

Study AV Kand 1 English

Atharva Veda 1.1.1

ये त्रिषप्ताः परियन्ति विश्वा रूपाणि बिभ्रताः ।
वाचस्पतिर्बला तेषां तन्वो अद्य दधातु मे ॥१॥

Ye triṣaptāḥ pariyaṇti viśvā rūpāṇi bibhrataḥ.
Vācaspatirbalā teṣām tanvo adya dadhātu me. 1

(Ye) These (triṣaptāḥ) three into seven (pariyaṇti) pervade everywhere (viśvā) all (rūpāṇi) forms (bibhrataḥ) while holding (vācaspatiḥ) Lord of speeches and knowledge (balā) strength (teṣām) their (tanvaḥ) of body (adya) today (dadhātu) assign, give (me) for me.

Elucidation:

How many elements are the basis of all forms?

'Atharva' is the Rishi and 'Vachaspati' is the devata of this sukta.

The three into seven i.e. twenty-one elements pervade everywhere in all forms. While holding them, the Lord of speeches and knowledge, please assign, give for me the strength of body, today.

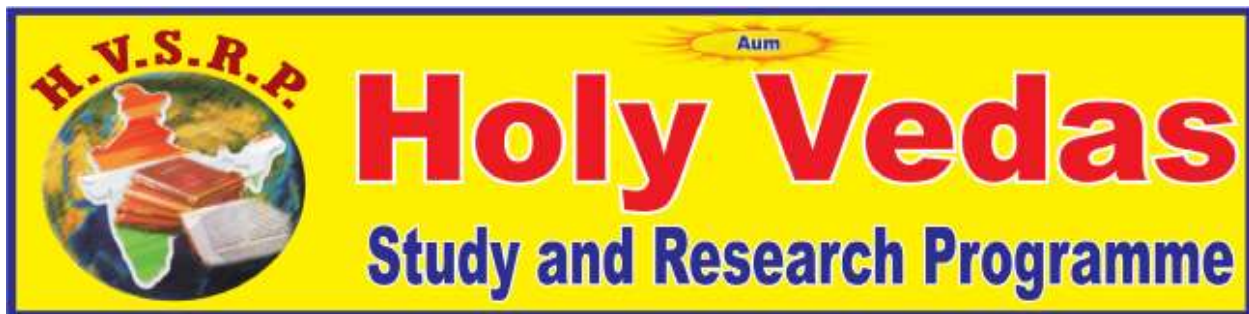
Practical utility in life:

Where from shall we begin the journey of knowledge?

Who can clarify the mystery of our life creation?

The first inspiration of Atharva Veda is to know about the twenty-one elements in this universe that are pervading in all forms. With this begins the journey to start understanding our human body in the first instance and then taking this journey of knowledge to all material forms of this universe and ultimately to the Creator.

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Lack of knowledge of basic constituents of our body would keep us groping in the dark. Whereas a clear understanding of our body constituents and the process of its formation and functioning would make it easy for us to understand anything in the universe because whatever is there in the universe, same is in this body – yatha brahmande, tatha pinde.

There are basically two causes of this creation – efficient cause i.e. invisible creator, and the phenominal cause i.e. visible creation.

A. Efficient cause, the invisible creator, is the Supreme Spirit, God, which is addressed as 'Vachaspati' meaning the Lord of speeches and knowledge. 'Vachaspati' is an attribute of God who gave knowledge to the seers.

B. Phenominal cause of this creation is the original power of nature or prakriti. The efficient cause and the phenominal cause, prakriti, both being the part of the Supreme Power, God, takes on the evolutionary process of diversification of the desire and design of God – eko aham bahu syam i.e. I'm one, let me be many.

C. Thus, these two causes together became mahat, the universal intellect i.e. the third element in the process of evolution of the creation.

