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# TIMELY FROM THE TIMELESS

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# THOUGHT CAPSULES FROM THE VEDAS

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T BALAKRISHNA BHAT

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PART 1

# ATHARVA VEDA

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## About the Book

This book presents topics from the ancient scripture, Veda, selected to match the present-day settings and to address emerging problems.

**Keywords:** Vedas, Brahmacharya, Marriage, Blessings, God, War, Oneness

TIMELY FROM THE TIMELESS, ATHARVA VEDA

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## Preface

The vast Vedas containing several thousand verses have been transmitted orally retaining its purity not just with respect to the words but also for their precise order and intonations for thousands of generations without break. Our ancestors undoubtedly must have benefitted from and must have seen the potential value of this great treasure for future generations for putting the great effort unprecedented in human history preserved as if in a time capsule.

Recognizing that the timeless Vedas are timelier now than ever before, an effort has been made here to bring out the thought capsules present in the ancient Vedas and set them in the language and form of topics relevant for the present times. Every person in this world is likely to find something useful and transformative for him in them.

The four Vedas will be covered in four parts. The Part 1, now ready, corresponds to Atharva Veda.

T Balakrishna Bhat

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Timeless Vedas appear to be more timely now than ever before. Vedas were revealed to Rishis of yore, thousands of who conveyed specific points in tiny capsules called Richas. Sometimes these thought capsules are somewhat direct, but many a time are put forward in a coded way. Yet their beauty is that they have always been relevant and have something for the present as also for the future wherein the words take on ever new meanings as time goes by. Each and every Richa is worthy of research in depth and can earn many a PhD and provide valuable contemporary results and solutions to contemporary social, political, psychological, national, economic, religious, philosophical, environmental, managerial, scientific, health, education, and family problems. In the Vedas - Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, AtharvaVeda - the Richas are compiled in to Suktas. Suktas are broadly put together as Kandas. Each Sukta may have contributions from more than one Rishi. Also, a Sukta may or may not describe only one specific topic. Veda means to know. On the whole the canvas of the Veda is the entire universe. Man, nature, God, creation, prayers, praises, scoldings, invocations, attacks, war, love, science, technology, medicine, education and also ways to bless, curse, command, entreat, entice, invite anything and anyone including God in all His manifestations are covered. Anyone who studies the Veda will surely find an inspiration to do something great during his lifetime. Not only that, in all probability he/she will develop special insights and solutions too for the problems at hand. Above all one will find oneself to be confident, find out the direction and be able to achieve whatever one sets out to do in life. Veda never says believe me, it never says obey me, surrender to me or to anyone. Instead it says: discuss in broad daylight in the morning, afternoon and evening and establish a clear thinking, Medha (6.108.5 Shounaka Rishi). This could be the guiding spirit in this exploration too.

Here is the first richa by Rishi Atharva.

1.1.1<sup>1</sup>Ye trishapta pariyanti vishwa roopani bibhrataha, vachaspatirbala tesham tanvo adya dadhatu may. May the lord of the Vedas who supports the whole universe of seven triplets (such as perhaps in the present state of knowledge and enquiry, creation + sustenance + destruction, time + space + energy, satwa + rajas + tamas, matter + antimatter +space) give the strength and knowledge of that entire body to me today.

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<sup>1</sup> Here the three numbers correspond to Kanda, Sukta, and Richa respectively

## Chapter 2

### Blessings

19.42.3 "Satyaa santu yajamanasya kaamaah" - May all of your wishes come true. (Rishi Brahma). This is the main aim of the Vedas - to enable you to fulfill all of your wishes and dreams.

20.96.9 You rising one! go on living for one hundred years. I, Agni, Savita, Brihaspathi, have lifted you up with energy to live for one hundred years. (Poorana<sup>2</sup>)

2.29.4 This life, gifted by Indra, taught by Varuna, sent by heroic Maruths, has come shining amidst us. Hey sun and earth! may he be never hungry or thirsty in your lap. (Atharva)

3.11.4 Making great progress you live for hundred years. I-Agni, Savita, Guru -protector of the great, have lifted you up with hundreds of life-energies. (Brahma)

6.64.3 May your plans be similar, may your feelings be same, may your thoughts be same; may you make great progress. (Atharva)

6.78.3 The Creator has made this wife for you and He has made this husband for you. May He give you all the support needed for a good living and give you a long life. (Atharva)

6.106.1 May your arrival and departure paths be spread with flowers and doorva grass. May there be wells with water and lakes with lotus flowers.

