

A IMPORTANCE OF JAP IN MANTRA YÓG

Dr. Aruna Jadeja
Research Guide

Shobhanadevi Gohil
Lakulish Yoga University
Higher Studies and Research Academy
Chharodi, Gujarat, India
August, 2021

Abstract

Indian culture is based on Dharma which is known as Sanatan Dharma or Universal Religion. As per the principles of Sanatan Dharma, the individual soul itself is the Supreme soul. One small component of the Parmatma or the Supreme soul is present in all beings in the form of the Jivatma. Out of the 84 lakh species that are believed to exist in this world, the human species is considered to be of paramount importance as the ultimate self can be realised only through the means of the human body by the performance of YógSadhana. Indian sages have shown the path of Yógin order to attain this aim of realising the Paramatma. Four types of Yóg have been mentioned in the scriptures and Mantra Yóg is considered to be the gateway to Yóg.

INTRODUCTION

Mantra has been given much importance in the Indian culture. Mantras are considered to have great power and strength. The Vedas are known to be the oldest scriptures in the world wherein lies a collection of many mantras. These mantras have not been composed by any individual but have been realised and heard by realised sages during their YógSadhana. These mantras are therefore considered to be Apaurusheya (Not of human origin or divine), eternal and divine. Mantra Jap (chanting) is the easiest and safest tool for realizing God.

Meaning of Jap:

The Shiv Samhita mentions Mantra Yóg, Hatha Yóg, LayaYóg and Raj Yóg as the four types of Yóg. Mantra Yoga is said to be the first among these four:

मन्त्रयोगो हठश्चैव लययोगस्तृतीयकः ।
चतुर्थो राजयोगः स्यात्स द्विधाभाववर्जितः ॥
(Shiv Samhita: 5: 15)

‘Mantra Yóg, Hatha Yóg, the third LayaYóg and the fourth Raj Yóg– these are the four types of Yóg.’

The chanting of mantra which is called mantra jap is an important aspect of Mantra Yóg. The meaning of jap has been explained in the following verse:

जकारो जन्म विच्छेदः पकार पाप नाशकः ।
तस्याज्जप इति प्रोक्तो जन्म पाप विनाशकः ॥
(Swami Krupalvanand, 2014, p. 96)

That is, ‘J’ means the cessation of birth and ‘P’ means the destruction of sins. That which makes one free from the cycle of birth and death and destroys the sins is called ‘Jap’.

According to the Manu Smriti even if one does nothing else but only mantra chanting with faith then one would be able to attain the power of recognizing the Brahman. (Manu Smriti: 3: 3)

गुरुणा चोपदिष्टोऽपि वेदबाह्य विवर्जितः ।

That is, 'Chanting the mantras given by the Vedaas taught by the Guru and practicing that mantra is called Jap.' Sage Patanjali has stated in the SamadiPada that:

तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम् ।

(Yog Sutra: 1: 24)

That is 'Chanting the mantra repeatedly with the meaning of the mantra in mind is 'Jap'.

Importance of Jap:

Chanting is very important in the worship of God. Demonstrating the importance of chanting, Lord Krishna himself has said:

यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोस्मि ।

(Shrimad Bhagwad Gita: 10: 25)

'Amongst the Yagnas, I am Jap.'

The Manu Smriti states that:

ये पाकयज्ञाश्चत्वारो विधियज्ञनः समन्वितः ।
सर्वे ते जप यज्ञस्य कला नाहन्ति शोडशीम् ॥

(Manusmriti: 2: 96)

That is 'the ritual (Yagna) of Hóm, Havan, Nityashraddha, Guest meal etc. is not even equal to the sixteenth part of JapYagna.'

Chanting is a simple tool for God realization, the poor - the rich, the educated - the uneducated, men and women can all chant mantras. All that is needed is honesty, concentration, faith, devotion and perseverance. In the process of mantra jap, the mantra should be chanted with the knowledge of the mantra and mantra chaitanya (consciousness) by contemplating the mantra from the jivarupa located in the place of origin of the Sushumna. "(P. Ramachandra, 2052, p. 220).

Swami Krupalanandji has stated that:

मंत्र तीर्थे द्विजे देवे दैवजे भषजे गुरौ ।
यादशी भावना यस्य सिद्धिर्भवति तादशी ॥

(Krupalvanandaji, 1981, p. 84)

That is – 'Mantra, pilgrimage, Brahmin, Deva, Astrology, Medicine and Guru are as fulfilling as ones faith in them.'