D. This mahat changed into ahankara i.e. a generic identity.

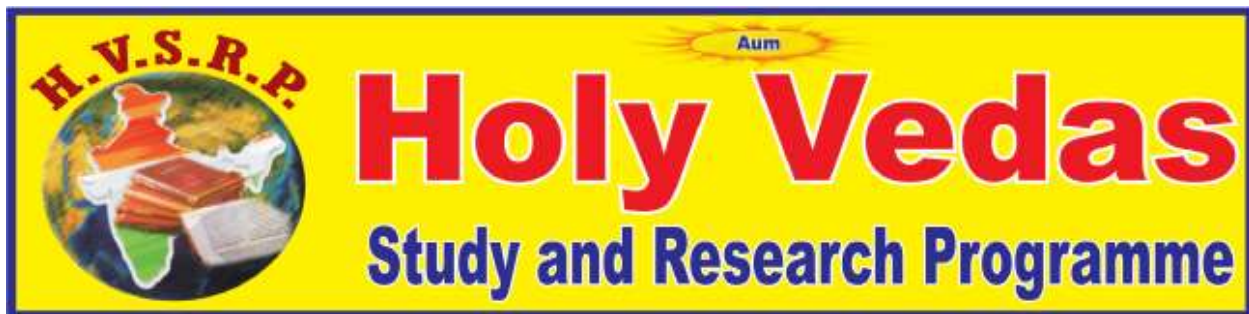
E. This ahankara evolved into two directions – (i) physical and (ii) psychic.

The physical aspect of evolution developed into –

- A. Five gross elements called panchamahabhoota – (i) Ether (akash), (ii) Air (vayu), (iii) Fire (agni, sun), (iv) Water (jala) and (v) Earth (prithivi),
- B. Five subtle elements called panch tanmatra – (i) Sound (shabda), (ii) Touch (sparsh), (iii) Form (rupa), (iv) Taste (rasa), (v) Smell (gandha) respectively related to the five gross elements.

The psychic aspect developed into –

- A. Five powers of senses of knowledge – (i) hearing through ears, (ii) touching through skin, (iii) seeing through eyes, (iv) tasting through tongue and (v) smelling through nose,
- B. Five powers of senses of action – (i) mouth, (ii) hands, (iii) legs, (iv) anus for excretion, (v) urinary organ.
- C. Mind is both the sense of knowledge and action.



Thus, the ten elements of physical aspect and eleven elements of psychic aspect together are referred to as triṣaptāḥ in this verse. We must know about these elements in detail.

Shri Hari Sharan Siddantalankar ji has taken a different method to count twenty-one elements.

- (i) Mahat, the universal intelligence,
- (ii) Ahankar, the generic identity.
- (iii) to (vii) five tanmatras i.e. subtle elements i.e. (i) Sound (shabda), (ii) Touch (sparsh), (iii) Form (rupa), (iv) Taste (rasa), (v) Smell (gandha).

Each one of these seven elements are influenced by the three qualities i.e. gunas – purity i.e. satva, activity i.e. raja, and inertia i.e. tamas. Thus, multiplying seven into three, constitute twenty-one elements that pervade and hold all forms in the creation.

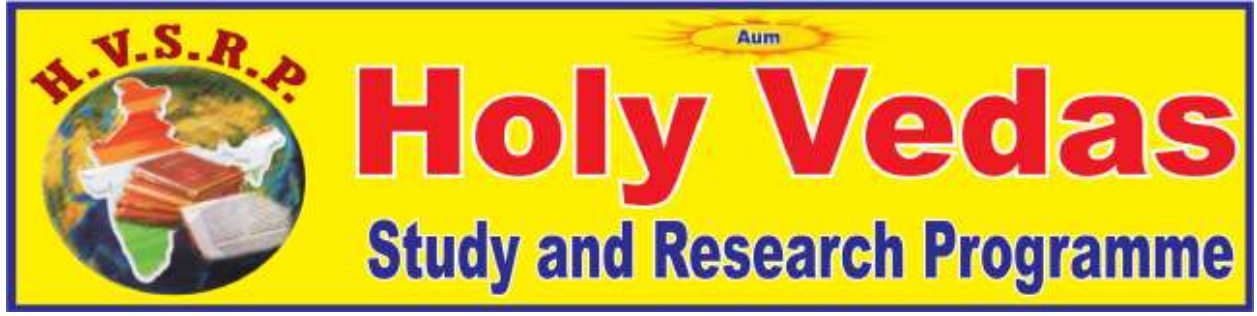
As per Kshem Karan Dass Trivedi ji, these twenty-one elements can be counted in two ways.

First, seven sets of three each i.e.

