

मेधा सूक्तम् Medhā Sūktam

Medhā - Intellection: understanding, retaining and assimilating what is heard/read.
Sūktam - A vedic hymn (lit: “well said”) that invokes either a devatā or Bhagavān

We start with a mantra from the Taittiriya Upaniṣad (I.iv.1) which is a prayer for one who wants intelligence. The second verse of the mantra goes on to ask for wealth, but as this is sounded with the *Medhā sūktam*, which is concerned with wisdom, we do not include the second verse.

ॐ यश्छन्दसामृषभो विश्वरूपः।

Om yaśchandasām ṛṣabho viśvarupah

Om – (*pratīka*) sound symbol that stands for the Lord (i.e. a (*pratīka* symbol, one that has no human features like the Siva lingam, unlike Ganesha who has a hands and legs, called a *pratīma* symbol)

yaḥ – that which (i.e. that Om)

chandasām – of the Vedic mantras

ṛṣabhaḥ – is exalted (lit. like a bull, i.e. “that which is the bull among Vedic mantras”)

viśva-rupah – in the form of the universe

That Om, the symbol for the Lord in the form of the universe, which is the most exalted of the Veda mantras...

छन्दोभ्योऽध्यमृताश्मम्बभूव ।

chandobhyo’dhyamṛtāth-sambabhūva

chandobhyaḥ – from the Vedas

adhi – essence (lit. ‘pertaining to’, here to be read with *sambabhūva* to carry sense of ‘essence’)

amṛtāt – from the timeless

sam-babhūva – emerged from (with *adhi - adhi sam-babhūva* - means “emerged as the essence”)

(That Om) which has emerged from the Vedas as their essence...

स मेन्द्रो मेधया स्पृणोतु ।

sa mendro medhayā spr̥notu

saḥ – that

me – me

indraḥ – Indra, Lord, Om

medhayā – with intelligence/wisdom

spr̥notu – may (he) bless

May that Om, the Lord Indra, bless me with intelligence.

My that Om, sound symbol for the Lord Indra in the form of the universe, most exalted of Veda mantras, which has emerged from the Vedas as their essence, bless me with the power of intelligence.

अमृतस्य देवधारणो भूयासम्।

amṛtasya devadhāraṇo bhūyāsam

amṛtasya – of immortality (here to be read in the context of a prayer for wisdom, so means nectar of knowledge that frees me from mortality)

deva – O effulgent Lord (i.e. Om)

dhāraṇaḥ – possessor, holder

bhūyāsam – may I become

O Lord, may I become endowed with the nectar of wisdom that frees me from mortality.

शरीरं मे विचर्षणम् ।

śairam me vicarṣaṇam

śairam – body

me – my

vicarṣaṇam – fit, healthy, strong

(bhūyāt) – may become (understood, implied)

May my body become strong, healthy and fit

जिहामे मधुमत्तमा ।

jivhā me madhumattamā

jivhā – tongue

me – my

madhu-mat-tamā – that which is sweetest (madhu = sweet + mat = that which is sweet + tama = that which is sweetest)

(bhūyāt) – may become (understood, implied)

May my tongue become the sweetest, i.e. always speak what is sweet, not-hurtful, true.

कर्णाभ्यां भूरिविश्रुवम् ।

karṇābhyām bhūrivīśruvam

karṇābhyām – with my ears

bhūri – abundantly, much

viśruvam – may I hear

May I listen to the śāstras as often as possible with my ears.

ब्रह्मणः कोशोऽसि मेधया पिहितः ।

brahmaṇa kośo'si medhayā pihitaḥ

brahmaṇa – of Brahman

kośaḥ – the sheath

asi – you are

medhayā – worldly intelligence (i.e. limited)

pihitaḥ – covered

O Omkāra, you cover Brahman like a sheath; and you are covered by worldly intelligence (* sheath: i.e. By dwelling on you we can arrive at the nature of Reality, which cannot be accessed directly.)*

श्रुतं मे गोपाय ।

śrutam me gopāya

śrutam – what has been heard (i.e. śāstra)

me – for me

gopāya – for protection (i.e. 4th case)

(bhūyāt) – may become (understood, implied)

May the śāstra that has been heard by me be for my protection.

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

ॐ मेधादेवी जुषमाणा न आगाद् विश्वाची भद्रा सुमनस्यमाना

Om Medhā Devī - O goddess (devī) of intellection (Medhā)

juṣamāṇā** - blessing

na - us (naḥ)

āgād - let her come

viśvācī - all-knowing (i.e. by which alone one becomes all-knowing)

bhadrā - auspicious (i.e. through clarity of thinking, perception, purpose)

sumanasyamānā - pleased-minded* (i.e. our actions, being dharmic, do not disturb the order)

May Medhā Devī, the power of intellection, who bestows all-knowingness, who brings auspiciousness through clarity, whose mind is pleased — undisturbed by our actions which are righteous — come, blessing us.

(*Implied Prayer: Please bless me with the knowledge and strength to live a life of dharma.)

