

Study AV Kand 12 English

Atharva Veda 12.1.1 to 8

Songs of Mother Earth known as Prithivi sukta Prithive Devata

Atharva Veda 12.1.1

सत्यं बृहदृतमुग्रं दीक्षा तपो ब्रह्म यज्ञः पृथिवीं धारयन्ति ।
सा नो भूतस्य भव्यस्य पत्न्युरुं लोकं पृथिवी नः कृणोतु ॥१॥

Satyaṁ bṛhadṛtamugraṁ dīkṣā tapo brahma yajñāḥ pṛthivīm dhārayanti.
Sā no bhūtasya bhavyasya patnyurum lokam pṛthivī naḥ kṛnotu. 1

(Satyaṁ) truth (bṛhat) great, infinity, cause of progress (ṛtam) knowledge of the real existence, truth of the creation (ugraṁ) powerful (dīkṣā) vow full, commitment, self-discipline (tapaḥ) penances, austerity (brahma) divine knowledge of God (yajñāḥ) welfare acts, creativity, contribution (pṛthivīm) to the earth (dhārayanti) sustain, hold (saḥ) she (naḥ) our (bhūtasya) in the past (bhavyasya) in future (patni) sustainer (urum) vast spread (lokaṁ) places, world of existence (pṛthivī) earth (naḥ) for us (kṛnotu) make, create.

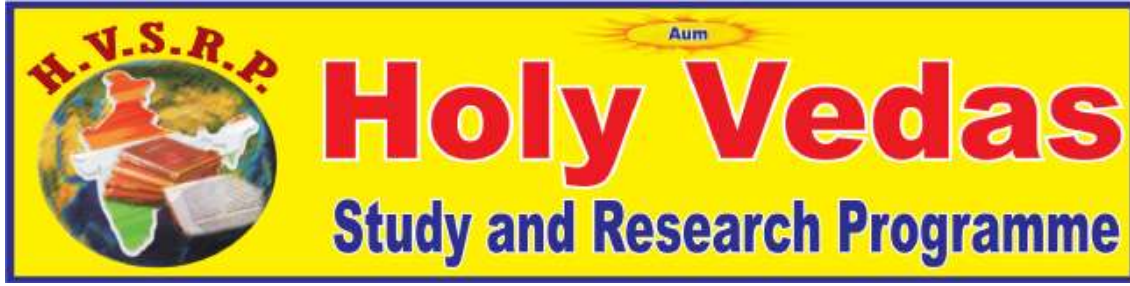
Elucidation:

What are the pillars of earth that hold and sustain her?

There are six pillars of earth, that hold and sustain her :

1. Satyaṁ bṛhat - Truth which is great, infinity and cause of progress.
2. ṛtam - knowledge of the real existence, truth of the creation.
3. dīkṣā – vow full, commitment, self-discipline.
4. tapaḥ - penances, austerity.
5. Brahma - divine knowledge of God.
6. yajñāḥ - welfare acts, creativity, contribution.

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She was our sustainer in the past, she will continue in future. Mother earth makes, creates, vast spread places, world of existence for us.

Practical utility in life:

Who can protect the pillars of earth?

What would be the result of deviation from these pillars of earth?

What are the three dimensional powers of Mother Earth?

A great positivity is expressed and a guarantee is given in this verse that the six great, noble and divine features would remain present till the earth is in existence. Mother earth is strong and divine enough to sustain all living beings and therefore, her own pillars also. Mother earth would continue to remain a strong divine power in future also. That's why earth is called mother because she sustains all with her divine powers.

This verse is an inspiration also to live a life following these features to become a pillar of our mother earth. Any deviation from these great noble features would ruin our own life as well as the whole fibre of the society.

'Prithivee' devata, invoked in this hymn, refers to all the dimensions of every existence i.e. physical, mental and spiritual. Physically earth is visible to all. Beyond it, there is a divine power of earth which is empowered by God, the Supreme and complete Spirit of the universe. Therefore, we invoke the divine power of earth i.e. the power behind this physical earth.