Many seekers have fulfilled their desires by pleasing their Ishtadev through mantra jap. The effect of mantra jap can be certainly seen if the seed mantra is chanted with proper pronunciation and complete faith according to the appropriate ritual.

The spirit of jap (bhāvanā) is very important for mantra siddhi (accomplishing the mantra). The word 'bhāvanā' has many meanings such as thought, deliberation, contemplation, imagination, research, desire, etc. The mind is the place of origin of thoughts as well as the place of wandering of the thoughts. Countless thoughts get generated and destroyed in one moment. These thoughts arise due to the willingness and reluctance of a person. When a desire becomes strong, it takes the form of bhāvanā or the spirit (of jap). The spirit of jap is the epitome of potency. The powers of the mind get concentrated and flow in the direction of the desire for the fulfilment of which the mind remains more alert, eager and diligent.

Sage Patanjali has stated in the Yóg Sutra that:

जन्मौषधिमन्त्रतपः समाधिजाः सिद्धयः।

(Yoga Sutra: 4: 1)

‘Siddhis (accomplishments) can be attained through Birth, Medicine, Mantra jap, Tapas and Samadhi.’

Swami Shivananda has stated that:

“Chanting purifies the heart and strengthens the mind. Destroys the Shadripu (Six enemies),revives the subliminal impressions (samskars), awakens the Kundalini and showers eternal bliss.” (Swami Shivananda, 1994, p. 21)

Types of Mantra Jap:

When a mantra is uttered in a specific manner, it has a peculiar effect on the body. There are three ways of chanting mantras.

- 1) Vāchik (Verbal)
- 2) Upānshu (Mumblng)
- 3) Mānsik (Mental)

• **Vāchik Jap:**

Chanting that is spoken aloud and audible is called verbal chanting. Loud chanting obscures other outside sounds. So the chanting is not interrupted. This type of chanting is useful in the early stages.

• **Upanshu Jap:**

Chanting with the lips (mumblng) that cannot be heard. That is, upanshujapis a chanting which is done when the lips are moving but the sound is not heard.

‘Anshu’ means ray. In upanshu chanting, the ray is mixed, the light of the pranagets added. Upanshu is the confluence of silence and speech.” (Makarand Dave, 2021, p. 9)

• **Mānsik Jap:**

In this type of chanting, the lips do not move and chanting is done only in the mind. “Mantras with the pronunciation of words are considered gross (sthul) mantras. The chanting with murmur sound (upanshu chanting) is considered a subtle (sukshma) mantra chanting. While the mental chanting is considered the subtlest utterance.” (Rajarshi Muni, 1998, p. 49)

**मंत्रैक शरळो विद्वान मनसैव सदाभ्यसेत |
अथुचिर्वा थुचिर्वापी गच्छस्तिष्ठन स्वपन्नपि |
न दोषो मानसे जाप्य सर्व देसेऽपि सर्वदा ||**

(Dr.Shrimali, 2011, p. 170)

That is, “The seeker who knows the secret of the mantra, who has become one with the mantra, does not get tainted while chanting the mantra. Such a seeker can keep chanting the mantra in all states – while getting up, while sitting, while sleeping, while being awake, while being pure and while being impure.

Importance of the place of Jap:

For mantra sadhana one needs concentration and for concentration one needs a peaceful, holy and sanctified place. In the scriptures, places like forest, river bank, confluence of rivers, holy place, place where a Siddha Yogi resides, under Bilvapatra tree, Pipal or Gooseberry tree, temple, water etc. are prescribed.

It is considered the best to chant while sitting in front of a cow, Brahmin, lamp, sun, moon, fire or the Guru.

Importance of asana (seat) for Jap:

Asanas are very important in mantra jap. One should sit on the same asana and chant mantras every day as a person’s vibrations are associated with that asana. The sages have agreed to many types of asanas for sadhana. Such as grass carpet, deer skin, tiger skin, wool, silk, wooden outpost etc. are indicated. Bamboo, stone, earth, perforated wood, etc. are forbidden.

Asana is essential in order that the energy generated by the sadhana does not get absorbed into the earth but remains secured with the seeker instead. According to the principle of gravity, the earth pulls every single terrestrial object towards itself. The principle of gravity was given by Isaac Newton in the year 1687. But our sages knew this principle thousands of years ago and that is why they have considered asana as important in Jap Sadhana.

