



ISSN 2583-9020

An Electronic Veda Journal

वेद वाणी

(vEda vaaNee)

Volume 1, Issue 4, January 2024



Printed and Published by

Veda Samskruti Samiti

Malkajgiri

Hyderabad TS

Sri Gaṇeśa Suktam

Suktam for Prosperity and Well-being

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Introduction

The *Gaṇeśa Suktam* is a compilation of mantras extracted from three mandalas of the *Ṛgveda Samhitā* (RV). There are twelve mantras in this Suktam. The first nine mantras are from the 81st Sukta of the 8th Maṇḍala, the tenth mantra is from the 23rd Sukta of the 2nd Maṇḍala, the eleventh and twelfth mantras of the Suktam are from the 112th Sukta of the 10th Maṇḍala. The first nine mantras are addressed to *Indra*, the tenth mantra is addressed to *Brahmaṇaspati*, and the 11th and 12th mantras are addressed to *Indra*. Though *Indra* is the Devata for this Suktam, it is also addressed to *Gaṇeśa* as it has the term ‘*Mahāhasti*’ (the great elephant or the one with great hands). The benevolent and generous giving nature of *Gaṇeśa* was brought out in this Suktam. The Vedas teach about being unselfish in the pursuit of wealth, to be intelligent seekers of wealth and also to be proactive in the matters of attaining wealth.

It seems in the course of time, as a convention, all these mantras are chanted to worship Lord *Gaṇeśa*.

Ṛṣiḥ – Devata – Chandas

The Ṛṣiḥ, Devata and Chandas for all the ten mantras of the Suktam are provided in the table below:

Maṇḍala, Sukta, Mantra/s	Ṛṣiḥ	Devata	Chandas
RV 8-81:1-9	Kusīdī Kāṇva	Indra	2, 3, 6 & 7 - Nicṛdgāyatrī 1, 5 & 8 - Gāyatrī 4 & 9 - Virāḍgāyatrī
RV 2-23-1	Gṛtsamada Bhārgava Śaunaka	Brahmaṇaspati	Jagatī
RV 10-112:9-10	Nabhaḥprabhedana Vairūpa	Indra	Nicṛttriṣṭup

Mantra word meaning, Translation and Explanation of the Sukta Mantras

Note: While splitting the words in the Veda mantras for their meanings, if the word and suffix are separated, they are explained jointly as a meaningful unit based on the traditional Veda Bhaṣya (commentary) of Sri Sāyaṇācharya. For instance, the first mantra starts with the words आ तू न इन्द्र, but here the word आ is conjoined with its corresponding word and explained as a meaningful unit – आ सं गृभाय.

Mantra 1:

आ तू न इन्द्र क्षुमन्तं चित्रं ग्राभं सं गृभाय ।
महाहस्ती दक्षिणेन ॥ - RV 8-81-1

तू – already, नः – to us, इन्द्र – Oh Indra!, क्षुमन्तम् – being endowed with salutations, चित्रम् – of varied nature, ग्राभम् – worth possessing, आ सं गृभाय – collect, महाहस्ती – endowed with great arms, दक्षिणेन – by the right hand.

Oh Indra! Endowed with great arms (hands), collect varied kinds of wealth that is worth possessing, to give to us with your right hand.

Though the mantra is addressed to Indra, it is also connected with Gaṇeśa because of the term *Mahāhasti* - the one with the great hand. Here the hands are given the attribute ‘great’ due to their nature of giving generously. But interestingly, the word ‘Hasti’ in Sanskrit also means an elephant. *Hasta* is tusk or trunk, *hasti* is the one which is endowed with a trunk, that too a great one, which reminds one of great *Sri Gaṇeśa*.

Mantra 2:

विद्महा हि त्वां तुविकूर्मिं तुविदेष्णं तुवीमघं ।
तुविमात्रमवोभिः ॥ - RV 8-81-2

विद्महा – (we) know, हि – indeed, त्वा – you, तुविकूर्मिम् – of lots of deeds, तुविदेष्णम् – great giving nature, तुवीमघम् – of lot of wealth, तुविमात्रम् – of great proportions, अवोभिः – endowed with.

We know you to be one endowed with lot of (great) deeds, great giving nature and a lot of wealth in great proportions.