Quote:

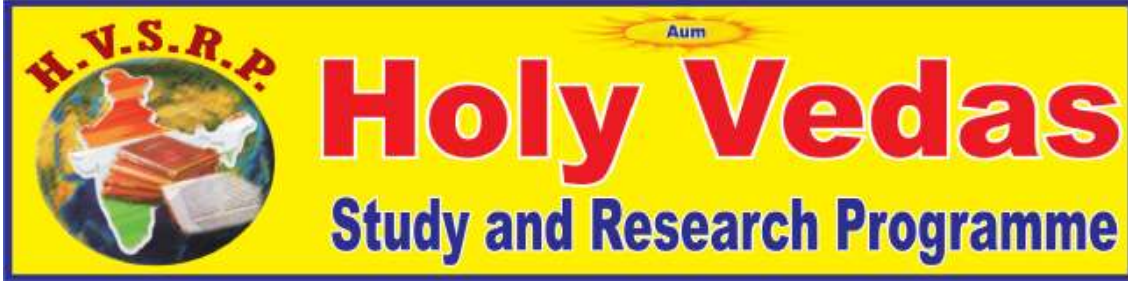
(Satyaṁ bṛhat ṛtaṁ ugraṁ dīkṣā tapo brahma yajñāḥ pṛthivīm dhārayanti, AV 12.1.1)

There are five pillars of earth, that hold and sustain her:-

1. Satyaṁ bṛhat - Truth which is great, infinity and cause of progress.
2. ṛtaṁ - knowledge of the real existence, truth of the creation.
3. dīkṣā – vow full, commitment, self-discipline.
4. tapaḥ - penances, austerity.
5. Brahma - divine knowledge (of God).
6. yajñāḥ - welfare acts, creativity, contribution.

(saḥ naḥ bhūtasya bhavyasya patni, AV 12.1.1)

Mother earth was our sustainer in the past, she will continue in future.



(urum lokam pṛthivī naḥ kṛnotu, AV 12.1.1)

Mother earth makes, creates, vast spread places, world of existence for us.

Atharva Veda 12.1.2

असंबाधं बध्यतो मानवानां यस्या उद्वतः प्रवतः समं बहु ।
नानावीर्या ओषधीर्या बिभर्ति पृथिवी नः प्रथतां राध्यतां नः ॥ 2 ॥

Asambādham badhyato mānavānām yasyā udvataḥ pravataḥ samam bahu.

Nānāvīryā oṣadhīryā bibharti pṛthivī naḥ prathatām rādhyatām naḥ. 2

(Asambādham) without bondage, freedom (badhyataḥ) from bondage (mānavānām) for men (yasyā) whose (udvataḥ) ascents (pravataḥ) descents (samam) plains (bahu) many (nānā) various (vīryāḥ) vital strength (oṣadhīḥ) herbs (yā) that (bibharti) specially bears (pṛthivī) earth (naḥ) for us (prathatām) spreads (rādhyatām) prosperity, wealth, growth (naḥ) for us.

Elucidation:

What is the extent of freedom of earth?

What is grown on earth for our health?

Mother Earth provides all men, freedom from bondage, whose many types of lands are there with ascents, descents and plains; who specially bears various types of vital strength giving herbs; she spreads (all these lands and herbs etc.) for us and also the prosperity, growth for us.

Practical utility in life:

How to develop universal brotherhood despite territorial boundaries among nations?

What is acidification of food?

Mother Earth has given men full competence and freedom to move on any type of lands. But men, in the name of organising and administering, have bound themselves in boundaries. Despite boundaries, there can be a feeling of

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brotherhood, honour to all men, inviting intellectuals to share their spiritual experiences for mutual guidance and inspirations at international level, with the indulgence of governments.

Mother Earth has given innumerable herbs grown on various types of lands. Human beings should use these herbs, vegetables etc. in their natural or near natural form, by avoiding over-cooking or acidification of food, for a healthy living. Mother Earth and her products should neither be polluted nor made acidic.

Quote:

(pr̥thivī naḥ prathatām rādhyatām naḥ, AV 12.1.2)

Mother Earth spreads (all these lands and herbs etc.) for us and also the prosperity, growth for us.

Atharva Veda 12.1.3

यस्यां समुद्र उत सिन्धुरापो यस्यामन्नं कृष्टयः संबभूवुः ।
यस्यामिदं जिन्वति प्राणदेजत्सा नो भूमिः पूर्वपेये दधातु ।।३।।

Yasyām samudra uta sindhurāpo yasyāmannam kṛṣṭayaḥ sambabhūvuḥ.

