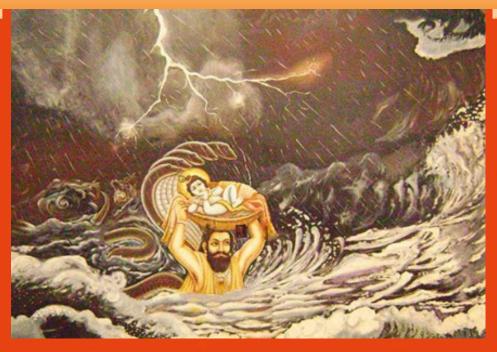


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MargFoundation@gmail.com

Suresh Chander Executive Director & Secretary

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Directors

Sant Gupta ♦ Kshemendra Paul Baldev Raheja

Editor-In-Chief & Publisher
Suresh Chander

MARG ADVISORS

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We also invite our readers to send their comments regarding the *Marg* articles, or about other issues falling within the scope of *Marg*. We reserve the right to select, abbreviate, and edit for clarity submitted materials to conform to the editorial policy of *Marg* and the available space.

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VEDANTA IN LIFE

(Part 2)

By Swami Jyotirmayananda

A great philosophical work of Vedanta "Yoga known as Vasishta" speaks of three interrelated methods that are geared to educate the integrate unconscious, the personality, and enlighten the intellect. These three methods are: (a) Tattva Jnana (knowledge of the self, (b) Vasana Kshaya (destruction of Vasana - subtle desires of the unconscious, and (c) Manonash (destruction of the conditioned mind)

In Part One (Refer to MARG V19N6), we discussed Tattva Jnana, now we will study Vasana Kshaya and Manonash.

VASANA KSHAYA

The second project before an aspirant is vasana kshaya, which means educating the unconscious in order to bring about the destruction of the subtle desires that are based upon egoconsciousness.

unconscious The contains subtle impressions of positive and negative experiences that you have gathered from many lives. But all those impressions are not operative all the time. The group of those impressions that are operative at any one time are known as vasanas. You can them consider subtle inclinations that you are not consciously aware of. But if you were to meditate and adopt certain advanced techniques, you

would begin to know them; or if you go to some expert psychoanalysis, to some extent, you will begin to know what is hidden within your unconscious.

But whether you know the contents of your unconscious or not, Vedanta presents a way of reeducating or reorienting the pattern of your unconscious. This is done through four practices which, according to the scripture of *Yoga Vasistha*, are called the four gatekeepers to the Palace of Liberation.

Sage Vasistha, the Guru of Sri Rama, teaches his disciple the great secret of Liberation. He teaches that in the Palace of Liberation there are four gatekeepers, and if the four gatekeepers a: your friends, they will let you in. Therefore, make friends with these four. He further says that if you find it difficult to make friends with all the four, then just make friends with any three or any two of them, or even only one. If you make friends with even one, then the other three will follow.

1. FIRST GATEKEEPER

The first gatekeeper is *shama*, or serenity. Keep watch over your mind and make it a point to keep it serene. If things go wrong, understand that night follows day, and day follows night. The rainy season passes on and then spring comes. So, if such is the nature of things, then why should

you become so upset? Try to promote serenity of mind.

No doubt it is a hard task to keep the mind serene, repeated effort must maintained day by day, no matter how many times you fail. If you fail, you have nothing to lose. Someone scolds you and your mind becomes agitated. At that time remember that serenity is a greater treasure than being agitated and revenging upon a person for what he did. Further, when things go well, it is a more difficult task to be serene. When suddenly there has been success in business and a lot of money has been made, one becomes so elated that their mind becomes agitated. At this time try to be serene, because all the world can give is but so little. What your soul hungers for is eternity, so why be so excited about little things?

When you look at monkeys being so excited about little things in the forest, you laugh at them. But what about human beings? They are doing the same thing, excited over such little things. Men of tremendous power, of immense wealth, have come and gone. It is only little things that have made the mind so swollen and egotistical.

So, by guiding your thoughts along these lines, develop serenity. Befriend *shama* and the other qualities will come to you

automatically. The unconscious will no longer be a storehouse of frustrated impressions but will become a storehouse of Divine impressions. You will promote an enlightened unconscious.

Consider your unconscious as your basket and the world as your garden. You are a flower picker, gathering flowers of different types to make garlands. There are flowers that are beautiful and divinely fragrant, and there are flowers that are wild, poisonous, and very nauseating to smell. Some go after the poisonous types of flowers and ignore the fragrant ones; they pick all the foul smelling flowers and, consequently, their whole basket smells.

Similarly, you can gather Divine impressions of humility, cheerfulness, compassion and and whole purity, your unconscious will be fragrant, or can gather negative you impressions of anger, greed, hatred, violence and selfishness, and your whole unconscious will develop a foul smell. It will radiate nothing but tension. The choice is yours, and you can choose serenity by adjusting your vision, picking up those impressions that are fragrant and repelling those that create a negative influence your unconscious.

2. SECOND GATEKEEPER

The second gatekeeper is *satsanga*, good association. All the scriptures of Yoga and Vedanta give great emphasis to satsanga. The association that you keep has a constant influence on your unconscious, and it is extremely

difficult to outstep the force of association. Intellectually you may be very bright and think, "I am a very alert person; nothing will happen to me. I can sit with people who constantly talk about violence, gambling, and all the unnecessary things of this world; yet nothing will happen to me if I do so. I am very alert."

That is wrong, however. You can never be so alert as to avoid the influences of association. No matter how alert you are, your unconscious goes on imbibing from your surroundings. If you are in a rajasic or outgoing type of environment, you are bound to imbibe that restlessness in your unconscious. There is a saying in India by a Hindi poet: "If you enter a room full of soot, no matter how clever you are, when you come out, a fleck of that black soot is bound to be sticking to you somewhere." You may be walking around saying that you were so careful, and nothing has happened. But there will be a fleck, if nowhere else, right on the tip of your nose.

Good association, therefore, has immense influence on the unconscious, and it must be promoted. People must develop the habit of coming together in families or in groups, studying the Gita, the Upanishads or the Bible, or whatever is inspiring and creates an atmosphere of prayer and meditation. Even if it is just for half an hour, it would be a movement. the great importance of satsanga could be conveyed to the masses, it would pave the way for a great cultural

advancement in the course of time.

3. THIRD GATEKEEPER

The third gatekeeper is *santosh* or contentment. Learn to experience the unique joy of contentment. Do not compare yourself with others and thus promote feelings of discontent. You may see a person and think, "Since he is laughing, obviously he is happy. I am not laughing, and I do not have so many wonderful clothes." This is just a simple illustration, but it has profound implications.

By comparing yourself with others, you create an atmosphere of discontent. But if you have insight into the law of karma, you will understand that in the karmic process you are placed in a situation that is the best for you. God has placed you in that situation for your evolution. Trust that situation and take advantage of it.

Being content doesn't mean that now you will stop all your effort. It simply means that you will not be agitated. You will not allow your mind to entertain thoughts of despair and frustration. Rather, your mind will be vibrant with a sense of joy, no matter what happens, because you understand that there is a Divine movement behind your personality, even though your ego does not understand it. You begin to have faith in Divine purpose.

You do not compare yourself with others, because you are unique in your own way. Others are unique in their own way also. If you were in another's place,

you would not always be happy. Rather, you might always be miserable. Therefore, develop contentment.

4. FOURTH GATEKEEPER

The fourth and last gatekeeper is *vichar* or enquiry. Enquiry means asking yourself, "Who am I?" It is a spiritual investigation carried on in the stillness of your mind. Many people become puzzled if they feel happy, and nothing seems to have happened to give rise to that feeling. And they ask others, "Why am I happy? Nothing has happened—no good news." The roof may be leaking, and things may have gone wrong. and yet you are happy. Why?

