

Gaayatree Mantra Explained

ओ३म्, (यजु० अ० ४० । मं० १७) भूर्भुवः स्वः । तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं
भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि । धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥

यजुः० अ० ३६ । मं० ३ ॥ ऋ० मं० ३ । सू० ६२ । मं० १० ॥

**Om bhoor bhuvaḥ svaḥ,
Tat savitur vareṇyam Bhargo devasya dheemahi,
Dhiyo yo naḥ pracho-dayaat.**

The most famous hymn (mantra) in Hindu religion is Gaayatree Mantra. We will look at each and every root Sanskrit word in this mantra and try to arrive at a meaningful explanation of this mantra.

Taken from Yajurveda 36:3, Gaayatree mantra has three phrases

Phrase 1:

Om bhoorbhuvaḥ savaḥ

Om ओ३म् – Primary name of God, identifying god as the source of all creation.

Bhoorbhuvaḥ भूर्भुवः – Conjugation of two root words bhooh and bhuvaḥ

Bhooh भूः – God as mother earth, sustainer of all life

Bhuvaḥ भुवः – God as the destroyer of everything evil or malevolent

Svaḥ स्वः – God as creator of everything benevolent

In the first phrase, the mantra describes three basic qualities of God: God as the sustainer of all life; God as the destroyer of evil and; God as the creator of happiness and source of all benevolence.

Phrase 2:

Tat savitur vareṇyam Bhargo devasya dheemahi

Tat तत् – a pronoun ‘that’ referring to the God whose 3 basic qualities were identified in the phrase 1

Saviturvareṇyam सवितुर्वरेण्यम् – Conjugation of two words savituḥ and vareṇyam

Savituh सवितुः – God as the father, the creator of the entire universe and everything that exists.

Vareṇyam वरेण्यम् - God as someone worthy of keeping relationship with.

Bhargo भर्गो – God as pure truth with no sign of any impurity or malice.

Devasya देवस्य – of the God

Dheemahi धीमहि – Remember, think about, meditate upon

Let's meditate upon and think of that God who is pure, the creator and the only one worthy of having relationship with.

Phrase 3:

Dhiyo yo naḥ prachodayaat

Dhiyo धियो – Mind, thoughts, determinations

Yo यो – pronoun referring to the god described in first 2 phrases.

Naḥ नः – Our / my

Prachodayaat प्रचोदयात् – conjugation of two words pra and chodayaat

Pra प्र – Light, knowledge, illumination

chodayaat चोदयात् – to give or to guide

May that God, guide our mind, thoughts and determinations towards illumination of knowledge.

Putting it all together

(Dheemahi) Let's meditate upon and think (Devasya) of the one with divine qualities, (Tat) that God who is (Bhooḥ) the sustainer of all life, (Bhuvah) the destroyer of evil, (Svah) the creator of happiness, source of all benevolence, (Bhargo) pure, (Savituh) the basis of all creation and (Vareṇyam) the only one worthy of having relationship with. May (Yo) that God, (chodayaat) guide (Naḥ) our (Dhiyo) mind, thoughts and determinations towards (Pra) illumination of knowledge