Yasyāmidam jinvati prānadejatsā no bhūmiḥ pūrvapeye dadhātu. 3

(Yasyām) on whom (samudraḥ) seas (uta) and (sindhuḥ) rivers (āpaḥ) water streams and bodies (yasyām) on whom (annam) grains (kṛṣṭayaḥ) agriculture (sambabhūvuḥ) are produced (yasyām) on whom (idam) this (jinvati) moves (prānat) breathing (ejat) making efforts (saḥ) She (Mother Earth) (naḥ) us (bhūmiḥ) Mother Earth (pūrvapeye) first drinks, priority to drink (dadhātu) give, establish, hold in us.

Elucidation:

What does Mother Earth provide us?

On whom, on Mother Earth, there are seas; there are rivers; there are water bodies and water streams; there are grains and all sorts of agricultural products produced; where these men move, breathe and make efforts, she, the Mother Earth, may give, establish or hold in us first drinks i.e. may we be provided drinks with priority.

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Practical utility in life:

Which element shall we consume with priority?

Water is rich in oxygen, therefore, consumption of water keeps the body also rich in oxygen. It's called hydration of body. A hydrated body keeps many diseases away from it. All fruits, vegetables should be consumed in natural way even without adding salt because salt reduces the oxygen from fruits and vegetables. The process of cooking on heat also reduces the water contents and other nutrition from vegetables.

Our body consists of 70% water, therefore, water should be our first priority to maintain it's level in body. It's a beautiful gift of Mother Earth. Ground water is very rich in various important minerals also.

Reference can be made to a special sukta in Rig Veda on water i.e. RV mandal 10 sukta 9.

Quote:

(saḥ naḥ bhūmiḥ pūrvapeye dadhātu, AV 12.1.3)

She, the Mother Earth, may give, establish or hold in us first drinks i.e. may we be provided drinks with priority.

Atharva Veda 12.1.4

यस्याश्चतस्रः प्रदिशः पृथिव्या यस्यामन्नं कृष्टयः संबभूवुः ।
या विभर्ति बहुधा प्राणदेजत्सा नो भूमिर्गोष्वप्यन्ने दधातु ॥ 4 ॥

Yasyāscatasraḥ pradiśaḥ prthivyā yasyāmannam kṛṣṭayaḥ sambabhūvuḥ.

Yā vibharti bahudhā prāṇadejatsā no bhū-mirgoṣvapyanne dadhātu. 4

(Yasyāḥ) on whom (catasraḥ) four (pradiśaḥ) complete directions (prthivyāḥ) of the earth (yasyām) on whom (annam) food grains etc. (kṛṣṭayaḥ) agriculture (sam babhūvuḥ) are produced appropriately (yā) who (vibharti) holds, sustains (bahudhā) in many ways (prāṇat) breathing (ejat) making efforts (sāḥ) she (naḥ) us (bhūmiḥ) Mother Earth (goṣu) cows i.e. mental strength, senses of knowledge (api) and (anne) food grains, physical strength (dadhātu) give, establish.

Elucidation:

Whom shall we pray for physical and mental strength?

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On whom, on Mother Earth, food grains and all other agricultures are produced in four complete directions; who holds, sustains people breathing and making efforts, in many ways. That Mother Earth may give, establish us in cows, senses of knowledge for mental strength and food grains etc. for physical strength.

Practical utility in life:

Why is Earth addressed as Mother by all devotees?

Why is Sun addressed as Father by all devotees?

Like everything in the world of existence, Mother Earth also has three dimensional existence – physical, mental and spiritual.

Like other divine powers, Mother Earth is also divine in nature and powers.

Therefore, an invocation to the divinity of Mother Earth is begun by addressing her as Mother, particularly because she generates i.e. gives birth, as well as sustain everything to be consumed by all living beings.

In this world of existence, Sun becomes a great and divine father. He penetrates his rays of energy into the womb of Mother Earth to produce and sustain all.

Quote:

(sāḥ naḥ bhūmiḥ goṣu api anne dadhātu, AV 12.1.4)

That Mother Earth may give, establish us in cows, senses of knowledge for mental strength and food grains etc. for physical strength.