The word *tuvi* is repeated, which as evident, means great. Indra is saluted as the one with greatness in action, giving and possessing great proportion of wealth. One can imbibe an interesting teaching from here. The one who performs great deeds (*tuvi-kurmi*) attains great wealth (*tuvimagham, tuvimatram*). Further, when such wealth is attained, one should also be endowed with the nature of generous giving (*tuvi-deshnam*).

Mantra 3:

नहि त्वां शूर देवा न मर्तासो दित्संतं ।
भीमं न गां वारयन्ते ॥ - RV 8-81-3

न हि – not, त्वा – you, शूर – valiant, देवाः – the Gods, न – not, मर् तासः – human beings, दित्सन्त म् – desirous of giving, भीमम् – the terrible, न – like, गाम् – the bull, वा रयन्ते – (can) stop.

The gods and the human beings cannot stop you, once you have desired to give. You are unstoppable like the fierce bull.

The strong desire of Indra to give is saluted and celebrated in the 3rd Mantra. The meaning is obvious - let us reflect upon it as follows: we unreservedly receive things right from our birth from our parents, nature, society, and fellow beings for our survival and sustenance. How much do we give back? Of course, there will be a desire to give back. But how strong is the desire? Are we converting all our desires, to give to some noble cause, into actions? We know the cause to be worthy, we also desire to give, but when it comes to actual giving, we shy away or we reduce the proportion of giving.

Look at the way Indra is described here. Once he has decided to give, no one can stop him from giving. He is like a fierce unstoppable bull in that regard. Such is the intense desire that we need to develop to give back to the society, fellow human beings and other beings and to the country. Thus Gaṇeśa or Indra has set an example as a leader in giving.

Let this Mantra in the *Gayatri Chandas* on repetition inspire us to intensify our desire to do our bit for the well-being of one and all.

Mantra 4:

एतो न्विंद्रं स्तवामेशानं वस्वः स्वराजं ।
न राधसा मर्धिषन्नः ॥ - RV 8-81-4

एतो – come, नु – quickly, इन्द्रम् – Indra, स्तवाम् – let us praise, ईशानम् – the lord, वस्वः – of wealth, स्वराजम् – shining in his own glory, न – not, राधसा – with wealth, मर्धिषत् – (others) affect, नः – us.

Come quickly! Let us praise Indra, the Lord of wealth, and the one who is shining in his great glory. Let others not affect us by their affluence (when we are rich ourselves, the wealth of others won't afflict us).

Mantra 5:

प्र स्तोषदुपं गसिषच्छ्वत्सामं गीयमानं ।
अभि राधसा जुगुरत् ॥ - RV 8-81-5

प्रस्तो षत् – let Indra be praised, उपगासिषत् – let accompanying songs be sung, श्रवत् – (Let him) listen, साम – the Saman, गीयमानम् – that is being sung, अभि – from all sides, राधसा – with wealth, जुगुरत् – let him bless.

Let the praise (of Indra) be sung, let the accompanying songs also be sung. Oh Indra! Listen to the *Saman* (*Samaveda* mantra) that is being sung and bless us from all sides with wealth.

4th and 5th Mantras – This is an interesting set of mantras that shows an urge to gain wealth by glorifying the rich and powerful deity. But in the light of *Srimad Bhagavad Gita*, we see Bhagavan Krishna stating that I have four types of devotees - the distressed, the one who is desirous of wealth, the inquisitive and the wise (*Srimad Bhagavad Gita*, 7-16). Sri Krishna says that all the four are noble people. This is to indicate that it is not wrong to turn Godward when in need of health, wealth, or wisdom. Rather than becoming abjectly material, even in the pursuit of money, connection with God can be established. With the grace of God, in due course, a person becomes noble, ethical and self-conscious and righteousness.

Mantra 6:

आ नो भर दक्षिणेनाभि सव्येन प्र मृश ।
इन्द्र मा नो वसोर्निर्भाक् ॥ - RV 8-81-6

नः – to us, आ भर – fill/bring, दक्षिणेन – by the right (hand), सव्येन – by the left (hand), अभिप्रमृश – Give, इन्द्र – Oh! Indra, मा – not, नः – us, वसोः – from wealth, निर्भाक् – leave out.