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<sup>2</sup> The name in the brackets refer to the Rishi to whom the Richa was revealed



## Chapter 3

### About God

Any amount of debate and thinking is unlikely to solve the mystery until one is able to experience God in some form at least once. It is impossible that those who study at least a few Suktas of the Vedas sincerely will not have this chance. Vedas display the presence of God in all things at all times at all places and enable you to reach Him, see Him, feel Him, and do whatever you wish to do to along with Him in this world.

7.21.1 Hey Men! practicing truth, you meet the Lord of all light present everywhere. He is the guest of everyone. He, the Ancient, is present in this new world in a wide variety of ways. To Him one can reach in many ways. (Rishi Brahma)

7.22.1 He is present as light in the physical world for the learned to see. (Rishi Brahma)

7.26.6 See the Omnipresent Vishnu; He has integrated everything together. He is the friend of life. (Medhatithi)

7.26.7 Learned intelligent ones see Him always as in broad day light with open eyes. (Medhatithi)

7.87.1 Salutations to Him who is in fire, who is in water, who is in plants and herbs, who has created the whole universe and who is present everywhere. (Atharva)

8.9.26 That One runs the world, That One guides the world, That One is of the form of light and That Constant One cannot be exceeded. (Atharva)

11.4.21 Everything and everyone, moving and nonmoving, is present in Him. (Brahma)

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## Chapter 4

### Right Way of Knowing God

Everyone has their own way of seeing God just the way one may see the world in different ways. But there is a difference. While for seeing the world our sense organs provide a great support they cannot quite reach God. Yet each may feel that he or she must be right. Many under illusion may insist that only they are right and all others are wrong. Particularly damaging can be the traps created by leaders and their organised followers which may lead to horrible clashes. In this context the advice by the Vedas can be highly beneficial. Rishi Atharva says the following in 11.3:

Unless you see God by the head of the wise Rishis of yore all of the citizens may perish.

Unless you hear God by the ears of the wise as wide as sky and earth you may become deaf.

Unless you eat God by the right truthful mouth your citizens may perish due to your mouth.

Unless you see God by the right eyes of the wise Rishis of yore you may become blind.

Unless you experience God by the right tongue shining like fire your tongue will lose its power.

Unless you eat God with the right teeth you will be toothless.

Unless you experience God with the right breath like the Rishis of yore your breath will leave you.

Unless you experience God with an expansive state like the Rishis of yore you will become incurably ill.

Unless you experience God from the right platform of the expansive space, it is said, you will be struck by lightning.

Unless you experience God with the right heart of the Rishis of yore as loving as the earth, your crops will fail.

Unless you eat God with the right stomach with the truthfulness of the Rishis of yore you will die of stomach diseases.

Unless you eat God with a lower abdomen as stable as the sea like the Rishis of yore you will be drowned.

Unless you experience God by the right thighs, like the teacher and the student, your thighs will die.

Unless you experience God by the right feet of the learned you will be only going round and round.

Unless you experience God by the right toes of the enlightened you will be poisoned.

Unless you experience God at the truthful hands like the Rishis of yore you will be killing Brahmins.

Unless you experience God with the right authority and respect as the Rishis of yore you will have no shelter or name.

But if you see, feel, experience, preach and so on with the right head, ear, eyes, tongue, breath, mouth, heart, stomach, lower abdomen, thighs, ankles, legs, feet, toes, hands, humility, expansiveness, authority, respect and truthfulness, you will surely find Him with all limbs, with all His aspects, with all knots and joints and He becomes all encompassing, all protective, all nurturing.

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## Chapter 5

### Praises and Prayers to God

By far the largest part of Vedas is dedicated to praises and prayers to The One God but in various names appropriate to the qualities being described. One can find these things often in the form of monologues with God practically in every Sukta by every Rishi irrespective of the specific topic being discussed. The prayers are more like the way a son would ask his father rather than the way a poor helpless beggar requesting for alms. For best effects these Richas should be recited with correct intonations while keeping their meaning at the back of one's mind. These will have to be learnt under a Guru well versed in the subject so that you could also experience a bit of the elevated state experienced by the original Rishis who first saw these Richas bubbling in their pure hearts. Gist of some Richas selected mostly from the last Kanda of Atharva Veda is given below:

20.51.1 Accept and praise the infinitely rich and generous Indra as He is. He will give you everything. (Praskanva)

20.61.1 We praise Your joyous state, which has unlimited strength, which enables victory in battle, which creates the universe and which gifts wealth.