- (i) Three dimensions of looking at the creation - God, jiva and nature.
- (ii) Three qualities i.e. gunas - purity i.e. satva, activity i.e. raja, and inertia i.e. tamas.
- (iii) Three divisions of time – past i.e. bhoota, preset i.e. vartamana and future i.e. bhavishya.
- (iv) Three highest attributes of God – Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh i.e. the Creator, sustainer and destroyer.
- (v) Three worlds – heavenly space i.e. duloka, middle region i.e. madhya loka and earth i.e. bhooloka.
- (vi) Three faults i.e. doshas – air i.e. vaata, warmth i.e. pita, and mucus or water i.e. kapha. These three faults are in the body and all eatables in different ratios.
- (vii) Three bodies of our life – gross body i.e. sthool sharira, subtle body i.e. sukshama sharira, causal body i.e. karan sharira.

Second, three sets of seven each i.e.

- (i) Seven suns i.e. aditya,



(ii) Seven seers i.e. rishis,

(iii) Seven seas i.e. oceans

There is another way of counting twenty-one elements as – twelve months, five seasons, three worlds and one sun.

Another set of twentyone elements is – five gross elements i.e. panch mahaboota, five breaths i.e. panch pranas, five senses of knowledge, five senses of action and one antahakaran

In whatever way one can try to understand this manifest creation by associating himself with that 'Vachaspati', the Lord of speeches and knowledge i.e. God.

Since creation, only this one supreme teacher has been imparting knowledge to all souls in human body. As per Yoga Darshanam 1.26, sah purveshamapi guru kalenanvachchedat.

Sankhya Darshan also establishes the supremacy of God through twenty-five elements of creation.

This is the only way to understand this whole creation and our human life to understand what is real and permanent in it and what is unreal and impermanent.

Quote:

(Ye triṣaptāḥ pariyanti viśvā rūpāṇi, AV 1.1.1)

The three into seven i.e. twenty-one elements pervade everywhere in all forms.

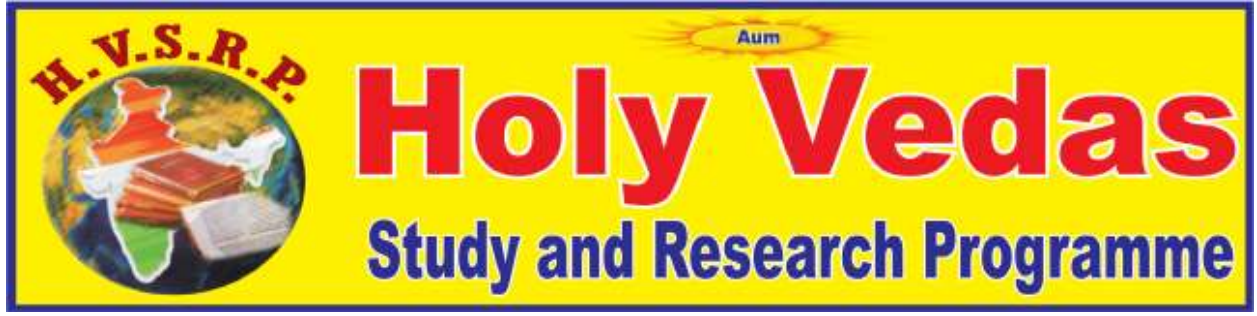
Atharva Veda 1.1.2

पुनरेहि वाचस्पते देवेन मनसा सह ।
वसोष्पते नि रमय मय्येवास्तु मयि श्रुतम् ॥२॥

Punarehi vācas pate devena manasā saha.
Vasoṣ pate ni ramaya mayyevāstu mayi śrutam. 2

(Punaḥ) again (ehi) please come (vācas pate) the Lord of speeches and knowledge (devena) divine (manasā) mind (saha) with (vasoḥ pate) the Lord of yajna, nobility

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(ni) continuously (ramaya) take me, move me (through knowledge) (mayi eva astu) remain in me (mayi śrutam) heard by me (that knowledge).

Elucidation:

How to retain and continue the pursuit of knowledge?

The Lord of speeches and knowledge! Please come again with divine mind.

The Lord of yajna and nobility! Please continuously take me through or make me move in that knowledge.

The knowledge shall remain in me and shall be heard by me.

Practical utility in life:

How to see off the Lord of knowledge and a teacher?

This is prayer after every knowledge received through a teacher or guide or through perception in which we pray to the Lord of knowledge to continue this flow of knowledge without stopping it till the light of knowledge is realised by us. This verse can be chanted while seeing off a teacher or after meditation, by inviting him again and again.

Quote:

(Punaḥ ehi vācas pate devena manasā saha, AV 1.1.2)

The Lord of speeches and knowledge! Please come again with divine mind.