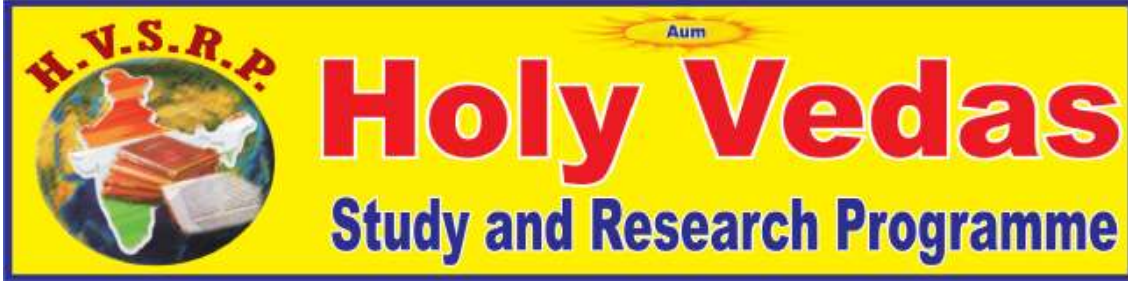
Atharva Veda 12.1.5

यस्यां पूर्वे पूर्वजना विचक्रिरे यस्यां देवा असुरानभ्यवर्तयन् ।
गवामश्वानां वयसश्च विष्टा भगं वर्चः पृथिवी नो दधातु ॥ ५ ॥

Yasyām pūrve pūrvajanā vicakrire yasyām devā asurānabhyavartayan.
Gavāmaśvānām vayasaśca viṣṭhā bhagaṁ varcaḥ pṛthivī no dadhātu. 5

(Yasyām) on whom (pūrve) in the past (pūrvajanā) ancestors (vicakrire) specially perform (their duties) (yasyām) on whom (devāḥ) the divine (powers and people) (asurān) to the negative, violent, demonic (abhyavartayan) attacked, defeated (gavām) of cows, of senses of knowledge (aśvānām) of horses, of senses of action (vayasaḥ) of birds, of flying (of mind) (ca) and (viṣṭhāḥ) residing and resting

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platform (bhagāṃ) comforts (varcaḥ) splendour, radiant energy, majesty, spiritual growth etc. (pṛthivī) Mother Earth (naḥ) us (dadhātu) give, establish.

Elucidation:

Who can give us comforts, splendour, radiant energy, majesty and spiritual growth etc. all together?

On whom, on Mother Earth, our ancestors specially performed (their duties) in the past; on whom the divine (powers and people) attacked and defeated the negative, violent and demonic powers and people; which is a residing and resting platform of horses, cows and birds and this body carved out of earth is the platform for senses of knowledge, senses of action and flying or wavering mind, that Mother Earth may give, establish and bless us with comforts, splendour, radiant energy, majesty and spiritual growth etc.

Practical utility in life:

How to create a balance between material comforts and spiritual destination?

Our physical and mental bodies represent Mother Earth in our individual life. Creator of both, our body and Mother Earth, is the Supreme Divine, God. Human beings are also divine in nature because they are destined to realise that Supreme Divine. While enjoying all comforts of Mother Earth, this human body normally gets deviated from its spiritual journey. That is why, this verse reminds all human beings to enjoy comforts given by their mother, but keep the spiritual destination always in focus of mind. The material comforts are only for our survival in human form, to reach the spiritual destination.

Quote:

(bhagaḥ varcaḥ pṛthivī naḥ dadhātu, AV 12.1.5)

Mother Earth may give, establish and bless us with comforts, splendour, radiant energy, majesty and spiritual growth etc.

Atharva Veda 12.1.6

विश्वंभरा वसुधानी प्रतिष्ठा हिरण्यवक्षा जगतो निवेशनी ।
वैश्वानरं बिभ्रती भूमिरग्निमिन्द्रऋषभा द्रविणे नो दधातु ।। 6 ।।

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Viśvambharā vasudhānī pratiṣṭhā hiraṇyavakṣā jagato niveśanī.
Vaiśvānaram bibhratī bhūmiragnimindraṣabhā draviṇe no dadhātu. 6

(Viśvambharā) shelter of all, bearing all (vasudhānī) holding wealth for abodes (pratiṣṭhā) established, firm-standing (hiraṇyavakṣā) having gold in chest (jagataḥ niveśanī) reposing moving world, investing the moving world in activities (vaiśvānaram) of all people (bibhratī) holder (bhūmiḥ) Mother Earth (agnim) fire (indra ṛṣabhā) whose strength is Rishabha i.e. God, Sun and Indra persons (draviṇe) power of all wealth (naḥ) us (dadhātu) give, establish.

