

# Sri Sathya Sai Global Council – Canada

## Sri Sathya Sai Vedic Yajna

April 28-30, 2023

### Message of the Vedas

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has explained that life is a journey whereby the *One* separates from oneself, in order to experience oneself. Along the journey, *Love* is exchanged and experienced in a variety of ways and then ultimately, the final destination is reached, with our awareness returning to our original, *One*, un-separated Self.

Veda literally means “knowledge”. Sages in deep meditative states “tuned in” and “heard” these mantras and then passed them on meticulously for the benefit of mankind. The Vedic mantras are meant to be utilized to facilitate making the most of this journey of the soul, from the beginning where we experience the universe, its wonder, the apparent good and the apparent bad; where we learn how to interface with and harness the power of the universe for our enjoyment, to finally, where we are led to the end of the journey, which is the final realization that we are none other than the Atma, which is none other than the Paramatma.

*God is present everywhere, God is omnipresent. Therefore, Vedas, which simply constitute the Breath of God, are also omnipresent, i.e. they are everywhere. The sounds of Vedas, the essence of Vedas, the fragrance of Vedas are indeed to be found all over the world.” (Summer Showers, Brindavan 1972, Chapter 2)*

Sages from all over the planet have "tuned in" to the Vedic mantras:

*“All founders of religions have heard this impersonal Voice of God revealing the Atma that activates the entire Creation. Just as the Vedas (revealed sacred scriptures) were 'heard' and propagated as 'heard' (Shruti), the Quran too was 'heard' by Hazrat Muhammad.” (Divine Discourse, Ramzan, Prashanti Nilayam, July 12, 1983)*

Ancient India developed a culture based upon their discovery and preservation.

### Relevance

The Vedas can be an important, powerful tool for transformation of the individual, society, and world. They directly address the present days needs for our world - the need for love, sacrifice, reverence for nature, atonement for mistakes, and the transcendence from the grip of negativity.

## Mantra

*"'Man' syllable indicates the process of probing and the syllable 'thra' means 'the capacity to take across, to liberate, to save.' In short, mantra is that which saves when the mind dwells upon it." (Leela Kaivalya Vahini)*

*"The mantra has a divine power which interacts with the human power. When the mantra is chanted with proper intonation, the divine force that is latent in man manifests." SSS Veda Vani p133*

*"They (Vedic mantras) appear mild and terrible, in accordance with the tendencies of the experiencer. But in total effect and in a deeper sense, the mantras are intended to reveal the Atma (spirit) and promote the peace and prosperity of humanity." Leela Vahini p 32*

## Meaning

Each word in Veda will have at least 3 meanings: Adi Bhautika (body), Adi Devika (mind), and Adhyatmika (spirit).

*"If one were to recognize the underlying broader interpretation of the Vedic mantras, there is no scope at all for misconceptions." SSS Veda Vani p 83*

*"Prefer the meaning that elevates and you will always be right." SSS Vo 2, Ch 46*

To be properly understood, the Vedas have to be experienced and not just approached as an abstraction of the mind. They have to be properly chanted to allow the vibrations to penetrate and activate within and without. They have to be viewed through the lens of their core messages of Love, Sacrifice and Oneness:

## Love

*"Love Him, adore Him, worship Him—say the Vedas. This is the grand philosophy of Love as elaborated in the Vedas." SSV p5*

*"Of course, it is good to love and adore God with a view to gain some valuable fruit either here or hereafter. But since there is no fruit or object more valuable than God or more worthwhile than God, the Vedas advise us to love God, with no touch of desire in our minds." SSV p5*

## Sacrifice

*"The Kaivalya Upanishad declares: Not by means of works, not by means of manpower, not by means of wealth, but by renunciation alone can immortality be attained. Na Karmanaa na prajayaa dhane na thyaagena eke amrithathwam-aanasuh." (Sutra Vahini, Chapter1)*

*"Today the foremost need is to develop the spirit of sacrifice. You are not expected to give away all your wealth and possessions. What is required is a sense of compassion at the sight of a suffering being. When the heart melts, that itself becomes sacrifice." (Divine Discourse, October 3, 1989)*

*"When there is Self-confidence and Self-satisfaction, you will be able to do Self-sacrifice, resulting in Self-realisation. Thus, immortality is the result of sacrifice (tyaga). It is for this reason that all the yajnas and other rituals in this country have been intended to symbolise sacrifice." (Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974, Part 1, Chapter 13)*