20.62.6 Hey Indra! you are victorious, you have given the shine to the sun, you are the maker of the whole universe, you are the strongest of all and are worthy of worship. (Nrimedha)

20.64.1 Hey Indra! you loving, won through love, never hiding, are available to us in all directions; you are spread all over and are the lord of comfort and joy. (Nrimedha)

20.70.1 Hey God! you are the one who rains comfort over us; you give true knowledge. Disclose the knowledge which is like the cloud now. (Madhuchanda)

20.79.1 Hey God! give us intellect (buddhi) like a father does to his child; show us the way now so that we find the light. (Vasishta)

20.80.1 Hey Indra! holding thunderbolt in your hand you have filled up the entire earth and space; for us you are the giver of greatest strength, support and success. (Shamyu)

20.82.1 Hey Indra! from the great wealth which you possess, enable me to be the owner of only that much by which I can support the learned but not so much as to fall into bad ways. (Vasishta)

20.92.5 Dear men! worship Him like a fear free fort, worship, worship, worship, and your good children also worship Him (Priyamedha)

20.92.10 He who has created all the necessary materials in a beautiful way, He who frees those who are near Him from all forms of sorrow, He alone is the leader, the God. (Priyamedha)

20.101.1 Worthy of being searched, honored, remover of sorrows, worthy of being seen, bright, God spreads light in wonderful ways. (Medhyathithi)

20.103.3 Hey strength giving all-knowing God! your subjects find you only in all of their nonviolent activities. Hey ancient one! we request you for water and light for our activities. (Sudeethipurameedhau)

20.108.2 Hey you Shelter! you alone have been our father and mother, so we ask you for the joy of your company. (Nrimedha)

3.5.2 Hey praiseworthy One! establish power and wealth in me. May I be the foremost amidst the nation's leaders. (Atharva)

5.6.12 Hey God! you are the refuge of my soul. With all my animals, persons, my full strength, my entire body, and myself in totality I am reaching you and entering you. (Atharva)

7.17.2 May the God who nurtures everyone gift unlimited support for life to the person whose heart is filled with generosity. May we carry the good, wise and benevolent mind of the God. (Bhrihu)

7.83.3 Hey God! untie all our chains from above and from below. Free us from bad dreams and all obstacles. May we once again be in the path of righteousness. (Shunashepa)

## Chapter 6

### On the "Only One God" Debate

It is unfortunate that this "only one God and none else" argument has caused perhaps one of worst tragedies and divisiveness in human history. It is interesting to see if we can see some light through the Vedas.

2.2.1 The only one Lord of the universe is worthy of namaskar by the subjects. With you wonderful One, Hey God, I am meeting you. Salutations to you, May I have your company with every activity. (Matrinama)

2.2.3 No doubt He is present also in all the animals and living ones who appear and disappear.

2.2.4 My namaskars to you divine ones who are present in cloud, lightening and stars and are always serving the God.

2.2.5 To those wives of God, who invite, who fulfill His wishes, who make happy surprises for Him, to those I have done namaskars. (bow down to them)

(The statements by the same Rishi in the same Sukta in consecutive verses makes it clear that there is absolutely no need to be fanatic about not doing namaskars to anyone else but one. Also, that God even as being only one resides in all has fantastic unifying and religiously liberating consequences)

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## Chapter 7

### Is God Male or Female?

Although it may be foolish to ask such a question the doubt often does arise in our minds due to various reasons and our own limitations. In Veda, by and large, God has been addressed in male form. Many a time God has also been addressed in neuter form and also described as pure energy, knowledge or consciousness or even left as non-describable. But here is a very special beautiful Sukta of extraordinary beauty and power where God is describing Herself in Her own words as female (here female gender has been used for describing the nouns, verbs and adjectives). The beauty can be seen best in the original Sanskrit version (4.30.) (Rishi Atharva)

4.30.1 I move with all knowledge giving and divine beings as well as the dependent worlds. I alone support the Mitra, Varuna, Indra, Agni, and Ashwins.

4.30.2 I am the power of generating all the wealth and of knowing and controlling all activities. Learned ones have taken me into themselves in various ways.

