

## 11. The Gaayathri

The *Gaayathri manthra* has in it the validity of the *Vedhas*. It contains the essence of *Vedhic* teachings. Each of the four *Vedhas* has a core axiom (*Mahaa Vaakya*) enclosed in it: *Thath thwam asi* (That thou art), *Prajnaanam Brahma* (Consciousness is *Brahma*), *Ayam Aathma Brahma* (This Self is *Brahma*) and *Aham Brahmaasmi* (I am *Brahmam*). When all these are synthesised, the *Gaayathri* emerges.

*Gaayathri* is all Gods in One: The triple stranded *Yagnopaveetham* (Sacrificial Strand of Thread) is to be worn by every one who is initiated into *Gaayathri* recital, for he has to perform the three *sandhya* rites when the Sun rises and sets, as well as when the Sun is at the zenith. The rites are in adoration of the Trinity---*Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Shiva*. The purpose of the rites is to invoke the Gods to bless the novitiate to lead a good life at all times (past, present and future), in all places (heaven, earth and nether region). The *Gaayathri* divinises the five elements; it represents the presiding deities of all the five. *Gaayathri* is worshipped as a Five-Faced Goddess---*Om*, being the first, *Bhoor-bhuvahssuvah*, the second, *Thath Savithur Varenyam*, the third, *Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi*, the fourth, and *Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayath*, the fifth face.

Through meditation on the *Gaayathri*, one can become aware of the inner motivating principle of the five elements, the five vital airs in the human body and the five sheaths which encase the *Aathma*. Just as there are three basic energies that govern man---the physical, the metaphysical and the psychical, the *A adhi-bhowthik*, the *Aadhi-daivik* and the *Aadhi-aathmic*, *Gaayathri* has three facets *Gaayathri*, *Saavithri* and *Saraswathi*. *Gaayathri* fosters the metaphysical, *Saavithri*, the physical, and *Saraswathi*, the psychical. These three *karanas* or instruments have to be cleansed and sublimated so that man can realise the goal of life. Through the recital of *Gaayathri manthra* and meditation thereon, this great task can be achieved.

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*Believe firmly that the body is the residence of God, that the food you eat is the offering you make to your Deity; that bathing is the ceremonial bathing of the Divine Spirit in you; the ground you walk upon is His domain; the joy you derive is His gift; the grief you experience is His lesson that you tread the path more carefully. Remember Him even in sun and shade, day and night, awake or asleep.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*