When you enquire deeply, you will understand that happiness does not come from happenings: happiness is yours because it is right within your own heart. When you begin to look for that source of stillness and joy within yourself, you enquire "Who am I? Am I this personality who will exist only for a short time?" By pursuing such enquiry with great persistence and patience, you eventually understand that the inner "You" is the Eternal Self; you are not this perishable personality. Your inner Self is like the sky; your personality is like the clouds. Clouds come and go, but your innermost being is unaffected.

When you are in deep sleep, you are not in touch with your ego or your mind, yet "You" still exists. The same "You" exists also when you are active in daily life, but due to ignorance there is leaning upon the ego, leaning

Being Content means your mind will be vibrant with a sense of joy, no matter what happens, because you understand that there is a Divine movement behind your personality, even though your ego does not understand it. You begin to have faith in Divine Purpose.

upon the mind. and this causes misery. Through Enlightenment.

However, you will come to realize that you are different from the ego and different from the mind; you are different from the body, mind and senses; you are the Eternal Self.

This world is like a drama in which your personality plays a role. Let it play its role perfectly. Things that you must do, do them well, but with an internal detachment. The real "you" is not dependent upon the fruit of action, upon the world of time and space. You are the everlasting Self, the "Self that abides in all. This form of reflection is called *vichar* or enquiry.

Asana Kshaya implies developing qualities such as fearlessness, honesty, sincerity, cheerfulness, and all the great Divine qualities. These all promote good impressions in your mind. And these good habits must be cultivated with great care, for they are your real treasure."

You may have all the wealth in the world, but if your unconscious is filled with negative impressions of anger and hatred, then that is what you carry with you, and these impressions go on determining the degree of your happiness or your sense of freedom. This being so, you must constantly discipline your mind and senses by various Yogic methods.

MANONASH

The term *manonash* literally means "destruction of mind," but it really implies mastery over the mind in your daily life.

The third important method of educating the unconscious is *manonash*, a technique adopted by Raja Yoga that consists of the practice of *dhyana* (meditation), *dharana* (concentration), and *samadhi* (super consciousness).

Dharana or concentration is the practice of focusing the mind on any object, whether concrete (such as a flower, a Divine form, a candle flame) or abstract (such as peace, love, bliss). When the focused state of mind continues to flow on without interruption, it known dhyana as meditation. With increasing intensity of meditation, you enter samadhi or super consciousness. As you scale the different rungs of samadhi, you develop intuitive vision, which destroys ignorance, the root of all negative mentation (related to egoism, attachment, hatred and fear of death). Thus, you finally attain the ideal state of manonash.

In day-to-day life, *manonash* implies keeping your mind free of the influence of attachment and hatred and allowing it to enter the state of profound samadhi, wherein the roots of attachment and hatred are negated. When

you move in the world without being affected by attachment or hatred, your mind is said, figuratively speaking, to be destroyed.

So, if in your daily life, you attend to these three points—tattwa jnana (knowledge of truth), vasana kshaya (destruction of subtle desires) and manonash (destruction of mind) - you would be moving towards the blessed goal of liberation. Therefore, attend to enlightening your intellect by listening, reflection and meditation; to educating your unconscious by adopting the four gatekeepers of Liberation; and to mastering your mind by the

practice of concentration, meditation and *samadhi* .

When these points are practiced during your life, you are moving on to the goal, no matter how small your steps may be. As you move on you will begin to take longer leaps and strides. A Divine Hand begins to guide you. You may take tottering steps towards an elevator, but once you get into the elevator, you start going up fast. Similarly, there are many elevators awaiting you on the Divine path.

There must be sustained practice day by day, an understanding that no matter where you are, or what circumstances you are in, your destiny is Self-realization. You do not have to wait and go to a remote place in the Himalayas, find yourself a cave and get yourself initiated by some impossible guru. You can have all these here and now. That is the great message of Vedanta - a teaching that is for all, not for a select few. All are select. There isn't a person who is not meant to attain Liberation.



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QUICK-WITTINESS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

During the college days of Swami-ji, when his name was Narendra, he took his food and sat next to one of his professors, named Peters, who was a racist. Mr. Peters got irritated seeing his brown student dared to sit next to him. Professor exclaimed: "A pig and a bird do not sit together to eat." Narendra replied, "You do not worry professor. I'll fly away and he went and sat at another table. Mr. Peters immediately knew what Narendra meant and he reddened with rage, decided to take revenge.

Next day in the class, the professor posed a question to Narendra: Mr. Datta, if you were walking down the street and found a package, and within was a bag of wisdom and another bag with money, which one would you take?" Narendra quickly responded, "I will take the one with money, of course." Mr. Peters, smiling sarcastically, said, "I, in your place, would have taken wisdom." Narendra the shrugged and responded, "Each one takes what he doesn't have." By now the professor's anger knew no bounds. He had to get his revenge.

After some time, when Mr. Peters gave back Narendra's examination report, he wrote 'IDIOT." A few minutes later, Narendra got up, went to the professor, and told him in a dignified polite tone, "Mr. Peters, you signed the sheet, but you forgot to give me the grade."

These short episodes indicate the quick wittiness of Narendra (Swami Vivekanand -ji) since his young days.

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HOW PRACTICE INFLUENCES KARMA

Pandit Rajmani Tigunait, PhD

We look at the world around us and see pockets of incredible suffering and wonder why. Some people are affected by disease, starvation, and violence while others go through life unscathed. We see people involved in all kinds of unhealthy, unethical, and harmful activities who appear to prosper, while others who are honest, hardworking, and wellintentioned encounter only failure. On the other hand, we hear accounts of those who had so spiritually evolved that they could heal others and transform their lives, yet who suffered from painful and fatal diseases themselves. Why?

According to yoga, the answers to these questions lie in the knowledge of individual and collective karmas (actions and their fruits)—knowledge explains the mystery of birth and death and all that lies in between. As a young man I was a philosophy student intent on understanding the root cause of fortune and misfortune. Yet for all my reading and pondering, I began to grasp the theory of karma as expounded in the scriptures only after I had encountered several yogis. During my time with them, these spiritual adepts began to unveil the subtle mysteries that lie beyond intellectual explanations.

When I was a student of Sanskrit at the University of Allahabad, for example, I was fortunate enough to meet a great saint, Swami Sadananda, who

lived on the bank of the Ganges on the outskirts of Allahabad. This peaceful and gentle saint was well versed in the scriptures as well as the secular sciences, and in the years before I met my gurudeva, Swami Rama, he was one of those from whom I sought knowledge of Sri Vidya, the most exalted of spiritual sciences. Swami Sadananda did promise to teach me that science, but he guided me to the scriptures related to Sri Vidya practice and told me that learning and practicing Sri Vidya requires good karmas as well as God's grace. He told me both can be gathered by practicing and understanding the root meaning of Gayatri mantra, noting that this mantra can create new positive karmas, and open the channel for God's grace.

Although neither these instructions nor the theories he expounded from the scriptures really made sense to me at the time, Swami Sadananda's love, compassion, and kindness, as well his knowledge of the scriptures, infused my heart with deep devotion and faith in him. several occasions explained the law of karma, but it remained abstract incomprehensible to me despite his teaching.

CHANGING THE COURSE OF KARMA

Swami Sadananda was kind to everyone and gave medicines freely to the sick. But when I was sick, he paid no attention to me. I could not understand this. Then one day I received the news that my mother, who lived in a distant village, had been having terrible headaches for more than a month and had now lost her eyesight. In a panic I went to the saint and begged him to give me medicine for her. His response was, "Medicines are too weak to change the course of karma. I will give you medicine for your mother if you want, but it is better that you do the recitation of Aditya Hridayam (a prayer to the sun revealed to the Agastya)."

"With a smile he said, "Intense tapas (austerity), samadhi (spiritual absorption), mantra sadhana (spiritual practice), the grace of God, selfless service, and satsanga (the company of saints) create a powerful positive karma in a short period of time. And this can neutralize the effect of previous negative karmas."