4.30.3 Those whom I like I make them bright, Rishis, and Brahmas. Those who do not know me weaken. Listen able ones!

4.30.5 I bear and support the universe. For the devoted and committed ones keeping good company I gift all nourishment and wealth.

4.30.6 I create the nurturing qualities. My creative space is the entire universe wherein I spread myself and touch it with my wealth.

4.30.7 I alone move throughout the universe like the wind and with my glory stand above it.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 8

### On Self and God Realization

While Veda aims at taking you to the peak of well-being in this life, taking you to the permanent state of well-being through a full link up with God is its main aim. This transformation occurs simultaneously and smoothly up to some stage when there occurs a sudden transition to a new state of self and God realization. In this context some Richas by Great Rishi Bhrigu are given in Sukta 4.14 outlining the critical knowledge and the ways to move out of yourself - body, mind and even soul - to attain self and God realization.

4.14.1 The unborn, and free to move soul has emerged from the same God only. They who saw the already existing God attained the quality of being Angels. In the same way men of pure quality acquired the ability to go up.

4.14.2 Hey great heroes! with the perfected knowledge on hand, with the help of the God, you enjoy great comfort. Moving with the learned, reach the God - the comfort and joy personified.

4.14.3 I climbed from the earth over to the middle space. From the middle space I climbed over to the sun space. From the bright sun space, I attained God who is like a light.

4.14.6 I enable the auspicious, strong, free soul with the shining knowledge. By that, aiming at the great joy- the God, let us search the divine space.

4.14.7 Come out of your body space. Place the head of your soul in front of you. Place the right lower half on your right.

4.14.8 Place the mid- body behind you. Place the lower left part on to your left. Place the back bone up over you, place the stomach below you. Hang the mid body in mid space above.

4.14.9 Cover the all complete perfect soul with your expanded energy. Now you get up from here aiming at the perfect God and become famous with all the four attainments in life.

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## Chapter 9

### Adhyatma - Spirituality

Spirituality is at the heart of the Vedas. You touch any cell of the Vedas you are bound to be pumped up by it. You touch any point on the Veda you are bound feel this heart beat and experience a rhythmic beat of your own heart. Now, ideally speaking, spirituality should be dealing with the spiritual world just as science deals with the physical world. Vedas have laid a good foundation for this. This foundation is also useful for the border areas of consciousness and entry and exit of life in the physical world. Concept of soul and God is basic here much like the concept of zero and one, or one and infinity in mathematics. Zero feels reassured and joyful in the presence of one. The infinity can playfully watch and support infinite finites such as one and all of their combined incarnations and adventures.

Science has progressed by leaps and bounds even though it has barely any idea about the ultimate origin and most fundamental nature of the physical world. Similarly, even though the ultimate nature and origin of the spiritual world is not clear it is possible to make good progress. The tools such as objectivity, reproducibility, statistical significance, truthfulness are essential here. In this context arguments such as "I am a believer, mine is right because someone said so, all others are wrong and must be persuaded, persecuted, cursed, converted or killed" must be recognised as one of the worst man-made tragedies in man's entire history still unfolding. Knowledge of the Vedas can help us in avoiding this huge blunder. Here are a few suggestions from the Vedas about how the twin intelligences-soul and God - interact with the physical world. In in Sukta 9.9 and 9.10 Rishi Brahma says that:

This body with its sense organs takes one towards where the universe gets its support.

Rishis say, That One is responsible for every action and growth while more contemplative and detached ones say He is within every one.

Soul was formed independently; sense organs are born when soul takes up a body of matter and shine as required by it in the specific form.

Soul is not created by the group of physical bodies.

In the world soul and God are like two birds on a tree where the former eats all the fruits of his actions while the latter keeps shining.

Those who get absorbed in the God and arise enriched get the foremost and lasting sweetness but not those who are unaware of Him.

Because of His worshipable quality Rishis have separated Him from the worshipper.

God has combined and mixed his powers very well throughout the universe.

Intelligent learned ones call the one God by different names.

May God who has all past and future in His hands hand over my past and future into my hands.

In different verses of Sukta 10.2 Rishi Narayana says:

God stitched the mind and heart together and stood above the head.

This head is a great reservoir of good qualities and is protected by the breath and food.

Whatever maybe the way one is born one is called Purush if one understands Puram - the perfect one (God).

