Gayatri Mahamantra

Lord Krishna says in Bhagavath Gita (Chapter 10 Verse 35)

brhat-sama tatha samnam

gayatri chandasam aham

masanam marga-sirso 'ham

rtunam kusumakarah

Amongst the hymns in the Sāma Veda know me to be the Brihatsama; amongst poetic meters I am the GAYATRI. Of the twelve months of the Hindu calendar I am Margsheersh, and of seasons I am spring, which brings forth flowers.

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Gayatri Mahamantra

Om Bhurbhuva: sva: |
tatsaviturvarenyam |
bhargo devasya dheemahi |
dhiyo yo na: prachodayAt |

Sloka meaning:
Om. We meditate on the glory of the effulgent Sun Lord who enlightens our intellect.

On the first sight, it seems to be a prayer for knowledge. But what does it have in its structure or meaning to qualify for the status of a ‘maha mantra’? Who is Gayatri Mata? What symbology does Gayatri represent? We will see in the next few days..

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Gayatri Mantra's structure is of five parts:

1. Om
2. bhur bhuva: sva;
3. tat savitur varenyam
4. bhargo devasya dheemahi
5. dhiyo yo na: prachodayAt

1. It starts with Om – the primordial sound of the universe. There is a declaration that the Trimurthis of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are within the Gayatri and Gayatri is within the primordial sound of ‘Om’. In short, Om contains everything. It is the seed of creation.

2. bhur bhuva: sva: - The three worlds, also called vyahritis. Bhur loka is the gross earth. sva loka is the very heaven. The bhuva loka is the intermediate space also called as antariksha. Our Upanishads declare that these worlds are in fact the gross, subtle and causal worlds - Stoola, Sookshma and kArana.

3. tat savitur varenyam- (the adorable Sun Lord) this is in praise of the Lord. ‘Praise’ is the essence of the Rig Veda.

Contd..2
4. bhargo devasya dheemahi- (we meditate on the Lord’s effulgence) ‘Meditate’ is the essence of Yajur Veda.

5. dhiyo yo na: prachodayAt- (who enlightens our intellects)- this is the ‘prayer’ part and is the essence of Sama Veda.

Gayatri Mantra is a 24-syllable hymn providing spiritual and material well-being to the chanter.

More to come...

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The Gayatri Mantra is a 24-syllable hymn, and is a confluence of 24 Beej Aksharas which has an enormous positive effect on the person who chants. The mantra is intended to give the following qualities.

1. 'tat' - tapini - fruitfulness
2. 'sa' - saphalata - valor
3. 'vi' - visshwa - perseverance
4. 'tur' - tushti - welfare
5. 'va' - varada - yoga
6. 're' - revati - love
7. 'ni' - sukshma - wealth
8. 'yam' - jnana - lustre
9. 'bhar' - bharga - protection
10. 'go' - gomati - wisdom
11. 'de' - devika - subjugation
12. 'va' - varahi - allegiance
13. 'sya' - simhani - determination
14. 'dhi' - dhyana - life
15. 'ma' - maryada – time

Contd..2
16 'hi' - sphutaa – penance
17 'dhi' - medha - forecast
18 'yo' - yogamaya - alertness
19 'yo' - yogini - production
20 'nah' - dhanin - protection
21 'pra' - prabhava - idealism
22 'cho' - ushma - adventure
23 'da' - drishya - discrimination
24 'yat' - niranjana - service.

The 24 powers of Gayatri mentioned above awaken certain qualities, and along with this awakening, one starts getting success and prosperity.

If one is able to realize the subtle force working in him/her, he/she will realize that such benefits do not accrue of their own accord, but is a result of their individual spiritual practices-eg : praying in temples, performing rituals, chanting shlokas/mantras like Gayatri mantra, Sri Rudram etc..

Gayatri sadhana or upasana is no more a blind faith, but is a scientific process.

More to come...

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GAYATRI MATHA
Gayatri Dhyana shloka given below is in ‘Sarada Tilakam’, describing Gayatri Matha..
“ muktA vidruma hema neela davalachhAyai, mukhais tree kshanai, yuktAm indu kalA nibaddha makutAm, tatvArtha varnAtmikam, gAyatri vardAbhayAngusa kasAs, subram kapAlam ,gadAm, sankam chakram atharavinda yugalam, hastair vahanteem bhaje"
Meaning:
I sing in praise of Gayatri who has five faces of the colours of pearl, sapphire, gold, blue and white, who has three eyes, who has the crescent moon in Her crown, who is of the form of the (twenty four) letters describing the tattva, who shows Varada and Abhaya mudra in two hands, and holds the Ankush, Whip, the white Skull, the Gada, the conch, the chakra and the Lotus ( in the other eight hands).

Contd..2
Symbolism of Gayatri Matha:

1. The five faces of Gayatri- represents the five vital currents (Praana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samaana)
   Also represented as -
   Dhavala = Aapaha (Water)
   Neela = Black (Earth)
   Vidruma = Tejus (Fire)
   Hema = Vaayu (Wind)
   Mukta = Ether (Sky).

2. The crescent moon on the crown, the three eyes, and the skull are symbolic of Shiva- the destroyer.

3. The conch, chakra, gadha, the abhaya mudra denote Vishnu the protector.

4. The Lotus seat is symbolic of Brahma- the creator.

5. The whip, and ankush symbolize Kali, the Sakthi.

In short, Gayatri is symbolized as "Sarva devata swarupa".

The above will show how this symbolism arrives at the statement that “Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are within Gayatri Matha”.

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Who can chant Gayatri? When it can be chanted and how many times?

Gayatri is an universal symbol and is for every human being. It is the duty of every HINDU to keep the divine tradition of Gayatri Japa alive, which is the gateway to the highest spiritual heights. Gayatri is best chanted with pranayama in the morning during sunrise (at dawn), mid-day and in the evening during sunset (at dusk). These times are known as the three sandhyas.

The maximum benefit of chanting the mantra is said to be obtained by chanting it 108 times. However, one may chant it for 3, 9, or 18 times when pressed for time.

What does one gain by chanting Gayatri?

Gayatri, if chanted knowing the meaning and with correct pronunciation, can take the Sadhak (person chanting) on a trajectory of spiritual growth away from the self defeating materialistic tendencies. It is always suggested to take a diksha from a Guru for such a holy undertaking.

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