Elucidation:

How does Mother Earth bless us with power of all wealth?

Mother Earth give, establish and bless us with the power of all wealth with the following divine features for the welfare of all:

1. Mother Earth is viśvambharā i.e. shelter of all, bearing all.
2. Mother Earth is vasudhānī i.e. holding wealth for abodes.
3. Mother Earth is pratiṣṭhā i.e. established, firm-standing.
4. Mother Earth is hiraṇyavakṣā i.e. having gold in chest.
5. Mother Earth is jagataḥ niveśanī i.e. reposing moving world, investing the moving world in activities.
6. Mother Earth is vaiśvānaram bibhratī agnim i.e. holder of fire for all the people.
7. Mother Earth is indra ṛṣabhā i.e. whose strength is Rishabha i.e. God, Sun and Indra persons.

Practical utility in life:

What is the spiritual wealth of Mother Earth and all other divine powers and people?

Mother Earth is the treasure of wealth, not simply because of the financial values of land but because of her divine features to perform yajna acts with Sun. When, we, human beings, consume innumerable comforts and benefits from mother earth, we should keep in mind the divine purpose and powers of Mother Earth and rather the purpose and powers of God behind this creation. With a simple peep into those divine purposes and powers, any human being can simply feel and realise that purpose and powers, of everything in this world of existence, are

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to be used for the welfare of all and the destination of human beings is to remain associated with the Supreme Divine, God, and all divine powers.

By revering before Mother Earth and all other divine powers and people, we can realise the Supreme Divine, God.

Quote:

(bhūmiḥ draviṇe naḥ dadhātu, AV 12.1.6)

Mother Earth give, establish and bless us with the power of all wealth.

Atharva Veda 12.1.7

यां रक्षन्त्यस्वप्ना विश्वदानीं देवा भूमिं पृथिवीमप्रमादम् ।
सा नो मधु प्रियं दुहामथो उक्षतु वर्चसा ॥ ७ ॥

Yām rakṣhantyasvapnā viśvadānīm devā bhūmiṁ pṛthivīmapramādam.
Sā no madhu priyaṁ duhāmatho ukṣatu varcasā. 7

(Yām) to whom (rakṣhanti) protect (asvapnāḥ) not sleeping i.e. awakened, aware, conscious (viśvadānīm) giver of everything (devāḥ) divine (bhūmiṁ) the Mother Earth (producing vertically) (pṛthivīm) the Mother Earth (spread horizontally) (apramādam) promptly, without laziness (sā) she (naḥ) for us (madhu priyaṁ) loving sweet (duhām) yield, produce (atha) then (ukṣatu) increases (varcasā) splendour, radiant energy, majesty, spiritual growth etc.

Elucidation:

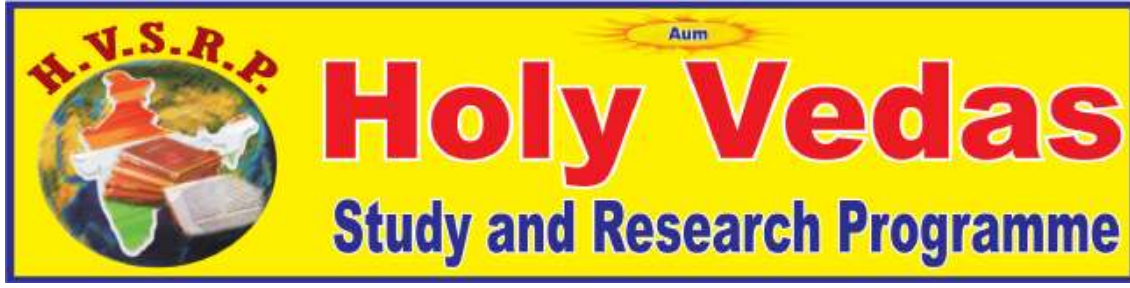
How is bhūmi different from pṛthivī?

Who protects Mother Earth?

The bhūmi (producing agricultural items vertically) and the pṛthivī (spread horizontally) is the giver of everything, to whom divine (people) not sleeping i.e. awakened, aware, conscious men protect promptly and without laziness. Then, she gives us the loving sweet yield, produces and increases us with splendour, radiant energy, majesty, spiritual growth etc.

