and Lord Krishna were born in human forms. Like other humans they also left the physical sheath one day. But they were divine incarnations. They were Gods in human form; their divine powers and virtues were expressed as per the need of the era and purpose of their arrival on the earth. We are not

angelic beings but that possibility is certainly sown in our deeper self.

Every human being can refine his character, thoughts, talents, and actions and transform himself into a great personality, become a world leader like George Washington, an intrepid warrior like Napoleon, a sage like Vivekanand and reach still higher realms of self-evolution. God has bestowed divine potentials in everybody, one only needs to realize, recognize and raise these by spiritual enlightenment. *Gayatri sādhanā* can make it possible in this very life.

I have researched and experimented myself on the philosophy and science

of this mantra and found that all that is stated in the scriptures about its supreme spiritual force and cosmic radiance and divine power of evolution of consciousness is absolutely true. This is why I can tell you so confidently about it. I want you all, the whole world, to benefit by the divine grace of Gayatri. It will accelerate both your worldly progress as well as spiritual ascent. It is important for us. We need neither renounce the worldly life nor should we neglect our spiritual growth and wellbeing. The support of Gayatri Mantra guides our intellect and orients our capabilities

for righteous progress on both the fronts.

I have been explaining and guiding you in different kinds of *upāsanā-sādhanā* of Gayatri Mantra. Regular sessions for practice in this spiritually vibrant ambience of Shantikunj are also run here throughout the year. Everybody is welcome here. Now, let me tell you something about the *siddhis* (supramental achievements) bestowed by Gayatri. When and what does the Mother Gayatri bestow upon us?

Well, a mother loves every child but she gives only small toys and toffees

and things like that to the tiny kids. She does not give precious gifts or valuables to them unless they mature and she is convinced that they can take proper care of those things.

What if a five- year old Ramesh asks his mother to give him the key of the lockers! Will she give it to him? No, instead, she would hide it carefully so that the kid won't see it. Yes, but once Ramesh is grown up and starts sharing the responsibilities of the household and is wise and capable enough to transact his duties, the mother would one day herself hand over the keys to him and his wife. When Ramesh was a child he would

cry for sweets and expensive toys, and break them in no time.

As a teenager he was wayward and would like to imitate whatever good or bad his friends were doing. Show-off, mischief making, quarreling were his interests then. But now things are different. He has matured not only in age but also in wisdom. Earlier he would compel his parents to purchase milk-cake of twenty rupees and eat half and throw away the remaining. But now he himself earns. He knows the value of hard earned money. He would even drink tea without milk if there is some scarcity at home, as he understands that the little children and the elderly need it

more. He earns respect in the society because of his good nature and dutiful conduct. What if he were a drunkard, a hoodlum, or a lethargic chap who would do nothing except watching cinema and day-dreaming? Then? Even his near and dear ones would not have believed him.

No one would like to lend money or extend support to him. One earns his status in worldly life in the society as per his qualities and deeds.

Spiritual attainments are more precious than anything else in this universe. They can't be bestowed

upon just anyone. Gods bless only the deserving devotees. What you achieve depends upon your purity, sincerity and devotion in the *sādhanā*. *Siddhis* will gradually emerge from within as you progress in the *sādhanā*.

A guru (spiritual master) helps you march along the path of spirituality only if you deserve it and only if you are dedicated towards this noble cause. He certainly guides you on how to become a deserving disciple and also initiates you in the *sādhanā* and commences the journey on the path of knowledge. But your success will depend upon your own endeavors. He shows the path but it

is you who has to step ahead. There is nothing like a magic wand in spiritual practices, as many of you might think. You may wish that the guru, or a great yogi, will put his hand on your head and you will attain some *siddhis*. But this is all your delusion.

Spirituality (*ādhyātma*), in simple terms, is a method of living an enlightened, fulfilling life. It is the science of evolution of consciousness, expansion of the narrow individual self into the omnipresent Supreme Self. Your *śraddhā*, integrated with the focus of devotion, renders greatest support in following the

ascetic disciplines of *sādhanā*. Patience and sincerity are other prerequisites along this testing path. A spiritual seeker is altruistic in his attitude. He is happy and strong from within, because he knows that happiness or strength does not lie outside.