Let (Indra) give us wealth with his right hand and left hand. Oh! Indra! Do not leave us out of (granting) wealth.

As an innocent child, the mantra urges Indra to provide wealth with both the right and the left hands. Also, giving by both hands indicates generous giving and not holding back anything that is meant for distribution. This is called as देयेषु मुक्तहस्तता - having a free hand in giving (*Srimad Bhagavad Gita*, 18-43). Also the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* recommends this approach in giving richly - श्रिया देयम्.

Through these mantras of Lord *Indra* or *Gaṇeśa* is praised for attaining wealth. This amply testifies to the fact that the Vedas are not just otherworldly, they are also for attaining wealthy prosperous living endowed with concern for others.

Mantra 7:

उप क्रमस्वा भर धृषता धृष्णो जनानां ।
अदाशूष्टरस्य वेदः ॥ - RV 8-81-7

उपक्रमस्व – (O Indra!) Come towards (wealth, to give), आ भर – bring, धृषता – with a bold mind, धृष्णो – O Tormentor!, जनानाम् – of the people, अदाशूष्टरस्य – the one who is extremely non-giving, वेदः – wealth.

Oh Indra! Come towards the wealth (to grant us). O Tormentor! With a bold mind (snatch) the wealth from among men, the one who is extremely non-giving (selfish). O Indra! You possess wealth which is adored by the wise / intelligent. (On being sought) grant that to us.

As is evident from the translations – this is also an unreserved Vedic prayer for wealth. As is always known, the one who seeks gets. Hence, the Vedas here teach us how to ask for what is required. Being reserved and introverted is not the way to lead a prosperous life. Prosperity

and withdrawing into a shell do not go together. We have to go out there into the world and boldly search for and seek our requirement.

Further, the Vedas also make a very strong comment on the selfish hoarders – who possess yet do not give. The mantra says, ‘O Indra, Snatch wealth from them and give it to us’. This indicates that the rich also have a responsibility to give. One can become and should become rich, but not selfish. Such parity in wealth has been envisioned in ancient times.

Mantra 8:

इंद्र य उ नु ते अस्ति वाजो विप्रेभिः सनित्वः ।
अस्माभिः सु तं सनुहि ॥ - RV 8-81-8

इन्द्र – O Indra!, यः उ – that which, नु – indeed, ते – with you, अस्ति – is, वाजः – food, विप्रेभिः – by the wise, सनित्वः – adored, अस्माभिः – by us (on being asked), तम् – that (food), सु सनुहि – grant well.

O Indra! Let your wealth, which gives happiness to all, come to us quickly. Our people (also), who are endowed with great many desires, are addressing prayers to you quickly.

This Mantra speaks of the wealth adored by the intelligent. This can have multiple meanings. The intelligent and wise will seek such wealth which will stay forever, i.e. daivee sampat – divine wealth. The divine wealth is elaborated in the *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* (Chapter 16) as abhayam (fearlessness), sattva samshuddhi (purity of the mind), jnana-yoga-vyavasthiti (being established in knowledge of the consciousness and the practice of Yoga) and so on.

The other possible meaning of ‘wealth adored by the intelligent’ can be this: seeking wealth with intelligence. The concept of wealth keeps changing. In early times, cattle constituted wealth. Later gold and silver, land and property were considered wealth. And in the current era, we have come to the level of digital currency. A person endowed with intelligence with regard to wealth will understand the changing paradigms of wealth and channelize his focus to attain wealth accordingly. This could be the probable meaning, as the entire sets of mantras are focused on attaining wealth. It is very interesting to note how the Vedic mantras are universal in nature and lend themselves to be understood depending on the times in which we live.

Mantra 9:

सद्योजुवस्ते वाजा अस्मभ्यं विश्वश्चन्द्राः ।
वशैश्च मक्षू जरन्ते ॥ - RV 8-81-9

सद्योजुवः – endowed with the ability to move fast, ते – your, वाजाः – wealth/food, अस्मभ्यम् – towards us, विश्वश्चन्द्राः – which makes us all happy, वशैः च – and with (many) desires, मक्षू – quickly, जरन्ते – (we) praise.