So, I remained in Allahabad, 60 miles from my mother's village, and did 12 recitations of this prayer every day while I continued my routine at the university. Eventually I heard from my sister that my mother had suddenly gotten well. Deeply grateful-and curious about the relationship between this prayer and my mother's recovery—I asked Swami Sadananda, "How can prayer or mantra practice help not only the practitioner but also someone at a distance?"

With a smile he said, "Intense (austerity), samadhi tapas (spiritual absorption), mantra sadhana (spiritual practice), the grace of God, selfless service, and satsanga (the company of saints) create a powerful positive karma in a short period of time. And this can neutralize the effect of previous negative karmas." He got up and pulled out the Yoga Sutra with the commentary of Vyasa and showed me the exact passage he was quoting.

When he put the law of karma in this context, I began to understand the Yoga Sutra and other scriptures more profoundly than before, but I was still not able to grasp the dynamics of karma and reincarnation very well.

DIRECT EXPERIENCE

Then one day I gained direct experience of a particular spiritual practice, and this changed the course of my own destiny.

It was the winter of 1982. My gurudeva, Swami Rama, was staying in New Delhi and I was with him, preparing to depart for the United States that evening. Suddenly he asked me, "So when are you going?" I told him the time. A little later, he asked again, "So when are you going?" I gave the same answer. Later he asked yet again, adding, "Do you have to go?" I explained that I had classes to teach and should get back, but he didn't seem to be listening. This dialogue was repeated again and again during the next several hours, and finally I realized that he didn't want me to go, although I did not know why. I called the airline and

cancelled my flight. A short time later, he asked again, "Are you going?"

When I said, "No," he said, "Good. You should go to Rishikesh and do an 11-day-practice while staying at the ashram. Every day visit the Virabhadra temple."

So, I went to Rishikesh and did the practice. On the last day, however, I began to extremely sluggish. Every time I picked up my mala beads and started to repeat the mantra, I fell asleep instead. Several times I got up and washed my face with cold water, but I couldn't keep myself awake. At some point, while sitting in my meditative pose, I nodded off, the mala dropped from my hand, and I began to dream a dream so vividly that I knew it was real.

In it I saw myself being driven along the familiar route from New York City to Swamiji's headquarters in Pennsylvania, where I live. The driver, a woman I will call Laura, often drove me to New York, and she was driving along happily, as usual. Suddenly a car entered the freeway from the exit ramp and headed toward us against traffic. Within seconds, it was coming directly at us. If Laura braked abruptly, the car behind us would crash into us. If we swerved onto the shoulder or into the other lane we would collide with the cars around us. There was no time and no option. collision head-on inevitable. Then, a fraction of a second before the crash, an extraordinarily tall man - clad in white - appeared between the two

cars and prevented the collision. He picked us up—me in one hand and Laura in the other—and deposited us on the right side of the road.

I woke up to find my mala on the floor. My entire being was suffused with a powerful mixture of fear and joy-fear from the near collision and joy from the loving touch of the being who had plucked me out of harm's way. There were goose bumps all over my body. But I still had lots of japa (mantra repetition) to do before the practice was finished, so I put the experience out of my mind and concentrated on my Shortly afterwards, returned to the United States and resumed my normal routine. As time passed, I forgot about the dream.

THE DREAM BECOMES REAL

That spring Laura drove me to New York City to teach a class. On our way home, she suddenly told me that her heart was pounding, and she was afraid to drive any further. She said that for the past several days she had been seeing a head-on collision in her mind's eye. She hadn't wanted to refuse to drive me to New York, so she tried to dismiss her fears. But now she was too frightened to keep driving.

I remembered my dream, and I saw that we were approaching the spot where it had taken place. I also remembered Swamiji saying that whatever happens in the external world has already happened long before in the inner world, and suddenly I understood that this whole

incident had already taken place, that the mysterious being in white had already saved us, so there was no need to fear. But I could not say such things to Laura.

"My entire being was suffused with a powerful mixture of fear and joy—fear from the near collision and joy from the loving touch of the being who had plucked me out of harm's way. There were goose bumps all over my body."

The exit ramp that the car had come down in my dream was just ahead. I was trying to distract Laura by engaging her in but conversation, she was becoming more and more agitated. We were in the right lane, approaching the exit, when a car suddenly entered the freeway right in front of us and came toward us in our lane. Our car and the cars behind and beside us braked and swerved, but a collision seemed inevitable. In that instant the question flashed through my mind: Should I take off my seat belt so that the white-clad being could get me out of the car more easily? Almost simultaneously another thought came: What difference does it make? A physical being can't help, and for a subtle force a seat belt is nothing. So, I closed my eyes and waited. Just as we were about to crash, I saw in my mind's eye that a white-clad being appeared between the two cars, plucking Laura and me out of the car, and deposit us on the right side of the road.

I opened my eyes and found myself standing next to Laura, my body infused with the same mixture of fear and delight I had experienced after the dream in Rishikesh. Again, goosebumps all over my body. Our car was standing almost nose-to-nose with the oncoming car, and our front doors were wide open. Some of the cars behind us had collided, although none seriously. Drivers were leaning out of their windows shouting. I asked Laura if she was all right. She smiled and said, "I'm fine." So, while the drivers around us were yelling and writing down each other's license numbers, we got into our car and drove away.

For several weeks I thought constantly about the tall being clad in white. Who or what was it? According to the Christian faith, it would be an angel. from the Indian perspective, it would be an immortal sage or yogi. I had no idea what it was. I had no sense that I had known or experienced it before—except in the dream. So why did it (or he) protect me? Was personified form of the mantra Swamiji had given me to practice in Rishikesh? Was this the same sage who had protected Swamiji once when he was lost in the mountains and fell? I had no particular feelings of love for that white-clad being. But I did feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude toward Swamiji. Had he himself helped me by assuming that form? Or had that been appeared at his request?

My mind kept returning to the practice I had done in Rishikesh. But I doubted that this experience was due solely to that

because I knew many people who had repeated the same mantra hundreds of times without any significant change in their circumstances. Had Swamiji used this practice to evoke a force of protection powerful enough to prevent me from reaping the fruit of my past karma?

BEYOND THE LAW OF KARMA

What happened to Laura after this raised even more questions. For a couple of weeks, she seemed to be in another, more blissful, world. Her heart was brimming with joy and gratitude toward Swamiji and the spiritual tradition he represents. But within three weeks her mood changed. Although she had been a student of Swamiji's for a long time and was a close friend of my family, she kept her distance from us, and became indifferent and then hostile to Swamiji. In the fourth week, she left the Institute. She had many complaints, but the main one was that Swamiji was selfish. She said she was disappointed that Swamiji did not want others to live a happy life.

I found this inexplicable. I wanted Swamiji to explain, but I knew he would simply remain silent if I asked him what had happened. One day, however, while reading one of the Puranas, I came across a passage that answered my question. In the course of a lengthy story, this scripture made it clear that no one can interfere with the law of karma. All the forces, seen or unseen, that function in this mortal world are governed by the law of karma. Birth and death and

all that happens between these two events are dependent on this law. But there is one way that karmic events can be amended. The law of divine providence, or divine will—which is the inherent power of God—is beyond the law of karma, and it alone can amend karmic events (although it rarely does so). Nothing is impossible in the realm of divine providence. What is more, we can connect with that divine will through intense tapas, mantra sadhana, samadhi, devotion to God, the company of saints, and service. When happens, the reshaping of karmic events begins to take place by itself in a positive manner.

The scripture also revealed that receiving the grace of divine will requires preparation. Even greater preparation is needed to retain and assimilate grace once it has been received. Faith in and

surrender to God are what makes this possible, and this condition is created through meditation, prayer, japa, contemplation, selfstudy, and service to those whose minds and hearts are totally filled with God-consciousness.

When I put Laura's behavior into the context of this message, I got the answer to my question. It was possible that in my case the force of karma had not interfered with divine will because that 11day-long japa practice Rishikesh may have given me the opportunity to assimilate the grace that flowed through the practice. But Laura had not had a similar opportunity, and that may have been why her initial joy was soon undermined by doubt and fear.