I have tried to inculcate spirituality in my life. The supramental faculties and the spiritual attainments or *siddhis*, if any, you find in me, are blessings of Mother Gayatri. From my side I have tried to perform the *sādhanā* of twenty-four *Mahāpuraścharaṇas* of Gayatri Mantra for twenty-four years while

eating only barley bread and buttermilk of cow and observing other ascetic disciplines as taught by my great guru in the Himalayas. All these years I did not know what the taste of wheat, fruits, sugar or salt is. I have tried to sincerely follow the guidance of my revered master. I have tried to live the life of a true Brahmin and a Saint. Who is a Brahmin? - The one who lives for knowledge; the one who takes the least from others and gives the most to others. And who is a Saint? A saint's heart is full of love and compassion. It pulsates and craves to eliminate the pains of others.

True Saints and Brahmins are greater than God. How? Well, God listens to their prayers and comes to attend to their calls. You must have read in the Holy Scriptures that Devarshi Narad had special privileges. You must have also read that Maharshi Shringi had performed Putreshthi Yagya in King Dasharath's palace. Lord Ram along with His *Vibhutis* Lakshman, Bharat and Shatrughan - could not ignore his call and had to take birth as King Dasharath's sons, as per the objective of the *yagya*.

Once a Brahmin had cursed King Pareekshita for the latter's misdeeds. In spite of best efforts by his mighty

army to capture and destroy all snakes from their land, taking all precautions to protect the king, on the seventh day of the curse Pareekshita died of snakebite. Please remember, one does not become a Brahmin by birth. Sainthood does not reflect in one's satire or philosophical knowledge. The qualities of a Brahmin and Saint should lie in one's heart, character and conduct. You would deserve great boons of Mother Gayatri if you awaken the qualities of a Brahmin and a Saint hidden within your soul.

The *upāsanā* (*japa* and mediation) of Gayatri Mantra is like sowing the

seed. Ascetic disciplines for self-refinement are like ploughing the land before sowing. But, as you know, sowing the seed in a properly ploughed field is not enough. The farmer or the gardener also has to arrange for watering it and nurturing it with good soil. The sprout would also need adequate air and sunlight to gradually grow into a sapling and eventually into a blossoming tree. Similarly, your efforts of becoming a Saint and a Brahmin by transforming your attitudes, convictions, desires and goals would also be necessary for the fructification of your *Gayatri Sādhanā*. A wonderful feature of

Gayatri Mantra is that its *japa* with deep faith itself initiates your inner refinement and transformation and thus lends immense support in your efforts of becoming a Brahmin or a Saint.

A true Saint or Brahmin is never short of people's cooperation. He distributes and gets multifold love and respect in return. Look at Mahatma Gandhi's life. Whole nation was behind him. What was his force of attraction? The achievements of our mission (Gayatri Pariwar) are also visible before you. From where did all this come? I never had to ask for anything. Divine grace

showers itself upon me from all directions in the form of people's love and voluntary cooperation. Who made such a grand organization of millions of devotees that continues to expand beyond the wildest expectations?

If you are a true Brahmin or Saint and a devoted *sādhaka* of Gayatri Mantra, the Mother Supreme will bestow enormous *riddhis*–*siddhis* upon you. You might aspire only for these divine potentials and supernatural talents. But, Mother Gayatri will bless you with something even more superior — ultimate and unalloyed bliss of the soul. Nothing remains to be acquired after attaining this *ātmasantōṣa*. No

desire, no disturbance will be there; while carrying on with all his normal activities as a human being, a blessed *sādhaka* lives in an ocean of joy, energy and inner light. I experience it every moment!

Those burning in the fire of jealousy burn others too. They are 'living ghosts' This fire is fueled by ambitions, worldly desire and the ego. There are very few in the world who experience the real delight and contentment of human life. For most others, happiness is conditioned on gaining success, prosperity, comfort, name, fame, etc. Even if what one aspired for has reached him and made him happy today, he will again

be the same 'not so happy' chap tomorrow, wanting something else.

These days, people's faith in God is shaky! Sometimes Lord Ganesh is their *iṣṭa*; then they will become ardent devotees of Hanumanji, Lord Shiva etc, depending upon who they believe would rescue them from adversities or fulfill their desires on a given day. Your devotion should be focused and remain unperturbed if you are a spiritual seeker. That is essential for progress in your *sādhanā*.

I have surrendered my identity to the devotion of Gayatri Mantra. This great mantra is the source of divine

light. Its *sādhana* has illumined my life. It has given me *ātmasantoṣa*, affection, honor and cooperation from all directions; it has also bequeathed me with angelic support and help. God lives with me like a bodyguard. The radiance of Gayatri has filled my being with beatifying bliss. I pray and wish that all of you also receive the grace of Gayatri and be the *sādhaka* of this eternal mantra of Divine Indian Culture. I may not exist in physical body after a few years, but the transcend aura of Gayatri Mantra will continue to protect and guide you.

|| OM SHANTI ||