(mayi eva astu mayi śrutam, AV 1.1.2)

The knowledge shall remain in me and shall be heard by me.

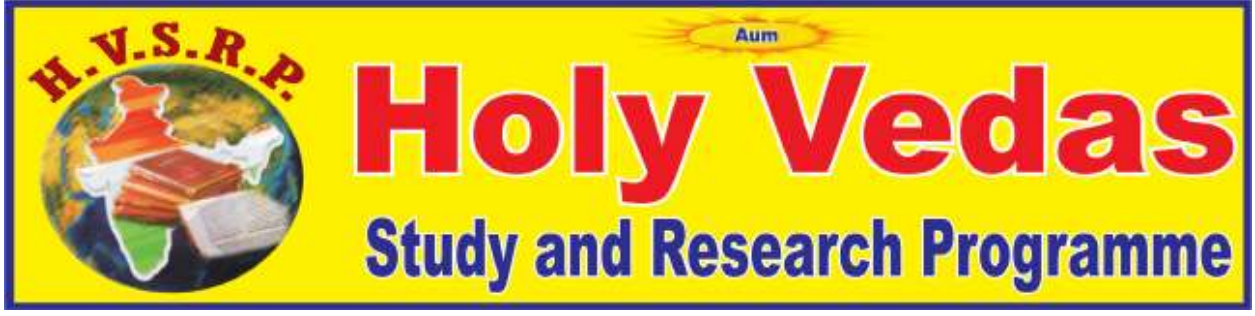
Quote:

Whole mantra

Atharva Veda 1.1.3

इहैवाभि वि तनूमे आर्त्ती इव ज्यया ।

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वाचस्पतिर्नि यच्छतु मय्येवास्तु मयि श्रुतम् ।।३।।

Ihaivābhi vi tanūbhe artni-iva jyayā.
Vācaspatirni yacchatu mayyevāstu mayi śrutam. 3

(Iha eva abhi) here, in all ways (vi tanu) especially attentive (ubhe) at both (material and spiritual aspects) (artni) of bow (iva) just as (jyayā) strings (vācaspatiḥ) the Lord of speeches and knowledge (ni) regularly (yacchatu) keep in discipline (mayi eva astu) remain in me (mayi śrutam) heard by me (that knowledge).

Elucidation:

How should the teacher conduct his discipline?

Here, in the process of learning, both the teacher and the taught should be attentive at both the aspects of life i.e. material and spiritual just as both the strings of bow (are attentive at both the ends). The Lord of speeches and knowledge should keep the disciple in full discipline. The knowledge shall remain in me and shall be heard by me.

Practical utility in life:

How can the disciple perpetuate his knowledge?

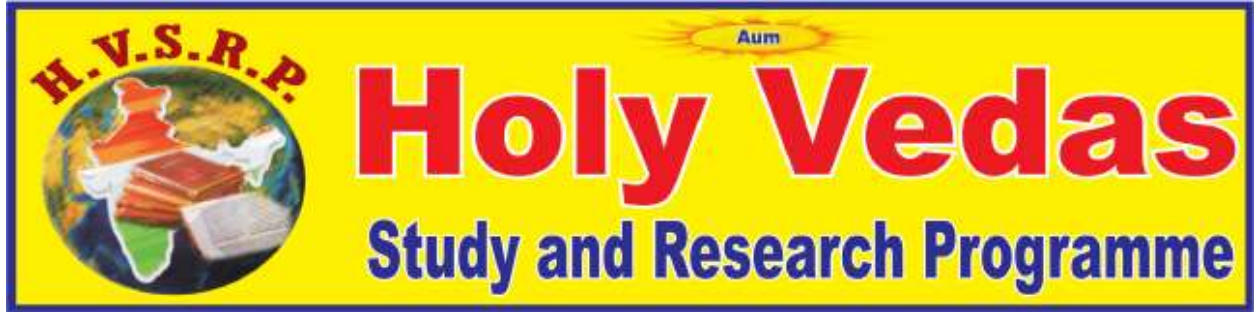
The realisation of teacher and taught must be in full discipline only then the disciple can learn both the aspects of life i.e. material and spiritual and can retain that knowledge practically with him throughout his life.

Atharva Veda 1.1.4

उपहूतो वाचस्पतिरुपास्मान्वाचस्पतिर्हवयताम् ।
सं श्रुतेन गमेमहि मा श्रुतेन वि राधिषि ।।४।।

Upahūto vācaspatirupāsmānvācaspatirhvayatām.