I have heard Swamiji expound on different aspects of yoga, meditation, and spirituality since 1976. One of his constants, underlying messages is that we are the makers of our own destiny; through thinking, we become what we want to be, even though generally the law of karma cannot be avoided. Even though the experience of divine will is rare, Swamiji has said that if we cultivate sankalpa shakti (the power of will and determination), we can reshape some of those karmas which have not yet started to manifest in present events. He has also made it clear that the scriptures offer hundreds of prescriptions for working with our karma to minimize their negative effects and bring greater joy and happiness to our lives. But nothing works unless we practice sincerely and faithfully. That is the key.

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HAPPINESS RESIDES WITHIN

The sages, being filled with universal love for all beings, did not want to keep their enlightenment to themselves.

They declared to all: O mortals, striving and struggling upon this Earth plane, weeping, wailing, buffeted by the vicissitudes of life: we have come upon a great discovery.

There is something beyond these appearances, these vanishing names and forms that go to make up this universe.

There is something beyond,

which is the very source and support of all these objects of the phenomenal world.

Why do you search in vain for happiness outside?

Come, come, happiness resides within."

Swami Chidananda (President of Divine Life Society)

Volume 20, Number 4 July-August 2024

MEMORIES OF THE SOUL

The effects of a past life can manifest in your current life in many ways, but they should be used as a tool, not an excuse.

Inside our subconscious lies our memories from past lives. Though we seldom remember even having lived these past lives, the experiences we had living them have had a hand in shaping who we are today. The effects of a past life can manifest in a later lifetime in many ways — phobias, beliefs, physical self-limiting problems, or innate creative abilities. Violence, death, and trauma in a past life may show up as fear, uncontrollable anger, or low self-esteem in this one, while positive experiences from an earlier lifetime may cause you to feel strongly drawn to certain people, places, or objects without knowing why. You may also feel drawn to a particular period in history, a seemingly unfamiliar

locale, or a new person you've met who seems oddly familiar.

Many people turn to past life regression therapists to revisit Past life their past lives. regression allows you to recall the memories and emotions associated with a past life that continue to exert an influence over your present reality. You may not have even been aware that these experiences are still affecting you today. Past life regression therapy can offer you a unique opportunity to reconnect with these memories, so you can understand them and vourself.

To discover more about your past lives, consider keeping a notebook where you can record anything that could be a memory from a different lifetime. Pick a time and choose a place where you can relax. Envision your body being filled with healing white light. Remember that

nothing you see or hear will harm you. Ask yourself what you hope to achieve through regression and connect with your inner vision. Observe what you see without judgment. When you are done, think about how what you experienced relates to your present life. There may be beliefs from a past life that you are still operating under but are now ready to let go of. The significance of your past life memory may not be obvious until much later. You can make the most of your past lives by learning from them. While past life regression can be an exciting journey, it is not a substitute for living in the present where we are most needed — right here and now.



Courtesy: www.dailyOm.com

HINDUISM IS NOT JUST & FAITH

Hinduism is not just a faith.

It is the union of reason and intuition that cannot be defined but is only to be experienced.

Evil and error are not ultimate.

There is no Hell,

for that would mean there is a place where God is not

and there are sins which exceed His love.

-- Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975), First Vice President of India

SPIRITUALITY INTEGRATION OF MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT FOR GOOD HEALTH

Rateebhai Patel, Arlington, VA

Most people have health problems or physical illnesses of some kind during the tortuous journey of their life.

Though good health has never been a "bed of roses" for life's long journey, very few of us are prepared, both mentally and spiritually, for coping with the illness that may visit us one day. Since modern medicine has achieved unprecedented success in treating many diseases, we all have come to rely very heavily on the "miracles" of present-day medicine to cure all indispositions --- often ignoring the health of mind, body, and spirit. With increasing dependency on drug treatments, we completely ignore the "doses" of mental and spiritual medicine that are readily available to us, free of charge, for treating and coping with physical diseases.

As a society, we put too much emphasis on external forces to play a role in our well-being and pay little or no attention at all to wonderful self-healing mechanism of the body at work under the direction of the mind. Since good health is our responsibility, must we understand the critical role that our mind plays in prevention, as well as cure, of disease. If properly handled with a strong mind, an illness need not be devastating. According to recent U. S. Research Studies, a strong mind accelerates healing and recovery. Indeed, a strong mind can even retard and, in some cases, reverse, disease. The same studies further suggest that, when the mind is depressed for a lengthy period, certain types of diseases can occur, and recovery from such diseases can be diminished. On the other hand, a strong and vibrant mind can body's boost the defense mechanism (Immune System) in fighting disease. If the mind is kept strong and free from negative thoughts, the body tends to be healthy. Negative thoughts of hate, fear, jealousy, anger, and anxiety, if allowed to penetrate your mind, will work steadily to produce the loss of health.

Our mind is the "computer" that operates and controls our entire physical system, including the defense mechanism. Just as what we eat affects our overall health; similarly, what we allow to get into our mind affects our mental health and consequently our physical health too! Good, positive thinking brings healthy living together with emotional and physical well-being. Leave, therefore, no room for negative thoughts and always fill your mind with wholesome, uplifting thoughts.

There is no situation in our life that cannot be changed by reprogramming our mind with a strong will. Merely voicing positive affirmation changes the way we feel. Making the mind and body receptive to healing is the best medicine. A cheerful state of mind is particularly restful to the body, allowing it full time to concentrate its energies on healing. A positive, optimistic frame of mind facilitates the intangible factor that accounts for the "miraculous" recovery. The undeterred "will" of mind, which means you have something strong and specific to live for, is of central importance in coping, healing, and recovery to physical well-being.

Attaining health, happiness and energy is basically a spiritual spiritual process. The stimulates vitality, not only in the mind and soul, but also in the body. We become healthy to the degree our mind thinks healthy thoughts and our soul - our conscience, is morally clean. A conscience clean continuing newness of health throughout the entire system. The most effective way of holding our life together today is the "Spiritual Cement" of faith in God. Without this spiritual cement, our life disintegrates and breaks down under the pressure of stress and strain of our modern-day living. Good health and great energy are ours if we sincerely attempt to base our life on spiritual laws and principles found in the Vedic scriptures principles that never change.

Good health requires an integration of mind, body, and

spirit; and is possible only when mind, body, and soul work with, not against, each other. If the spirit and the mind are kept free of evil, negative thoughts and attitudes, the body is more likely to be healthy. On the other hand, an unhealthy mind can result in sickness and even death. We can choose a way of life that combines faith and affirmation of the re-creative power of God, or we can choose the opposite. Faith, in oneself and God, is an important path to good health. This brings us health and happiness as God wants us to be well, vital, and vigorous throughout our life. We can choose between faith and indifference.

Health and happiness in life really depend on making the right choices, winning choices.

There are definitive forces that are working throughout one's life; some are working for you and others working against you. Positive attitudes such as love, faith, hope, courage, and enthusiasm are the beneficial and non-malevolent forces that are working for you; whereas

negative forces such as hate, fear, jealousy, worry, anger, anxiety are the forces that are working against you and are detrimental to your health and happiness. The love for life is more powerful than the negative forces of illness working against you. To have good health for a long time, you must be happy and peaceful. And if you are peaceful, you will be happy.

To have good health and happiness, you must be able to choose correctly between these two forces. You must use the positive forces of love, faith, hope, courage to maintain a healthy body and repel all negative forces. This is a crucial choice. However, making this choice requires clear thinking and a strong, resolute faith. When faith declines, it is the beginning of loss of energy, loss of enthusiasm, loss of hope and, ultimately, loss of health.

One sure way to up your faith is by regularly reading spiritual literature like Gītā every day. It offers a blueprint for the spiritual as well as physical well-being. Our bodily health is largely

determined by what we habitually think and hope for. Pull yourself up, physically, mentally, and spiritually, by filling your mind with resolute faith and hope. As you hope and have faith in God, you will have health in your countenance, because you will have health of body, mind and spirit.

