

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
TAMIL NADU AT THE SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF SAMAVEDA
NITHYA PARAYANA CHARITABLE TRUST AT SRI KANCHI KAMAKOTI
SANKARA MADAM, WEST MAMBALAM, CHENNAI
ON 03.08.2019 AT 5.30 P.M**

Anaivarukkum Maalai Vanakkam

Thiru. R. Subramanian,
President,
Samaveda Nithya Parayana Charitable Trust

Thiru. N. Gopaldaswamy,
Former Chief Election Commissioner

Dr. Sudha Seshayan,
Vice Chancellor,
The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University

Thiru. N.Sundaresa Iyer,
Chief Administrator of Kanchi Mutt

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

I am delighted to be present at the function being organized on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Samaveda Nithya Parayana Charitable Trust.

The Trust was constituted in 1994 to carry out the recitation of Vedas on a “daily basis” with the support of Vedic Pandits. That this tradition has been continued without a break shows the determination and the dedication displayed by the Samaveda Nithya Parayana Charitable Trust to keep the noble practice flourishing.

In the Mahabharata, the creation of Vedas is credited to Brahma. The Vedic hymns themselves assert that they were skillfully created by the

Rishis based on inspired creativity, just as a carpenter designs and builds a chariot.

The great Saint "Veda Vyasa" made an outstanding contribution to Humanity by classifying the Vedas to enable a person to learn and practice at least a portion of them during his life time.

According to tradition, Vyasa is the compiler who arranged the mantras, thus forming the Vedas: the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda.

Of these, the first three were the principal original division, also called "trayi vidya"; that is, "the triple science"; of reciting hymns - the Rigveda, of performing sacrifices - the Yajurveda,

and of chanting the hymns set to a melodious tune
- the Samaveda.

Of these three, the Rigveda is the oldest. It contains a total of 1,028 Vedic Sanskrit hymns and 10,600 verses which are organized into ten books. The hymns are dedicated to Rigvedic deities. The books were composed by poets from different priestly groups over a period of several centuries.

The Samaveda consists of 1549 stanzas, taken almost entirely, from the Rigveda except for 75 mantras. Just as in the Rigveda, the early sections of Samaveda typically begin with hymns to Agni and Indra but shift to the abstract.

The Yajurveda consists of mantras in the form of prayers that are recited by a priest when

ritualistic practices such as a homam or yajna are performed. The Yajurveda includes verses that are distinct but yet borrow and build upon the foundation of the verses in the Rigveda.

The Artharvaveda has about 760 hymns, and of these hymns 160 are in common with the Rigveda. It is probably the oldest record of practices in medicine, in the world.

Each Veda has been sub-classified into four major text types – the Samhitas which are the mantras and benedictions, the Aranyakas which is the text to be learnt in forests, the Brahmanas which speak about procedures on rituals, ceremonies and sacrifices, and the Upanishads (texts discussing meditation, philosophy and

spiritual knowledge). Scholars also add a fifth category – the Upasanas (worship).

This Parayana trust though devoted to all the four Vedas is named after the Samaveda and hence I wish to give you a more elaborate account of the wisdom contained in the Vedas with the help of Samaveda.

Two primary Upanishads of Hinduism are embedded inside the Samaveda – the Chandogya Upanishad and the Kena Upanishad. Both are notable for their melodic structure, the Chandogya Upanishad has played a particularly significant role in the evolution of various schools of Hindu philosophy. The philosophical concepts in the Chandogya Upanishad have, for example, served

as the foundation for the Vedanta school of Hinduism. It is one of the most cited texts in later Bhasyas. Adi Shankara, for example, cited Chandogya Upanishad 810 times in his Vedanta Sutra Bhasya.

The text in eighth and ninth volumes of the first chapter, for example, describes the debate between three men proficient in the origins and support of empirical existence. The text summarizes their discussion as,

What is the origin of this world?

Space, said he. Verily, all things here arise out of space. They disappear back into space, for space alone is greater than these, space is the final goal.

This is endless. The most excellent worlds does he win, who, knowing it thus, reveres it.

Max Muller notes that the term "space" above, was asserted to be a symbolism for the Vedic concept of Brahman. Paul Deussen explains the term Brahman as the "creative principle which permeates the whole world".

There were about a dozen styles of Samavedic chanting in the past. Of the three surviving versions, the Jaiminiya preserves the oldest surviving tradition of Samavedic chanting.

The Indian classical music and dance, states Guy Beck, is rooted in the sonic and musical dimensions of the Sama Veda and the Upanishads.

All of the above go to show that the Vedas are a storehouse of knowledge. The spectrum of knowledge covered in the Vedas ranges from medicine to music and from science to space astronomy. It is therefore no surprise to know that the term Veda is derived from the Sanskrit root 'vid' - to know.

Speaking about the Vedas, Swami Vivekananda said and I quote "Veda means sum total of eternal truth. Truth is of 2 kinds (1) that which can be perceived by ordinary senses of man and reasoning based thereon. This is science. (2) that which is cognisable by subtle super sensuous power of Yoga. This knowledge is called Vedas".

Knowing fully well the wisdom contained in the texts, the Vedas, Vedic rituals and the ancillary sciences - the Vedangas, formed part of the curriculum at ancient universities such as at Taxila, Nalanda and Vikramashila where the Vedas were transmitted from the teacher to the students in the Guru-Shishya tradition.

The Guru-Shishya tradition continues to be the means for the Vedas to be passed on from one generation to the next.

The Guru-Shishya tradition denotes relationship and mentoring where learning is transmitted from a guru to a shishya. Such knowledge, whether it be Vedic, agamic, architectural, musical or spiritual, is imparted

through a relationship between the guru and the disciple developed over many years of continuous and committed learning. The student eventually masters the knowledge that the guru embodies.

The efforts of the Samaveda Nithya Parayana Charitable Trust to promote the chanting of the Vedas will I am sure kindle interest in many more well intentioned individuals and institutions to carry forward the tradition of learning the Vedas by setting up Patshalas for the Vedas in the Guru Shishya Parampara.

I extend my greetings and best wishes to the this trust for their pioneering efforts. May spiritual orientation be their watchword and India's cultural inheritance be the guiding spirit behind their

activities. It is our belief, faith, confidence that the banner of the Samaveda Nithya Parayana Charitable Trust and all such spiritually inclined institutions will continue to fly with grandeur and majesty not only in India but also all over the world in the coming years. May success visit them all in bountiful measure in all their endeavours.

Nandri Vanakkam....

Jai Tamil Nadu....

Jai Hind....