We invite you, the leader of the gods. You are exceedingly comparable to food; you are a visionary among the visionaries. You are shining among the best mantras. O *Brahmaṇaspati* (Lord of food / actions)! Kindly listen to our prayers and be seated in the place of *Yajña* with your protective grace.

The key words in this mantra are Sadyojuva and Makshu, both of which indicate quick. As quick and intense are the prayers and endeavour for wealth, so quick will the attainment of wealth be. This is true for any pursuit in human existence. Hence, this mantra emphasizes the need to have an element of quick and intense effort. The same concept is also mentioned in *Brahmānandavalli* while defining one unit of human happiness where – to attain happiness, among other virtues, a person should also be ashishthah – a quick mover (आशि ष्ठो दृढिष्ठो बलिष्ठः, *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 2.8.1).

Thus, with regard to attaining wealth the mantras impart unselfishness, financial intelligence and the ability to act quickly and pro-actively.

Mantra 10:

गणानां त्वा गणपतिं हवामहे क्विं कवीनामुपमश्रवस्तमं ।
ज्येष्ठराजं ब्रह्मणां ब्रह्मणस्पते आ नः शृण्वन्नूतिभिः सीद सादनं ॥ - RV 2-23-1

गणानाम् – of the group (of gods), त्वा – You, गणपतिम् – Leader of the group, हवामहे – we invite, क्विम् – a visionary, कवीनाम् – among visionaries, उपमश्रवस्तमम् – the one who is exceedingly comparable to all (nourishing) food, ज्येष्ठराजम् – the one shining among the best, ब्रह्मणाम् – of the mantras, ब्रह्मणस्पते – O, Lord of actions/food!, नः – our (prayers), शृण्वन् – listening, ऊतिभिः – with protective grace, आ सीद – be seated, सादनम् – (in) the place of *Yajña*.

Be well seated Lord *Gaṇapati* / Indra (leader of the group)! In all the groups that praise you, you are stated as exceedingly intelligent among the visionaries. Nothing is done far or near without your presence. O Maghavan / possessor of wealth! This worship/adore is with great and varied praise (to you).

This Mantra is very popular. Though in our current convention we address it to Lord *Gaṇapati*, the elephant faced god, we can see that *Gaṇapati* is addressed as *Brahmaṇaspati* and that means the lord of action and food. It is interesting to note that food and action have cause-effect connection. If we act, we get the means for our sustenance and survival. In the Vedas, *Brahmaṇaspati* symbolizes this essential cause-effect connect. Such inspiration and protective grace of the lord of food and action is expected in every *Yajña* and every endeavour that we begin.

Mantra 11:

नि षु सीद गणपते गृणेषु त्वामाहुर्विप्रतमं कवीनां ।
न ऋते त्वत्क्रियते किञ्चनरे महामर्कं मघवंचित्रमर्च ॥ - RV 10-112-9

सु नि सीद (सुनि षीद) – be seated well, गणपते – O, Leader of the group!, गणेषु – among the group (of those who praise you), त्वाम् – you, आहुः – they state, विप्रतमम् – exceedingly intelligent, कवीनाम् – among visionaries, न – not, ऋते – without, त्वत् – you, क्रियते – is done, किञ्चन – anything, आरे – neither far nor near, महाम् – great, अर्कम् – prayers, मघवन् – O Possessor of wealth!, चित्रम् – of varied nature, अर्च – worship/accept and adore.

O Maghavan / possessor of wealth! To us, the seekers grant great fame / brilliant glow. O Friend! Lord of wealth! Understand the praise, we the friends, offer you. O Fighter in battles! O the one endowed with true prowess! Fight (our enemies). Make us partakers of wealth even from unexpected quarters.

Mantra 12:

अभिख्या नो मघवन्नाधमानान्त्सखै बोधि वसुपते सखीनां ।
रणं कृधि रणकृत्सत्यशुष्माभक्ते चिदा भंजा राये अस्मान् ॥ - RV 10-112-10

अभिख्या – brilliant glow/fame (grant), नः – (to) us, मघवन् – O, Possessor of Wealth!, नाधमानान् – the seekers, सखे – O Friend!, बोधि – understand, वसुपते – Lord of Wealth, सखीनाम् – (the praise of) the friends (we), रणम् – fight, कृधि – do, रणकृत् – O Fighter in wars!, सत्यशुष्म – O the one with true prowess, अभक्ते – from unexpected quarters, चित् – also, आ भज – Make partakers, राये – of wealth, अस्मान् – us.