For thousands of years, Vedic Scriptures have taught that faith is an important path to a good, healthy life. Leading medical men are now speaking of the health producing "Faith Factor". It is amazing how good health may be promoted through a combination of strong mind, positive attitudes, in-depth faith in oneself and God, and affirmation of power of hope and courage. To access this valuable source of energy, the Vedas have provided us a simple, drug-free approach to good health. It is in the form of a prayer which is very potent for good health of mind and body. Reciting it at least once a day will have lasting beneficial ripples on our health and everyday living.



NEVER QUIT DREAMING

One day you will see that it all has finally come together. What you have always wished for has finally come to be. You will look back and laugh at what has passed and you will ask yourself, "How did I get through all of that?" Just never let go of hope. Just never quit dreaming. And never let love to depart from your life.

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JANMASHTAMI STORY OF KRISHNA BIRTH

Sri Sadhguru

Krishna as a man, the mission that he took up in his life, the frailty of being a human being living such an active life and at the same time, the divine element — all these aspects form a complex web. It is not right to see him just as this or that. He would come out as a totally distorted figure if you were looking at just one aspect of his life. He is so multi-dimensional that unless you at least touch a little bit of all of him, it would be total injustice to him.

THE PLACE WHERE KRISHNA WAS BORN

Geographically, his birth took place in Mathura, in the present state of Uttar Pradesh. There was a prominent chief of the Yadava community named Ugrasena. Ugrasena was becoming old and his very ambitious son, Kamsa, who had no qualms about how to become powerful, could not wait for his father to die. He imprisoned his own father and took over leadership. He also aligned himself with an absolutely ruthless emperor from the East whose name was Jarasandha. Jarasandha's dream was to conquer the whole known world. Through absolute brutal force, his power was growing at great pace. Kamsa aligned with him because that was the only way to get powerful at that time.

WHY KAMSA WANTED TO KILL KRISHNA

Kamsa's sister Devaki married Vasudeva, another Yadava chief. Immediately after the wedding, when Kamsa himself was driving the newlywed couple in his chariot, an astral voice made a prophecy. A heavenly voice sounded a warning, "Oh Kamsa, very happily you are driving your sister after her wedding. The eighth child born to this sister of yours will slay you. That will be your end."

Immediately, Kamsa became violent. "Oh, her eighth child is going to come and kill me? I am going to kill her right now. Let's see how she will have her eighth child." He took out his sword and right there, wanted to behead his own sister. Vasudeva the groom, begged of Kamsa, "Please spare her life. How can you do this? She is your sister and we are just married. How can you just slaughter her right here?" "Her eighth child is going to kill me. I am not going to let anything like that happen." So, Vasudeva offered a pact, "I will give all our newborn children to you. You can kill them. But please spare my wife right now."

But Kamsa, overly concerned about his life and security, kept his sister and his brother-in-law under a kind of house imprisonment so that they were constantly watched. The first child was born, and the guards informed Kamsa. When he came, Devaki and Vasudeva wept and begged, "It is only the eighth child which is going to kill you. Spare this one." Kamsa said, "I don't want to take any

chances." He picked up the child, held him by the legs and smashed him on a rock. This continued. Every time a child was born, the parents begged Kamsa in many ways, but he won't spare even one. Six new-born children were slaughtered like this.

VASUDEVA TAKING BABY KRISHNA TO GOKUL

When the eighth child was due, Kamsa became nervous. All these days, they had been under house arrest, but now he shackled Vasudeva and put Devaki in a proper prison. The child was born on the eighth day in the dark half of the month, and it was pouring rain and thunder. Kamsa would not allow anybody to enter the prison because something may happen. He put his trusted aide, a lady who was related to him whose name was Puthana, as a midwife. She was supposed to watch. The plan was that the moment the child is born, she would hand it over to Kamsa who would kill the child.

The labor pains came and went, came and went. Puthana waited and waited. It didn't happen. During the night, she went out to visit her home for a few minutes and came back. But when she arrived at her home, suddenly a very heavy rain set in, and the streets were flooded. In this situation, Puthana was unable to go back to the prison.

That was when the child was born, and a miracle happened. The doors of the prison opened by themselves – all the guards fell asleep – the shackles broke. Immediately,

Vasudeva saw that this was a divine intervention. He picked up the child and as if by intuitive guidance, he walked to the river Yamuna. Though the whole place was flooding, he found to his surprise that the ford which crossed the river was sticking out and he could clearly walk. He walked across and went to the house of Nanda and his wife Yashodha. Yashodha had just delivered a girl child. She had had a difficult labor and was unconscious. Vasudeva replaced the girl child with Krishna, took the girl child and came back to the prison.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YASHODA'S DAUGHTER

Vasudeva returned to prison. Then the girl child cried. The guards were woken up by the sound and went to report to Kamsa that a child had been born. By then, Puthana had returned too. Kamsa came and saw that it was a girl.

He knew something fishy had happened, so he asked Puthana, "Are you sure? Were you here when the child was born?" Puthana, fearing for her life said, "I was here. I saw it with my own eyes. This child was born to Devaki." To add authenticity, she said, "This child was born right here in front of my eyes." Devaki and Vasudeva begged, "See, it is just a girl. This girl cannot kill you. If it was a boy, he would have been your slayer. But this is a girl. Spare this girl." But Kamsa said, "No, I don't want to take any chances." So once again, he picked up the child by her legs and wanted to crush her on the floor. As he was about to do this, the child slipped

out of his hands and flew out the window. The child laughed at him and said, "Your slayer is elsewhere."

Now Kamsa became very suspicious. He interrogated everyone who was there. The guards had been sleeping, Puthana had gone out. Nobody was willing to admit anything because all of them valued their heads. When you manage or rule over people using threats and fear, initially you think of it as an advantage. "If you don't do this, you're dead" - so things will happen the way you want them. But after some time, this becomes a big problem. People know that if something doesn't happen the

way you want it, it will cost them their lives. So, instead, they lie to you instead of telling you the truth. When you rule by fear, this is the consequence that you will have to face.

Meanwhile, Krishna was placed into the community of Gokula. Despite being the son of a chief, he grew up in an ordinary cow-herding community. There are any number of miracles and adventures that happened around him during that phase of his life.

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Courtesy: www.isah.sadhguru.org

WHEN HELP ARRIVES - ACCEPT IT WITH GRATITUDE

One day a lady hurried to the pharmacy to pick up the medication for her sick husband. When she got back to the car, she found that her keys were locked inside. The woman found an old rusty coat hanger on the ground. She looked at it and said, "I don't know how to use this." She went back to the pharmacy to get help, but the store was closed.

She bowed her head and prayed to God to send her some help. Within five minutes, a motorcycle, driven by a bearded man wearing an old biker skullrag, pulled up.

He got off his cycle and asked the woman if he could help her. She said, "Yes, my husband is sick and I've locked my keys

in my car. I must get home soon. Please, can you use this hanger to unlock my car?" He said, "Sure!" He walked over to the car, and, in less than a minute, the car was open.

She hugged the man and, through tears, said, "Thank you, God, for sending me a very nice man."

The man heard her little prayer and replied, "Lady, I am not a nice man. 1 just got out of prison yesterday; I was in prison for car theft."

The woman hugged the man again, and said: "Oh, thank you, God! You even sent me a professional!"

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DĀŚARĀJÑA YUDDHA - BATTLE OF THE TEN KINGS

Dr. Omesh Chopra

Most Indians have heard bed-time stories from two ancient Indian epics, Valmiki's Ramayana and Ved Vyāsa's, The Mahabharata. They are familiar with the war between Ayodhya king Rāma against Lanka king Ravana during the Ramayana period (≈1800-1900 BCE), and between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas during the period (1400-1500 BCE). Mahabharata However, most of these people have not heard about the battle known as the Daśarājña Yuddha or Battle of the 10 kings, that took place earlier during the Vedicperiod and is described in the Rg Veda. The battle was between a Vedic tribe of Trtsu-Bharatas and a confederation of ten Vedic and non-Vedic tribes.