This perfect body with eight centers and nine gates is the victorious city (Ayodhya) of gods. In it the golden powerful soul is enveloped by the divine light of God. Brahma jnanis know this light which is of the same nature as the soul.

God has entered this joy giving, bright, sorrow removing, never defeated city (my body).

(This last sentence is the way spirituality is made a living experience and Rishi Brahma's last sentence is the best way of going about it)

## Chapter 10

### Spiritual and Philosophical Excursions

Veda is the knowledge of the world soaked in God. As we continue our explorations of Veda we too can taste the nectar and experience our intimacy. In Kanda 15 and 16 the Great Rishi Atharva takes us through some deep, fascinating philosophical excursions toward God.

15.1.1-15.1.8 The envelope and friend of all continued to exist, and He activated His creative, nourishing nature. He saw that ability in Himself and brought it out which became That Great One which has no second- none like It. It became the Main, the Great, the Oldest, the Brahma, the active cause. He grew, became great and became Mahadev. He became lord of all skills and became Eeshana. He alone can create life. Clear knowledge is His stomach and creative ability is His back. With His clear knowledge He overcomes obstacles - so say Brahmavadis.

15.2.1-15.2.28 He stood up and went forward (east); space, matter, stars and all moving things followed Him. Anyone who speaks ill of Him is making a mistake and is a fool. But for the learned and wise, who know the Envelope, the past and the future behave like two servants and the mind becomes an omni mobile chariot. Success and fame run ahead of him. He stood up and moved to the right (south); all spiritual knowledge, spiritual actions, enlightened persons and all animals followed Him. For him who know Him all persons and animals become friends. Darkness and light, knowledge and ignorance become his friends, name and fame come to receive him. He stood up and went backward (west). All material knowledge, all knowledge needed for freedom and liberation, all materials of the world, leaders and great persons followed Him and the west becomes their favorite residence. They come to him who knows Him. He stood up and went to the left (north). All progressive knowledge, knowledge of the saints, all sense organs, mind and intellect, the Kings and gurus followed Him, making north their favorite residence. Success and glory come to meet them who know Him.

15.3.1-15.3.11 Learned ones are His servants, determination are His messengers, all physical forces are His close associates who become close associates of all those who know Him.

15.4.1-15.4.18 The spring season protects them from the front (east) and the whole space works for those who know Him. Summer protects them from the right (south), and the five elements work for them. Rainy season protects them from the west; knowledge of the materials and the leaders and great persons work for them. Sharadritu protects them from the north, Saptarshis and saints, kings and Gurus work for them. Winter protects them from below; fire and earth work for them. Shishir Ritu protects them from above; sky and sun work for them who know Him.

15.5.1-15.5.16 He will be present in appropriate forms and removing all forms of sorrow and protecting them in the north east, south east, south west, north west, as well as half way up and half way down locations.

15.6.1-15.6.26 He went in the downward direction. Earth, fire, herbs, plants, creepers followed Him and will stay joyfully with those who know Him. He moved in the upward direction. Science and truth followed Him whose favorite are those who know Him. He went in an unknown direction. The whole world and its residents followed Him whose favorite are those who know Him. He went in a secret direction from where the learned thought He would not return. But the perishable world, the unperishable world and the life force (Diti, Aditi, and Indrani) followed Him whose favorite are those who know Him. He went in all directions at the same time. All the divine materials and forces followed Him whose favorite are those who know Him. He went in all inward directions. Parents and grandparents followed Him whose favorite are those who know Him.

15.7.1-15.7.5 Those who know Him receive good job, devotion, greatness, good company and good food.

15.8.1-15.8.3 He loved so He became the Lord.



15.9-15.13 (50 Richas) He moves around men. (Learned ones and saints who know Him coming in as guests uninvited, are considered as Himself paying a visit). Those who honor such a guest in an appropriate manner receive great boons: long life, great wealth and whatever one wishes. If the guest stays for a night, one's society becomes secure. If he stays for two nights, life in the sky becomes secure. If he stays for three nights, all the divine life becomes secure. However never entertain or allow cheats to stay at home.  
15.14.1-15.14.24 When the honored guest leaves from the east, south, west or north He strengthens one's bravery, wealth, leadership, and work skills respectively.  
16.1.6 You are the leader among the living; I (Veda, Atharva Rishi) will take you toward Him.

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