

33-34. Towards the right of the holy water, in a splendid prayer hall, temple or a common Maṭha, or in a stipulated place in one's own house, one shall sit firmly with the mind in concentration and perform the Gāyatrī Japa after due obeisance to all gods. He shall not omit the practice of the Praṇava mantra.

35-37. While practising the Praṇava he shall realise fully the identity of Jīva (the individual soul) with the supreme Brahman. The full implication of the Gāyatrī must be borne in the mind when the Japa is performed. "We pray to Brahmā, the creator of the three worlds, to Acyuta the sustainer and Rudra the Annihilator.* We meditate on the Self-luminary that prompts us in the activities of virtue and wisdom bestowing enjoyment and salvation, the Self-luminary that is the driving force behind the sense-organs, mind, intellect and acts of volition." The devotee who dwells thus on the meaning constantly attains the Brahman.

38. Or if incompetent to dwell on the meaning let him at least continue the recitation of the mere mantra to keep his Brahminhood in tact. An excellent brahmin must repeat the mantra a thousand times in the morning every day.

39. Others shall repeat as many times as they can. In the midday Gāyatrī shall be repeated a hundred times; in the evening at least twenty times along with Śikhāṣṭaka [A set of eight as the tuft i.e. eight times more than stipulated.]

40-41. He shall meditate on Vidyēśa, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Īśa, Jīvātman and Parameśvara stationed in the twelve esoteric centre of the body from Mūlādhāra (basic support) to the Brahmarandhra (the mystical aperture at the crown of the head), as identical with Brahman with the conception of *Soham* (I am He) and continue the Japa. He shall then meditate on them as stationed outside the body as well.

42-43. From Mahat tattva (the cosmic principle) there

*Cf. Devī Bhāg. 1.8. 3-4 ब्रह्मा विष्णुश्च रुद्रश्च त्रयो देवाः सनातनाः । नातः परतरं किञ्चिद् ब्रह्माण्डेऽस्मिन्महामते ॥ ब्रह्मा सृजति लोकान्वै विष्णुः पात्यखिलं जगत् । रुद्रः संहर्तते काले त्रय पतेऽत्र कारणम् ॥ also ŚP. VS. 10 : त्रिधा विभज्य चात्मानं त्रैलोक्ये सम्प्रवर्तते । सृजते प्रसते चैव वीक्षते च त्रिभिस्त्वयम् ॥ The idea is often repeated in the Purāṇas.