During the Vedic period, to encourage peaceful and harmonious existence, yajñas were performed to (a) worship of deities (deva-pujana), (b) unity (sangati karana), and (c) charity (daana). During a yajña, oblations (Ahuti) were poured into a consecrated fire. Everything offered to the divine fire was believed to reach the Devas. The Rg Veda considers that Bhrgu Rsi Atharvan and his son Dadhīci were the founders of the ritual of yajña. F.E. Pargiter considers Dadhīci the founder of yajña. His descendant Cyavana Rsi performed the first Aśvamedha yajña. The oblations offered in a yajña included purified ghee, milk, grains, cakes, meat, and Soma. The fermented juice of the Soma plant was mixed with clarified

butter and used in rituals. Rg Veda describes the fire ritual (Agnihotra Yajña) and offering of Soma* to the gods (Soma Yajña). The hymns of the Rg-Veda were recited by the Hotr, the presiding priest. The formulas from the Yajur Veda were recited by the Adhvaryu, the officiating priest. The formulas contained in the Sama Veda were sung by the Udgātr, the priest that chants. Note that both Vedic and Zoroastrian people are fire worshippers. In their traditions, Atharvan Rṣis were considered as fire keepers. The role of Atharvan was taken by the Magi in Zoroastrian beliefs

However, belief in bhakti (devotion) towards a chosen deity such as Śakti (Devī) and Siva, was also being practiced by some non-Vedic cultures during the Pre-Vedic and Vedic periods. Dadhīci Ŗṣi was a great devotee of Śiva. He traveled through South India to preach Śaivism. Sati the daughter of Daksa and the wife of Lord Siva, had heard about Śiva from Dadhīci. The abundance of bulls on Harappan seals, suggests a connection between the bull and Harappan God. Nandi, the bull, is Śiva's vahana (vehicle). Nandi signifies strength, and virility, and the bearer of truth and righteousness. A few Vedic hymns suggest some antagonism of the Vedic Āryans towards the followers of Proto-Śiva, e.g., Śivas and Visasins (horned headdress wearers), Śiśnadevas (phallus worshipers),

^{*} Soma plant has been identified as Ephedra, the original species of Soma would be Ephedra sinica, the Chinese plant.

and Yatis (ascetics). Also, note that genetic studies indicate that before 2000 BCE, the entire population of India, both north and south, belonged to the Dravidian race. People with fair complexion entered India after 2000 BCE.

The 1^{st} and the 10^{th} Mandalas ("books") of the Rg Veda form the latest part of the Rg Veda, most likely, they were composed during the late Vedic period (1000-500 BCE). The rsies who have authored the Mandalas 2-8 are: Mandala 2, Grtsamada Śaunahotra; Mandala 3, Viśvāmitra; Mandala 4, Vāmadeva Gautama; Mandala 5, the Atri clan; Mandala 6, Brhaspati family of Angirasa (Bharadvāja); and Mandala 7, Vasistha Maitrāvaruņi. In Maņdala 8, hymns 1-48 and 60-66, were authored by the clan of Kanva Rsi and the rest by Angirasa rsis. The 9th Mandala, known as the Soma Mandala, is completely dedicated to Sóma Pávamāna, "Purifying Soma," the holy elixir of the Vedic faith. dedicated to soma. It is focused on a moment in the ritual when the soma is pressed, strained, mixed with water and milk, and poured into containers. Drinking soma produces immortality.

ápāma sómam amítā abhūma, áganma jyótir ávidāma deván kíṃ nūnám asmán kṛṇavad árātiḥ, kím u dhūrtír amṛta mártiyasya

We have drunk the soma; we have become immortal; we have gone to the light; we have found the gods. What can hostility do to us now, and what the malice of a mortal, o immortal one?

Next, lets establish the location and chronological order of the various tribes mentioned in the Rg Veda. They were living along the central Sarasvatī River valley

around Haryana and Northeast Rajasthan. Since Sarasvatī River dried up during the 300-yr drought ≈2300-2000 BCE, the Daśarājña Yuddha must have happened before 2300 BCE. Also, the Rg Veda mentions Indra's thunderbolt, i.e., a strong metal. Since Trtsu-Bharatas were settled around Khetri, Rajasthan, the major source of copper, Indra's thunderbolt must have been a copper alloy, e.g., brass. It was not bronze because tin ore is not available in northwest India. Thus, Vedic people must have lived after 3200 BCE. Daśarājña probably took place during the peak Vedic period ≈2500 BCE. In addition, since the custom of Aśvamedha yajña was practiced during the Vedic period and "aśvacontaining" names were used during the Vedic period, horses must have been domesticated before 2500 BCE. Probably by the Nishada tribe. Remains of a horse have been found in Lothal (\$2200 BCE) and at Kalibangan, Surkotada (≈2200-1800 BCE). Also, several metals e.g., gold, silver, tin, copper, lead and iron, and their alloys were being produced during religious rituals in hāvankunda by brāhmins. These people were known as Lohāvids or Dhatuvids and may be considered as ancient Indian metallurgists.

A map of Northwest India and a king-list of some of the royal dynasties and families of rsis that existed during the peak Vedic period are shown in figures below. Most of the names listed in these figures are mentioned in the Rg Veda. Particularly in Maṇḍalas 3 by Viśvāmitra and 7 by Vasiṣṭha. In Maṇḍala 7, Vasiṣṭha commemorates the supremacy of Bharata people in the entire Sapta-Sindhu region, from Afghanistan to Haryana State. Furthermore, Maṇḍala 7,

sūktas (hymns) 18, 33 and 83 provide some historical account of the Daśarājña (the Battle of the 10 Kings), which is believed to be a pivotal event in ancient Indian history. Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are well known in later Puranic literature, especially for their mutual antagonism towards each other



Fig. 1 Various kingdoms and tribes during the peak Vedic Period (≈2500 BCE).

Before the 300-yr drought ≈2300 BCE, the northwest region of India was very fertile. Several rivers are mentioned in the Nadistuti hymn (X 75.5 and 6) of Rg-Veda:

Favor ye this my laud, O Gaṅgā, Yamunā, O Śutudrī, Paruṣṇī and Sarasvatī with Asikni, Vitastā, O Marudvrdha,

O Arjikiya, with Suṣomā hear my call. First with Trstama thou art eager to flow forth, with Rasa, and Susartu, and with Śvetyā here With Kubhā; and with these Sindhu and Mehatnu, thou seekest in thy course Krumu and Gomati.

The rivers mention in the Rg Veda starting from Ganga in the east and going towards the west in sequence are Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Śutudrī (Sutlej), Paruṣṇī (Irāvatī or Rāvi), Asikni (Chandrabhaga or Chenab),

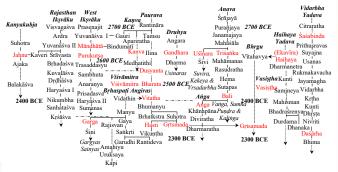


Fig. 2 The lineage of various dynasties and families of rsis during the peak Vedic Period.

Vitastā (Jhelum), Sindhu (Indus), and Kubhā and Śvetyā (Kabul/Kunar). The river names in parentheses are the present names.

Other rivers include Marudvrdhā (Maruwardhwan), Ārjīkīya and Susomā (Haro and Sohan), Tṛṣṭāmā, Susartu, and Rasa (Gilgit, Ghorband, Panjshir), Krumu (Kurum), Gomati (Gomal), and Mehantu (Tochi or Kaitu). Sarasvatī River is called Naditame, Ambitame, and Devitame, the best of rivers, mothers, and goddesses. This supports the view that Vedic people lived along the Sarasvatī River valley.