Practical utility in life:

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What does Mother Earth provide us?

What is the relevance of Mother Earth in our spiritual progress?

Mother Earth is the giver of everything that we have or that we need including our body, food for our sustenance and abode for our safe living.

Mother Earth gives us food from agricultural produce and is called bhūmi (producing vertically).

Mother Earth spreads and provides herself for our abodes and is called pṛthivī.

Besides physical and mental support, Mother Earth only facilitates and inspires us to proceed on spiritual path to associate with God, the Supreme Divine Creator of all divinities, including human beings.

Therefore, it's the bounden duty of a man, to remain conscious about his spiritual destination, to protect Mother Earth from all pollutions and deteriorations, only then he is entitled to receive her sweet sustaining food and splendour for spiritual progress.

Quote:

(Yām rakṣhanti asvapnāḥ viśvadānīm devāḥ bhūmim pṛthivīm apramādam, AV 12.1.7)

The bhūmi (producing agricultural items vertically) and the pṛthivī (spread horizontally) is giver of everything, to whom divine (people) not sleeping i.e. awakened, aware, conscious men protect promptly and without laziness.

Atharva Veda 12.1.8

यार्णवेऽधि सलिलमग्न आसीद्यां मायाभिरन्वचरन्मनीषिणः ।

यस्या हृदयं परमे व्यो मन्त्सत्येनावृतममृतं पृथिव्याः ।

सा नो भूमिस्त्विषिं बलं राष्ट्रे दधातूतमे ॥ ८ ॥

Yārṇave'dhi salilamagra āsīdyām māyābhiranvacaranmanīṣiṇaḥ.

Yasyā hṛdayam parame vyomantsatyenāvṛtama-mṛtaṁ pṛthivyāḥ.

Sā no bhūmistviṣim balaṁ rāṣṭre dadhātūttame. 8

(Yā) that which (arṇave) sea (adhi) full of (salilam) in water form (agra) in the past (āsīt) was (yām) whom (māyābhiḥ) with creative intellect (anvacaran) followed the footsteps (manīṣiṇaḥ) the contemplative men (yasyāḥ) of whom (hṛdayam) heart, controlling power (parame vyoman) in the highest firmament

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(satyena) with truth (āvṛtam) covered, pervaded (amṛtaṁ) non-dying (pṛthivyāḥ) Mother Earth (vast spread) (sā) she (naḥ) us (bhūmiḥ) Mother Earth (producing vertically) (tviṣim) vital power, intellect (balaṁ) strength (rāṣṭre) to our nation (dadhātu) give, establish (uttame) the best.

Elucidation:

Where is the heart of Mother Earth?

What does Mother Earth ensure for all nations?

The Mother Earth, which was in sea full of water, whom the contemplative men followed her footsteps with creative intellect, heart i.e. controlling power of whom, of Mother Earth, is in the highest firmament, covered with truth and is non-dying. She gives, establishes and bless us and our nation the best land (producing agricultural products) and vital power i.e. intellect and strength.

Practical utility in life:

Where shall we fix up our mind and heart?

Where is parme-vyoma?

The whole Mother Earth has all the three dimensions of existence i.e. a physical or material body, the mind or heart and the spiritual controller. When her mind is in the highest firmament, all human beings are supposed to fix up their mind and heart consciously in that Supreme Controller, God.

The Almighty God ensures all materials for sustenance of all living beings through Mother Earth along with vital power i.e. intellect and strength.

We must revere that Mother Land and perform yajna acts for the welfare of all her children. With intellectual mind and heart, we must associate with God established in the highest firmament in our body and in the creation, of course along with following truth and seeking a non-dying state. Non-dying state i.e. salvation, is possible after living a non-dying state in human life i.e. not dying or desiring for materials.

The highest firmament i.e. Parme Vyome, is beyond the material creation i.e. above our physical or mental level of existence, the vacuum beyond vacuum.

Quote:

(yasyāḥ hṛdayaṁ parame vyoman satyena āvṛtam amṛtaṁ pṛthivyāḥ, AV 12.1.8) Heart i.e. controlling power of whom, of Mother Earth, is in the highest firmament, covered with truth and is non-dying.

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