## Oneness

*"Of the hundred parts in the Vedas, 80 are for Duty (Karma), 16 for Worship (Upasana) and four for Wisdom (Jnana). Wisdom is the final destination in the journey. Duty has to be done in order to educate the impulses and train your feelings. Then you develop the attitude of Worship, of humility before the great Unknown, and finally, you Realize that the only reality is you, which is the same as He." (Divine Discourse November 23, 1964)*

## Ganapathy Homam

A Homam is a ritual ceremony whereby symbolic offerings are placed into a fire (Agni), which is the gateway from the material dimension/plane to the spiritual dimension/plane that exists both within and without - in the individual and in nature - in the microcosm and the macrocosm.

Lord Ganesha represents the supreme intelligence, the Buddhi, that is the illuminated portion of the mind, directly reflecting from the shining Atma within us. Therefore, Ganesha is also referred to as Vinayaka - meaning supreme head. For the successful completion of any tasks, one first needs to remove the obstacles of ignorance, using Buddhi, thus Ganesha is known as Vigneshwara - the remover of obstacles. So, Ganesha is invoked at the beginning of any venture to ensure peace, prosperity and wealth in life.

During the Ganesha homa, various material offerings are placed into the fire, each bringing along with them the spiritual principles and qualities they represent as offerings into deeper planes for both our individual benefit and for the benefit of the entire universe.

Pooja ingredients for Ganesha homa:

- An idol of lord Ganapathi, it is optional and one can simply invoke the god in Agni. Turmeric mixed with water can be shaped to an elongated elliptical shape and can be placed, or a metal coin can also be used.
- Fresh Flowers or fresh flower petals.
- Sandalwood powder, kumkum, turmeric powder.

- Homa samagri that includes darbha grass, camphor, incense, the twigs of a particular tree for burning in homa.
- Other offerings in homa include, sesame seeds, puffed paddy flakes, nuts, honey, ghee, and coconut pieces.
- Few fruits for offering to god.
- Other offerings include modak, laddoo, and other sweets. One can even offer plain sugar.

There are a set of procedures to perform Ganapathy homa that involves:

1. Anujnaa – this involves the set of Mantras that seek the cooperation and permission from Lord Ganesha and other deities to perform the Homam.
2. Aachamanam – The procedure involves purification of the body, mind and soul by sipping of punya theertham (holy water).
3. Vighneswara Pooja – This Pooja is as a request to the lord Ganesha to remove all the obstacles in the devotional activity being initiated.
4. Pranayama and Sankalpam – Steadying the breath and resolve to please Lord Ganapathi.
5. Kalasha Shuddhi – sprinkling of the punya theertham (holy water) on oneself and the surroundings for purification of the vessel.
6. Agni Pratishthapana – lighting of the fire inside the Homa Kunda (fire pit)
7. The Dikpaalaka Pooja and Panchopachaara Pooja also takes place for the Lord. The priest offers the preliminary offerings into the Homa Kunda with the invocation of the God.

## **Sri Sathya Sai Sathya Narayana Vratha Pooja:**

The puranas state that Sage Naradha was distressed at the misery of men in this world and approached Lord Vishnu for a solution. Lord Vishnu said that the Sathyanarayana Vratha ritual, performed to Lord Sathyanarayana, would relieve people of all their troubles.

*"In olden days, it was a common practice among the women of Bharat (India) to perform the sacred ritual of Sathyanarayana Vratam, on every full moon day. Likewise, mother Easwaramma used to perform Sathyanarayana Vratam every full moon day in the company of Karanam Subbamma, who was her neighbour. Karanam Subbamma would often tell Easwaramma, "You are performing Sathyanarayana Vratam. With His blessings, you will bear a son. I want you to name him Sathyanarayana." ( Divine Discourse, 23 November 2003)*

The efficacy of the Sathyanarayana Pooja is brought to light for all with the Divine Incarnation of our Lord Sri Sathya Sai.

The Sri Sathya Sai Sathya Narayana Vratha was first celebrated in Prasanthi Nilayam on the 18 July 2010, with Swami's Blessings. Since, then it has become a regular occurrence in Prasanthi Nilayam.

The opportunity of performing this Pooja with the guidance of Sri Vedanarayanan who has been involved in the observance in Prasanthi Nilayam is a great opportunity for all the devotees to learn this most auspicious ritual of worship, which was instrumental in bringing about the Divine Incarnation of our Lord on earth.

