

The Sarasvati Hridayam is a term we have given to our selection of 52 verses on Sarasvati from the Rgveda. These verses are scattered in the Veda. This course is not intended to cover all 50 plus verses. We will cover only 16 verses. Thus the term Pravesika is being used aptly therefore for this course. We hope to do the remaining verses in the future in the form of follow up courses.

## VEDIC THOUGHT

Vedic concept of the divine is very unique. The modern Bharatiya's concept of the Divine has its roots here. We have however modified and complicated these concepts over the many centuries to match the modifications of our mind and our changing ways of living. A few pointers are given below that can help in the understanding of Vedic suktas.

The Rgvedic concept of the Divine was spontaneous. This matched their language of communication which was also spontaneous. These concepts are not the result of deliberate planning as seen in the later works. This planning is seen somewhat in the other three Vedas that are later in their construction.

The Riks or stanzas of praise are conceptualizations of what the rishis spontaneously felt. The experience of Man, Nature and the Divine has to be reasoned by us. For them it was a matter of instinctive and instantaneous experience. We are at a stage where we give hands, feet, body, jewellery, clothes, wife, births, events etc to appreciate and worship the Divine. They did not need that. For example, Vishnu the pervasive-divine, Rudra the cosmic inflictor, Indra, the inner and outer ruler was a matter of experience to them. There was no room for dichotomous thinking. It is simply for that reason that modern man finds it hard to understand the Riks. We are approaching the riks with the magnifying glasses of a mind, that is no longer in harmony with its environment. So many Western scholars and Indians inspired by the West have dubbed these Riks to just beautiful hymns or poetry. Sadly enough that is merely MERE-ing them!

Vedic Sanskrit and its manner of expression and usage of words is different from the Itihasic and Pouranic Sanskrit. Often a single word has different meanings that hold good together and separate, but the word always carries with it, its essence which remains the same, no matter what is being said. Agni can be the Divinity that is First. It can be the sacrificial fire. It can be the first Eagerness within, yet throughout the essence of the word Agni, the igniting factor, remains the same. Go means cow, rays and light. Asva means horse, power and speed. Vaaja means food, nourishment and source. Ritam means water. It can also mean manifested Truth. It also stands for cosmic order and order in the manner of life, lived. Saagara means ocean, and the raw material for the building of creation. These are just a few of the many examples.

Gender and Number made no difference when words to suggest the Divine were used. Thus Sarasvati can be the single source or the many streams, the neuter river, the feminine mother, the masculine sarasvanta, the result, or sarasvantam, the phenomenon of movement or flow.

The Riks being rishi-conceptualisations their creators were not mere poets. Their understanding went beyond normal understanding. They are kraanta darsees. Most important of all they are satya shrutah. They could hear the revealed truth. These truths are already there in the Vyoma ( space or akasa) before and will continue to be after them. It is as if they went into the inner space or daharaakaasa and caught what is in outer space or mahaakaasa and expressed these truths in outpourings sublime and divine through the medium of speech. What resulted was these Riks that have an automatic parallel value. One that is an outer value baahya and one that is guhya or inner. That is why they became mantras. This double value is instantaneous. It can therefore be used to attain what we desire and ward off what we do not want. Its measurement in the outer life can be seen by ordinary man. Its measurement in inner life is known only to the rishi and falls within the dominion of the " Unmentionables ". To translate these Riks word to word would be an act of inadequacy. Paraphrasing them would therefore allow better comprehension.

The manner in which this study is to be approached is very simple. The Reflections are given first .Study these in the same manner that a child listens to a bedtime story read by a parent for the first time. Allow yourself to be lead! Then read the sukta. Reflect on it again.

आषाढ कृष्णद्वादशी मंगळवारे वि. २०५४

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