



(i)

As to what was the situation or condition prevalent prior to the commencement of the process of creation is not exactly known but this much is certain that the commencement of creation coincided with the emergence of Agni as the first transformation or mutation of the primordial energy which came into being as though out of nothing all of a sudden in a flash heralding the beginning of the differentiation of the undifferentiated mass of universal consciousness.

—The Illumination of Knowledge
(p-240)

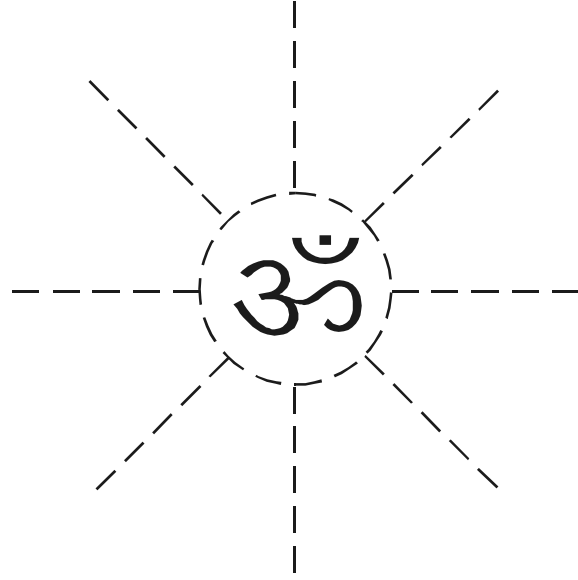
The process of learning is an on-going experience. Seeing and hearing which are actions of the mind do not become an experience unless something is learnt through these acts, when awake a person cannot avoid seeing and hearing. Just as the divine Angirasas are said to be born of the flames of Agni, Bhrgus are said to be associated with the Sun as its rays. Rishi Nodha Gautamah tells us (Rig Veda 1.58.6)-

दधुष्ट्वा भृगवो मानुषेष्वा रयिं न चारुं सुहृवं जनेभ्यः ।

that Agni was established in human beings by the Bhrgus for attainment of divinity.

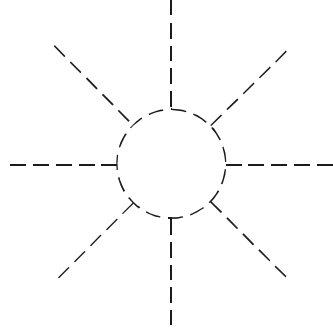
—The Illumination of Knowledge

(p-69-70)



तस्य वाचकः प्रणवः

(योग सूत्र 1.27)



The Illumination of Knowledge

A brief reflection on the role of Agni,
the Vedic God of Fire

Ravinder Kumar Soni

***The Illumination
of Knowledge***

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Dedicated to

My father and Guru

Shri Mehr Lal Soni Zia Fatehabadi (1913-1986)

Who made me learn

How to think and visualise.

And in gratitude to all those who led and encouraged me to read and understand the ancient scriptures and related books, and to gather and collate information and words of expression essential for the study of the anatomy of human thought.

वो देख मशरिक़ से नूर उभरा लिये हुए जल्वा-ए-हकीक़त
मिजाज़ की तर्क कर गुलामी कि तू तो है बन्दा-ए-हकीक़त।
—ज़िया फ़तेहाबादी

तय कर चुका हूँ मँज़िलें आगाज़-ए-शौक़ की
अब इन्तज़ार है न शब-ए-इन्तज़ार है।

—ज़िया फ़तेहाबादी

यत्ते पवित्रमर्चिष्यग्ने विततमन्तरा ।

ब्रह्म तेन पुनीहि नः । ।

“O Agni ! Thou who art the embodiment of knowledge, purify us through the various purifying lights (or rays) which are of Brahman that art within Thee.”

Rig Veda 9.67.23

तद्धामृतं रोदसी प्र ब्रवीमि जायमानो मातरा गर्भो अत्ति ।
नाहं देवस्य मर्त्यश्चिकेताऽग्निरङ्ग विचेताः स प्रचेताः ॥

“O learned ones ! I tell you the truth that the fire lying hidden in the two Aranis consumes them both; I, who am mortal, do not know the secrets held by fire who is certainly worthy of being known.”

Rig Veda 10.79.4

FOREWORD

My dear reader,

Herewith I place before you for your perusal a record of my simple and straight-forward understanding of the Rig Veda. I was introduced to the Rig Veda by my revered father and guru, (late) Shri Mehr Lal Soni Zia Fatehabadi, soon after we had left Delhi to take up our residence in Madras (now Chennai) when I was hardly ten years old. Before that I was permitted only to read and memorise the very few but widely recited mantras taken from the Rig Veda which I was later told also found a prominent place in the Yajur Veda. My father, who passed away on the Raksha Bandhan day of the year 1986 A.D. at the age of seventy three years, sowed in my mind the seed of the understanding of the Rig Veda; he was a Jnana-yogi and a man of letters. Since then I have merely watered and allowed that seed to sprout and grow within me; my father had made me learn my lessons the hard way. However, owing to the many limitations that still keep me bound to this world of objects I do not know for certain whether I could have at any stage actually known about the flowering of that cherished plant. But then, I have eagerly watched that plant grow, and I have all along savoured its fruits. I have relished those fruits of many tastes mainly because I had allowed my mind to freely roam so as to find its own true bearings. I had allowed my mind to probe the depths of the bottomless deep sea of knowledge, reason and belief combined regardless of there being no shore attached to that sea of wonderful unity. I had also allowed my thoughts to grow and flow unhindered in the infinite uncaused space hoping that they would

all one day, guided by reason and transcending space and time, grow more and more focussed on the sole object of my attention and attain it.

I invite you to rise and stand with me atop the highest peak of attainment already identified for us by the Rishis of the Rig Veda who have also shown us the way to reach it. Let us join at that place to experience the presence of THAT which can only be experienced through our minds on the strength of our faith; let that experience be our common aim and purpose. Let us together experience the perfect union amongst us through mental realisation of the actual truth which truth is our true identity and also that of the entire creation. I seek your company for I have finally found myself in you, warm and moving, beyond all false identifications based on names and forms and various meaningless rituals attached thereby. What I tell you now is by no means new; you and I have always known it as such as the unchanging, brilliant and peaceful face of Truth. You and I are that Truth and therefore let us both combine to light-up all our worlds with our own light.

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24th June 2007.

ॐ सह नावतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु ।
सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

**“May He protect us both together. May He nourish us both together. May we both acquire strength together. Let our study be brilliant. May we not cavil at each other”
Aum (May) Peace (reign supreme everywhere) ! Peace ! Peace !**

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