O friend, O lord of the earth, please understand the story of your friends, who are like Indra. O devotee of truth and warfare, please wage war against us.

11th and 12th Mantras – As mentioned earlier, according to Sri Sāyaṇācharya’s commentary these mantras are addressed to Indra. But in our prevalent tradition, we chant this as a mantra for Sri Gaṇeśa. Indra / Gaṇeśa are described as the best among the intellectuals. In relation to the previous mantra if we see, to attain the means for sustenance through our action, we also need to apply our intellect exceedingly well. *Indra / Gaṇeśa* symbolize this dimension also. Hence, he has to be invoked in each action.

We need fame, glow, and wealth from unexpected quarters. But this path will not be without adversaries. We have to overcome them to reach the goal. *Indra / Gaṇeśa* symbolize the prowess that overcomes our adversaries.

Thus, through these final three mantras, we see *Indra / Gaṇeśa* symbolizing food, action, great intelligence and the prowess to overcome adversaries.

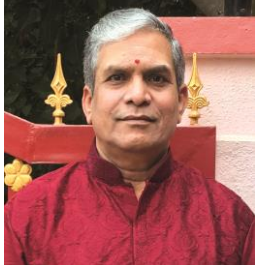
Conclusion

As is evident from the mantras, here Indra, the king among the gods, is invoked and saluted to attain wealth. Looking back at this very interesting Sukta on the divinity *Indra / Brahmaṇaspati*, we could see that the Vedas never discourage us from the pursuit of wealth. Not only that, they also provide us the knowledge wherewithal to achieve this. At the same time, the timeless Vedas also remind us to be free from selfishness, to share richly, leading to prosperity and happiness for one and all. Such is the pragmatic vision of the Vedas that makes it eternally relevant.

Hariḥ OM

- *OM Tat Sat* –

About Author



Dr. Raghava S. Boddupalli, MSc., PhD – After obtaining the PhD degree, he worked as a Scientist in the Department of Microbiology and Cell Biology at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore. Later, he worked as a Project Leader for a multinational agricultural biotechnology company. He has more than 35 years of experience as a scientist in field of Plant Biology and Agriculture Biotechnology. Over the last thirteen years, he has completed studying the Krishna Yajurveda. This has inspired him to publish several research articles on Vedas in relation to Botany. He has also completed two Vedic Projects titled, ‘*Plant Biology of Yajurveda*’ and ‘*Plants of Atharvaveda - Their Descriptions and Uses*’ sponsored by the Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi. He has edited and published three Veda books namely, ‘*Taittirīya Yajurvēdīya Āśīrvāda Manjarī*’, ‘*Abhiśravaṇa Mantrah*’ and ‘*Agnimantra Manjarī*’.



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13-1-62 & 13-1-47/1

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Veda Samskruti is an inherent intellectual property of Bhaarata dEsham. It is the basic duty and right of every citizen in Bhaarata dEsham to protect this Intellectual property. Indian Constitution and Law provides provision for protection and preservation of its culture, its monuments, architecture etc.

The Chaturvedas said to have 1131 shaakhaas right up to the time of Aadi Shankaraachaarya and thereafter during last more than ten centuries, many shaakhaas are out of practice due to various reasons and presently only seven shaakaas are in the practice of Guru shiShya parampara.

There is a need to continuously preserve these available shaakhaas which may likely to disappear in future due to various external forces acting in the country vigorously with the power of money and global politics. It is time for the intellectuals of Bharata dEsham to wake-up and work collectively to protect and preserve Veda Samskruti of Bharata dEsham, by empowering the Youth of Bharat dEsham, the future care takers of this great Indian Heritage , with suitable education of our correct history and culture.

The above background lead to formation of this Veda Samskruti Samiti which is registered under Societies acts of Government of Telangana, with Regd. No. 961/2016 by Sri A.H. Prabhakara Rao, who is the Founder and President of the Samiti.

The vEda vaaNee e-journal, [ISSN 2583-9020](https://doi.org/10.26434/chemrxiv-2024-12345), is now publishing its **Volume 1, Issue 4, January 2024.**