Importance of Direction in Chanting:

Direction is also important in mantra chanting. East direction is considered best for chanting in the morning. The east direction is the direction of the gods. The sun also rises in the east. The rays of the sun bestow good health. In the Atharva Veda, Indra is referred to as the lord of the east direction and east direction is considered to be the abode of Aditi's sons Sarpa, Dhata, Aryama etc. (Atharva Veda 3: 27/1)

Importance of Beads in Mantra Jap:

Beads are a means of remembering God. The number of mantras chanted can be counted by a Rosary (string of beads) called Mala.

There are three types of Malas:

1. Manimala
2. Karmala
3. Varnamala

• Manimala:

A Manimala is made by the beads of Tulsi, Rudraksha, Jewels, Sandalwood, Pearl etc. Shaivites consider Rudraksha and Vaishnavites consider Tulsimala to be the best.

• Karmala:

The chanting performed by using the fingertips of the hand instead of using beads is called Karmala chanting. The scriptures prescribed a rule for such chanting as under:

अंगुलीनवियुज्जीतकिञ्चदाकुजिच्चेतले
अंगुलीनावियोगाच्चछिद्रेचस्त्रवतेजपः ॥

(Dr.Gautam, 1972, p. 308)

That is, 'One should not chant by keeping the fingers separated from each other at the time of chanting. The fingers should be kept together and chanting should be done with a slight tilt of the fingers towards the palm.'

• Varnamala:

The letter from A (अ) to Ksha (क्ष) make the Varna Mala (Sanskrit Alphabet). In which 'Ksha' is considered to be the mainstay of this mala. The chanting should be done from 'A' to 'Ha' (ह) and then from 'Ha' to 'A'. Ishtamantra (Mantra of the Personal deity) should be chanted after everyvarna. (Dr.Gautam, 1972, p. 312).

According to the science of nature, there are 27 constellations. Each constellation has four parts, which comes to $27 \times 4 = 108$. Hence, there are 108 beads in the rosary. Chanting 108 times is considered the best because $1 + 0 + 8 = 9$ is considered a complete number.

Chanting of mantra of one's personal deity is considered to be an integral part of the spiritual sadhana of most of the religions and sects. Mantra sadhana is also considered to be an important part of Kriya Yoga. The reference to 'NaadAnusandhan' in yoga is also a reference to special state of chanting.

CONCLUSION:

Jap is a spiritual exercise. It is also a scientific process which has a definite effect on our mental and intellectual field. Many spiritual accomplishments are made possible by chanting with faith. The confidence and willpower of the seeker is strengthened. The intellect becomes pure and sacrosanct.

GoswamiTulsidasji has also highlighted the importance of Jap as under:

जपहि नामु जन आरत भारी ।
मिटहि कुसंकट होहि सुखारी ॥

(Shri RamcharitManas: 21: 3)

भायं कुभायं अनख आलसहैं ।
नाम जपत मंगल दिसि दसहूं ॥

(Shri RamcharitManas: 27: 1)

That is, 'Chanting removes many a big troubles of a sincere devotee. Whether God's name is chanted with love or aversion, anger or laziness, it leads to success in all directions.'

Sage Patanjali has stated the importance of Jap in the Yoga Darshan as under:

"A seeker who chants mantras slowly reaches such a higher state that he attains Samadhi at once." (Yoga Sutra: 1: 28)

REFERENCES:

1. Sharma Nathuram, 1988, Shri YogKaustubh, Anandasham, Bilkha.

2. Swami Krupalvanand, 1981, Premdhara, KrupaluMunimandal, Malav.
3. Swami Prabhupad, 2009, Bhagwad Gita, Bhaktivedant Book Trust, Mumbai.
4. Swami Shivanand, 1994, Japayoga, DivyajivanSangh, Ahmedabad.
5. Dave Makarand, August 2021, Om Hrim, NavneetSamarpan, Mumbai.
6. Dr.ShrimaliNarayandatt, 2011, Mantra Rahasya, V. S. Publishers, Delhi.
7. PoddarHanumanji, S.2074, Shri RamcharitManas, Gita Press, Gorakhpur.
8. Dr.GautamChamanlal, 1972, Mantra Mahavigyan, SanskrutiSansthan, Bareli.
9. Swami Rajarshi Muni, 2018, Mantrayoga, LIFE Mission, Vadodara.
10. Vyas Ramkrushna, 2004, Patanjali Yoga Sutro, Gujarat SahityaAkadamy, Gandhinagar.
11. Sharma R. N., Manu Smriti
12. YogacharyaKrishnamacharya, 2015, Yoga-Yajnavalkya-Samhita, Krishnamachrya Yoga Mandiram, Chennai.
13. Dr.KamatRamkrushna, S.2052, SadhanaAnk, Kalyan, Gita Press, Gorakhpur.