TRTSU-BHARATA

According to the Vedic-Puranic literature, the Tṛtsu-Bharata as well as Magadha, Kaurava-Pāṇḍava, and Uttar and Dakṣiṇa Pañchāla dynasties evolved from Ajamīḍha. In most Purāṇas, Ajamīḍha and his brothers Dvimīḍha, and Purumīḍha, are considered the sons of Paurava king Hasti, a descendant of Bhūmanyu (see Figure). Thus, they are considered the descendant of Bharata the son of Paurava king Duṣyanta and wife Śakuntalā. This view is inconsistent with Puranic literature. According to several Purāṇic legends, Ajamīḍha lived several centuries before

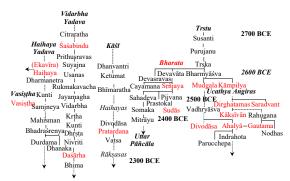


Fig. 3 The lineage of various dynasties and families of rsis during the peak Vedic Period.

Hasti. Also, the above scenario means the Daśarājña Yuddha took place after Sarasvatī River had dried up.

The proponents of above view, explain this by assuming that Helmand River in Afghanistan was the Rg Vedic Sarasvatī, and Tṛtsu-Bharatas were the Āryans who were moving east towards the Sarasvatī-Sindhu valley. After entering India, they settle in West Punjab region ≈1700-1500 BCE, they named the Sapta-Sindhu rivers after the original Sarasvatī River and its tributaries. Furthermore, they named their newfound land "Bhārata," after the son of Dusyanta and Sakuntalā. However, Bhāgavata Purāṇa states that India's name "Bhārata." originated from Bharata, a descendent of Svāyaṃbhuva Manu's son Priyavrata. Agni Purana considers Ajamidha, Dvimidha, and Purumīdha the sons of Brhatputra, of the Niṣāda tribe. Most likely, Bṛhatputra was a descendant of Bharata the son of Rsabha. Several scholars consider India was named after this Bharata. Also, the information in the Rg Veda clearly indicates that the Bharatas are moving towards the west during the Daśarājña Yuddha and not east.

Ajamīḍha's son Rkṣa and grandson Samvarna ruled over the region between Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī Rivers, it was known as Uttarvedi. The Trtsu-Bharatas evolved from Nīla, they occupied the region between Drsadvatī and Gangā. Brhadisu's kingdom was located east of the nation of Rksa. Note that before 2000 BCE, Sutlej and Yamunā Rivers were tributaries of Sarasvatī River. During Samvarna's rule, there was a severe drought. Also, Pañchāla king invaded Samvarna's kingdom. Samvarna had to flee with his family and ministers. established a colony along the Sapta-Sindhu valley. They lived there until the people of the Uttarvedi succeeded in driving out the invaders. By then, Samvarna had passed away. They requested Samvarna's successor to return to his kingdom. Samvarna's successor had married Tapati; their son was the pious king Kuru. After returning to Uttarvedi, Kuru cleared the region between Sarasvatī and Drsadvatī to establish his new kingdom (≈2700 BCE).

Later, Uttarvedi was named Kuru-jungle. Kuru believed that Sarasvatī River personified the eight virtues of spirituality: truth (satya), kindness (daya), purity (Śuddha), forgiveness (kṣamā), charity (dāna), ritual sacrifice (yajña), celibacy unmarried (brahmacharya), austerity (tapa). He performed tapa for which the region was declared as a Holy land. It was named Kuruksetra (land of Kuru). It is also called Brahmavedi and Dharam-Ksetra. Kuru's capital was at Asandīvat (Assandh) in Haryana around Karnal and Jind. Rg-Veda hymn VI 61.1 says that Vadhryaśva (castrated worshipped Sarasvatī, and she gave him Divodasa (canceller of debts). Indra helped Divodasa destroy 9 and 90 forts of the Dasyu Sambara and killed him. Divodāsa also vanguished Turvaśa and Yadu.

Flow onward, Indu, with this food for him who is thy wild delight, battered the nine and ninety down, Smote swiftly forts, and Śambara, then Yadu and that Turvaśa, for pious Divodāsa's sake.

Divodāsa defeated Dāsa chiefs Susna, Pipru, and Varcin, and Śambara, and other tribes such as Paṇis, Parvatas, and Vṛṣayas. He was guided by Bharadvāja Ḥṣi (RV VII 33.3).

So, verily, he crossed the river, in company with these, he slaughtered Bheda.

So, in the fight with the ten kings, Vasiṣṭhas! Did Indra help Sudās through your devotion.

In the Rg Veda, Gautama Rsi mentions Kaksīvān, and Kaksīvān mentions Vāmadeva, Nodhas and their father/ancestor Gotama (probably Dīrghatamas) Rṣi. They must have lived before Kaksīvān Rsi. Trtsus are described as white-robed people with braided hair. The attire of Trtsus represents priestly garments, most Rg Vedic Rsis belonged to the Trtsu-Bharata tribe. Divodāsa's sister Ahalyā, married Gautama Rsi, the son of Rahūgaņa. In RV VII 33.1, Vasistha states:

These who wear hair-knots on the right, the movers of holy thought, white robed, have won me over, I warned the men, when from the grass I raised me, not from afar can my Vasiṣṭhas help me.

The various headdresses, ornaments, and hairstyles depicted in the Harappan figurines suggest that the Sarasvatī-Sindhu valley civilization consisted of

diverse groups of people. The diversity was probably due to differences in their associations with other cultures from outside that region. The neighboring included Ahar-Banas cultures Ganeshwar towards the southeast in Rajasthan, Malwa towards the south in Madhya Pradesh, Gangā-Yamunā doab of Uttar Pradesh, North in Kāśmīra, and Helmand towards the west. These cultures consisted of settled farming communities and/or settled pastoral groups. Also, before 2000 BCE, genetically, the entire population of the Indian subcontinent, both North and South India, was Dravidian. According to genetic studies, the fair complexion Indo-Aryans from the Central Asian Steppe entered India after 2000 BCE.

Also, note that many renowned western scholars of Indian history had never visited India. For example, famous German philologist and orientalist Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900 CE), who popularized the Aryan Invasion theory of India, never visited India. He did all his work in England. These scholars have taken two Rg Veda hymns V 29.10 & VII 5.3, to support the now debunked Aryan invasion theory. They considered Vedic people were "Aryan." In these hymns, the Dasa and Dasyu tribes are called snub-nose (anas), dark-hued race (krsnatvac) or hostile speech (mrdhravac), which they believed referred to Dravidians, as opposed to the fair-skinned Aryan. However, genetic studies have shown that before 2000 BCE, the entire population of India, north and south, was Dravidian. The term melechcha,

refers to a person with unintelligible speech, a foreigner or a barbarian. In these hymns, Dāsas and Dasyus represent the melechcha tribe, i.e., non-Vedic.

DĀŚARĀJÑA YUDDHA

Daśarājña Yuddha took place during the peak Vedic Period (≈2500 BCE) along the banks of Paruṣṇī or Irāvatī (Rāvi) River. The battle is described in Rg Veda hymns VII 18, 33, 83.4-8. According to some scholars the location of the battle became the city of Harappa, while others believe it took place up the river from Harappa (see Figure). The battle was between Trtsu-Bharata king Sudās and confederation of 10 tribes which included 5 Vedic tribes (Druhyus, Turvaśas, Ānavas, Pauravas and Yādavas or Matsya), and 5 non-Vedic tribes (Pakthas, Bhalānas, Alinas, Śivas, and Viṣāṇins). Bhṛgus were allies of Yādavas.

Anavas lived along Paruṣṇī River and Druhyus were in Gandhara. Turvasas and Yadus are mentioned together, they were settled in the west. Later Turvasas and some Yadavas migrated further west to the "mlechchâ" country. The Sanskrit word "mlechchâ," means a stranger of illpronounced speech and is applied to foreigners or barbarians. Some Yadavas moved southeast and settled in northeast Rajasthan. They represent the Matsya tribe. Pauravas occupied the region between Sarasvatī and Gangā Rivers. Pakthas are the Pathans. Bhalānas represent the people near Bolan Pass in Baluchistan. Alinas stand for later-day Sarmatians in northeast of Kafiristan. Viṣāṇins got their name because of their horned headdress. The Śivas are the Sibois, they were settled in a region around Baluchistan, Sindh and Jhang. Later they migrated to Rajasthan and settled near Chittor. Rg-Veda also mentions Paṇis and Parvatas. The Paṇi were trading with the kingdoms of Sumer, Akkad, Susa, and Lagash in Mesopotamia. Parvatas were settled near river Yamunā River.