## **Ekadasha Rudra Parayanam & Linga Abhishekam**

In the words of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, "*Rudram is generally understood to be a prayer to Lord Rudra. In fact, it is the essence of all the Vedas, namely, Rig, Yajur, Sama, and Atharvana Vedas.*" (Divine Discourse, 09 August 2006)

The Rudram comprises of two collections of mantras in the rishna Yajur Veda. One is called "Namakam" and the other "Chamaam". Swami explains, "*The Namaka emphasizes the aspect of detachment whereas Chamaka stresses the aspect of desire. But the essence of both aspects is one... that which is evil is to be discarded and all that is good is to be desired.*" (Divine Discourse, 09 August 2006)

In the Namakam, the word namah or namo is repeated 187 times. In the Chamakam the worlds 'cha me' are repeated 338 times. Both Namaam and Chamakam contain 11 anuvakas or sections.

There are 5 ways one can do recitation (parayanam) of the Rudram:

1. **Sri Rudram** - Recitation of the entire Namakam followed by entire Chamakam once
2. **Ekadasha Rudram** - Entire Namakam recited 11 times with each of the anuvaka of chamakam recited progressively at the end of each cycle of Namakam
3. **Laghu-Rudram** - Eleven times Rudra Ekadashini
4. **Maha Rudram** - 11 times Rudri
5. **Ati Rudram** - 11 times Maha Rudra (14,641 Namakams and 1331 Chamakams)

Ekadasha Rudra parayanam along with Lingabhisheka will take place during the Sri Sathya Sai Vedic Yajna.

Linga Abhishekam is a way of offering respect to Shiva; by pouring water or milk over the lingam or the shivalinga. You can also use items like ghee, curd, honey, sandalwood, etc to perform Shiva Abhishek; each of them have their own benefits.

*“The Shivarathri Festival, as celebrated here, is an example for you. You might ask, “Swami has often declared that all days are holy days, that there is no special rite or ritual that has to be observed on any single day; but, Swami Himself is pouting vibhuuthi (holy ash) on the Idol and calling it abhisheka (anointing the idol); is this right?” Swami is doing so, to teach you a lesson.*

*The Vibhuthi Abhisheka has a potent inner meaning which Swami wants you to grasp. The Vibhuthi is the most precious object, in the truly spiritual sense. You know that Shiva burnt the God of Desire or Kama, called Manmatha (for he agitates the mind and confounds the confusion already existing there) into a heap of ashes. Shiva adorned Himself with that ash, and thus He shone in His Glory, as the Conqueror of Desire. When Kama was destroyed, Prema (Love) reigned supreme. When there is no desire to warp the mind, Love could be true and full. What greater offering can you give God to glorify Him than the ash signifying your triumph over tantalising Desire? Ash is the ultimate condition of things; it cannot undergo any further change. The Abhisheka with Vibhuuthi is done to inspire you to give up desire and offer Shiva the ashes of its destruction as the most valuable of all the articles you have earned. Ash cannot fade as flowers do in a day or two; it does not dry and disappear or get soiled and unpotable as water does; it will not lose colour as leaves do, in a few hours; it does not rot as fruits do in a few days. Ash is ash for ever and ever. So, burn your viles, your vices, your bad habits; worship Shiva, rendering yourselves pure in thought and word and deed.” (Divine Discourse, Shivarathri, 20 February 1974)*

*“In the morning, Punditji, while doing abhisheka to the padukas with milk, curds, and honey, explained the significance of these offerings. All these spiritual pursuits are meant for the purification of Heart. “Chittasya Suddhaye Karmaha (all actions are aimed at the purification of heart).” Purity alone is not enough to experience Divinity. With purity of heart, you should offer yourself to God. You would not offer a faded flower to God. Likewise, the heart, which may be compared to a flower, should be fresh and devoid of impurities before it is offered to God.” (Divine Discourse, Prasanthi Nilayam, 11 October 1998)*

*“Do the besprinkling (abhisheka) of the Atma symbolized by the oval stone (Atma-linga) with the pure waters of your own mental impulses. When the mind moves in one direction and the senses in another, you are doubly confused. So, keep attachment afar. When that is done, whatever you do becomes a sacrifice (yajna).” (Gita Vahini, Chapter 10)*