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Sam śrutena gamemahi mā śrutena virādhiṣi. 4

(Upa hūtaḥ) invoked (vācaspatiḥ) the Lord of speeches and knowledge (upa – to be prefixed with hvayatām) (asmān) to us (vācaspatiḥ) the Lord of speeches and knowledge (hvayatām – upa hvayatām) call near (sam - to be prefixed with gamemahi) (śrutena) heard (gamemahi - sam gamemahi) associate (mā) not (śrutena) heard (vi rādhiṣi) separate.

Elucidation:

What does a sincere disciple expect from the Supreme teacher?

The Lord of speeches and knowledge is invoked. May that Lord call us near Him for inspiration. May we associate practically with heard knowledge. May we not separate from the heard knowledge.

Practical utility in life:

What does a sincere disciple promise to the Supreme teacher?

The disciple is expecting from the Supreme teacher that He should provide a nearness to him. And in return the disciple promises two vows:

- (i) He will use the knowledge in life practically. It's called imbibing the knowledge.
- (ii) He will never disassociate with the knowledge. It means, he will always remember the core dictates of values and never show a schism between his knowledge and practical life.

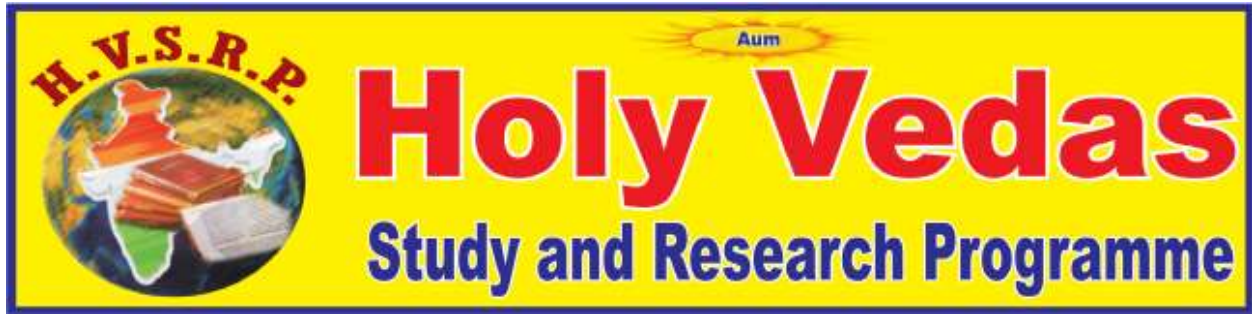
Quote:

(Upa hūtaḥ vācaspatiḥ upa hvayatām asmān vācaspatiḥ, AV 1.1.4)

The Lord of speech and knowledge is invoked. May that Lord call us near Him for inspiration.

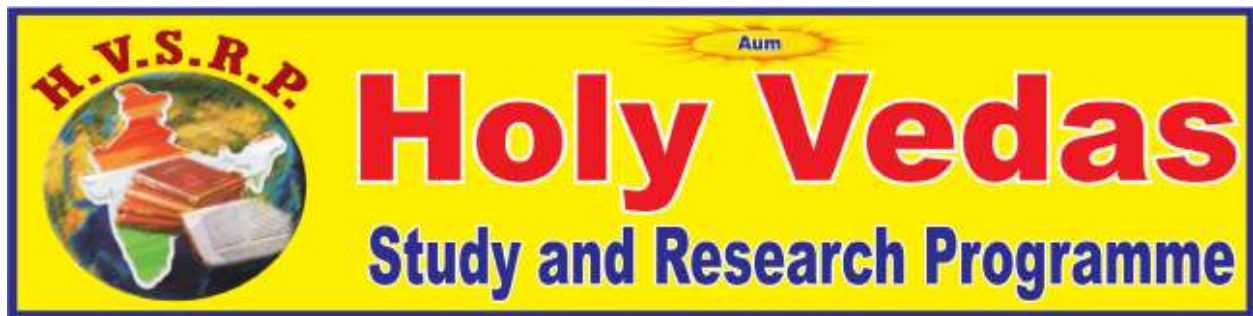
(sam śrutena gamemahi mā śrutena vi rādhiṣi, AV 1.1.4)

May we associate practically with heard knowledge. May we not separate from the heard knowledge.



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