The Vedic people had a well-established hierarchy among their leaders, samrāţa (Sovereign), rājāna (king), and rājaka (chieftain). Only Abhyāvartin Cāyamāna (RV VI 27.5) was a samrāţa, the rest were rājānas. Sudās is called rājāna because he had inherited a large kingdom and expanded it further. But he alienated the rulers he subjugated. These aggrieved rulers formed a coalition of 10 rājakas to fight against Sudās. Initially, Viśvāmitra advised Sudās and led him against his enemies on the Vipāś (Beas) and Śutudrī (Sutlej) Rivers (RV III 33, 53). Later, Sudās appointed Vasistha as his priest and he guided him to victory during the Daśarājña Yuddha against confederacy of 10 kings. The war lasted several years. Eventually, Sudas defeat the entire alliance. The river seemed to have played an important part in the outcome of the war.

A Vedic-period army included kṣatriya military leaders equipped with bows/arrows and covered with leather body armor, riding horse-drawn chariot. The main ground force consisted of infantry units recruited from the same

village or tribe. The infantry was equipped with bows/arrows, spears, swords, and axes. The infantry played a secondary role in a battle but was important for siege warfare. The confederate army was deployed on the right bank of Paruṣṇī River and planned to attack Sudas by crossing the river. Most scholars believe that they had constructed dykes and dug channels to divert the river. something went wrong, the water flowed back to the natural bed and flooded the right bank causing confusion among the confederate army. Taking advantage of the situation Sudās crossed the river and attacked the confederacy forces. Abhyāvartin's brother Kavi Cāyamāna and Turvaśa king Purodās were killed by drowning. Vasistha and his family are glorified in Hymns RV VII 33.2-7. According to Rg Veda, Sudās defeated the enemy with Indra's help who drowned the opposing army. Later, Vasistha helped Sudās in the battle against the Dāsas on Yamunā River (RV VII 18, 33, 83). In that battle, Sudās killed Bheda who led 3 tribes, the Ajas, Sigrus, and Yaksus.

However, some scholars believe that Daśarājña was not a battle, it involved some dispute regarding control and distribution of irrigation water. According

to these scholars, various Vedic and non-Vedic tribes were building a dam across Paruṣṇī River, something went wrong, and most of the Dasarajña people drowned. Sudās took advantage of the situation and took control of the entire region from Parusnī River to Helmand River.

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About the author: Dr. Omesh Chopra, a Mechanical and Nuclear engineer, worked at Argonne National Lab, Chicago, IL. After his retirement, he authored a book entitled "History of Ancient India Revisited. A Vedic-Puranic View" Blue Rose Publishers, India. (ISBN: 978-93-5347-780.6)

Difficulties and hurdles strengthen the mind, as labor and exercise do the body!

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THE BLIND MAN CARRYING A LAMP

Rituals are a part and parcel of the Indian culture. But most of the time these rituals are followed without any understanding, and followed because someone told us to do so. The following story describes the danger of following rituals without knowing their true purpose.

A blind man stayed with his friend for a few days, and then started for his hometown in the night. His friend gave him a lit lantern, but the man protested, "Why do I need a lantern? Everything is the same for me. For someone who is blind, what is the use of carrying a lamp?"

"My dear friend, this is not for you; this is for the person who comes in front of you. If you have this lamp in your hand, the person who comes in front of you will not bump into you."

"In that case, I will take it," the blind man said.

He took the lamp and started walking in the dark. In spite of that, someone collided into him head-on down the road. The blind man lost his balance and fell down. He got angry and asked, "Why did you bump into me? I had a lamp with mecan't you watch where you're going?"

"What lamp? I don't see anything," said the man who bumped into him and looked around.

Then he found the lamp and said, "Oh yes! There is a lamp here, but the flame had gone out long ago, my dear friend.

The man held the lamp in his hands for the light it gave. Holding it high and walking even after the flame died out is just a meaningless ritual. Many things that we started in our life with a purpose have lost their original quality and are continuing as mere rituals.

There is a certain tradition in Karnataka. If non-vegetarian food is served to a guest at someone's home, they will keep a pestle next to the leaf on which food is served. Many people were asked about the reason for this, but they did not know. After asking several elderly people who were well-versed in the culture, the answer was found out.

Earlier, the tradition was to keep a small stick next to the leaf as a toothpick, in case the person got something stuck between his teeth. As time went by, they replaced the tiny toothpick with a stick and then some fool started putting a pestle instead of a stick. Later, this became the standard practice without anyone asking for an explanation. Can anyone use a pestle as a toothpick?

This is how we create certain processes to benefit our lives. But when we forget why these processes were fundamentally created and start following things simply because our grandfathers and fathers did it, it becomes a mere ritual. Because we do not understand why something was done in our tradition generation after generation, we are confused about whether it is needed for our life or not.

Like a blind man carrying a lamp, certain tools and traditions that were created to guide us in our lives to move in the right direction have become superstitions. It is high time we understood their true

purpose and made them into lamps to guide us in our lives. Otherwise, we should at least create new tools which guide us.

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Courtesy: www.isha.sadhguru.org

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Once upon a time a little candle stood in a room filled with other candles, most of them much larger and much more beautiful than she was. Some were ornate and some were rather simple, like herself. Some were white, some were blue, some were pink, and some were green.

She had no idea why she was there, and the other candles made her feel rather small and insignificant. When the sun went down and the room began to get dark, she noticed a large man walking toward her with a ball of fire on a stick. She suddenly realized that the man was going to set her on fire. "No, no!!" she cried, "Aaaaagghhh! Don't burn me, please!" But she knew that she could not be heard and prepared for the pain that would surely follow.

To her surprise, the room filled with light. She wondered where it came from since the man had extinguished his fire stick. To her delight, she realized that the light came from herself. Then the man

struck another fire stick and, one by one, lit the other candles in the room.

Each one gave out the same light that she did. During the next few hours, she noticed that, slowly, her wax began to flow. She became aware that she would soon die.

With this realization came a sense of why she had been created. "Perhaps my purpose on earth is to give out light until I die," she mused. And that's exactly what she did.

Moral: God created you and I to produce light in a dark world. Like that little candle, we all can produce some light, no matter how small we are or what color we might be. But we can produce light only when we receive it from an outside source. That outside source is God, the light of the world.

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When you meet someone better than yourself, turn your thoughts to learn from him and becoming his equal. When you meet someone and you think he is not as good as you are, look within and examine your own self.

HINDU CALENDAR 2024 (VIKRAM SAMVAT 2081)

	-	ULY n – Shravan)			UGUST ı - Bhadarpad)			PTEMBER ipad – Ashwin)
01	MON	Yogini Ekadashi	01`	THU	Pradosh	02	MON	Amavasya
02	TUE	Pradosh	03	SAT	Amavasya	07	SAT	Shri Ganesh
05	FRI	Amavasya	07	WED	Hariyali Teej			Chaturthi
15	MON	Karka Ekadashi	15	THU	Putrada Ekadashi	14	SAT	Parsva Ekadashi
17	WED	Devshayani	15	THU	Indian	15	SUN	Pradosh
		Ekadashi			Independence Day	16	MON	Kanya Sankranti
18	THU	Pradosh	17	SAT	Pradosh	17	TUE	Purnima
21	SUN	Guru Vyasa	19	MON	Purnima	18	WED	Sharadh Begins
		Purnima			Raksha Bandhan`	27	FRI	Indira Ekadashi
31	WED	Kamika Ekadashi	26	MON	Shri Krishna Janmashtami	29	SUN	Pradosh
			29	THU	Aja Ekadashi			
		30	FRI	Pradosh			धर्मी रक्षति रक्षितः	



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