(*माना mānā. creates present participles eg. ātmanepada verbs, jushate - blesses, jushamānā - is blessing;

bhāshate - he speaks, bhāshamānā - he is speaking; ucchate - is spoken, ucchamānā - is being spoken)

त्वया जुष्टा नुदमाना दुरुक्तान् बृहद्ब्रह्मदेम विदथे सुवीराः

tvayā - by you

juṣṭā - (we who are) blessed

nudamānā - giving up (pushing aside)

duruktān - unwanted, vile speech (that distracts from living dharma)

bṛhad - of Brahman

vadema - may we speak

vidathe - having understood*

suvīrah - good children (i.e. who understand the value of dharma and are committed to a life of dharma)

Being blessed by you, may we, having understood and having given up all harsh words, speak about Brahman and have children that appreciate the value of a life of dharma.*

*understood = having purushartha nishchaya, knowing the value of knowledge (i.e. connected with moksha), knowing the importance of pramaana, knowing the shastra as pramaana, learning with a right teacher, having shraddha, thereby understanding what Brahman is and remaining in contemplation.

त्वया जुष्ट ऋषिर्भवति देवि त्वया ब्रह्माऽऽगतश्रीरुत त्वया

tvayā - by you

juṣṭa - (one who is) blessed

ṛṣir - a rishi (a seer of reality, a knower of Brahman) (ṛṣiḥ)

bhavati - becomes

devī - O goddess

tvayā - by you

brahmā - Brahman (the word "bhavati"- becomes, is understood)

āgataśrīr - wealthy (lit. one to whom wealth has come) (āgataśrīḥ) ("bhavati" is understood)

uta - and

tvayā - by you (rhythmic filler)

O Goddess, blessed by you one becomes a knower of Brahman, one becomes Brahman, one becomes wealthy.

त्वया जुष्टश्चित्रं विन्दते वसु मानो जुषस्व द्रविणोन मेधे ॥

tvayā - by you
juṣṭaś - (one who is) blessed
citram - different forms of
vindate - attains
vasu - wealth
sā - such a one (Medhā Devī)
no - us (naḥ)
juṣasva - may you bless
draviṇona - with wealth (= draviṇena)
Medhe - O power of intellection (voc. of Medhā)

May such a One as you, O Medhā Devī, blessed by whom one attains all varieties of wealth, bless us with prosperity (both material and subtle, up to moksha).

मेधां म इन्द्रो ददातु मेधां देवी सरस्वती

medhām - intellection
ma - me
indro - by Indra
dadātu - may he give (bless)
medhām - intellection
devī - goddess
sarasvatī - Sarasvatī (goddess/power of knowledge, intellect, music and wisdom)

May Indra (śakti of the physical body) grant me good stamina and health (for unhindered functioning of the intellect) and may Goddess Sarasvatī grant me the power of intellection.

मेधां मे अश्विनावुभावाधत्तां पुष्करम्रजा

medhām - intellection
me - to me
Aśvināv (=Aśvinau) - the twin Ashvins, deities of the nostrils, the divine physicians
ubhav (=ubhau) - both
ādhattām - infuse/place
puṣkarasrajā - lotus (puṣkara) garlanded (srajā)

May the twin Ashvins, garlanded with lotuses, bless me with the power of intellection (by giving me good health, on which it depends).

अप्सरसु च या मेधा गन्धर्वेषु च यन्मनः

apsarāsu - heavenly damsels
ca - and
yā - that which (yad f.) (co-relative of sā in following statement)
medhā - intellection
gandharveṣu - celestial musicians
ca - and
yan - that which (yad n.) (co-relative of sā in the following statement)
manah - intellect (the mind - manas - regarded here, generically, as the intellect)

That which is enjoyed as the subtle intelligence of heavenly damsels and the intelligence of celestial musicians...

दैवी मेधा सरस्वती सा मां मेधा सुरभिर्जुषताम् ॥

daivīm - divine

medhā - intellection

Sarasvatī - Sarasvatī (goddess/power of knowledge, intellect, music and wisdom)

sā - that (co-relative of yā in previous statement)

mām - me

Medhā - power of intellection

Surabhir - celestial wish-fulfilling cow (symbolizing wisdom and self-knowledge)

juṣatām - may bless

... may Sarasvatī, manifest as Surabhi, bless me with the intellection which is that Divine intelligence...

May Sarasvatī, fulfiller of all wishes, bless me with the power of intellection which is that subtle Divine intelligence enjoyed by heavenly damsels and celestial musicians.*

(* When, through the power of intellection, all is known, no more desires remain to be attained, i.e. all wishes are fulfilled as it were.)

आमां मेधा सुरभिर्विश्वरूपा हिरण्यवर्णा जगती जगम्या

ā - coming **mām** - (to) me

medhā - intellection

surabhir - lit. wish-fulfilling cow (i.e. Surabhir Medhā = that Medhā Devi by which one gets self knowledge)

viśvarūpā - lit. one who is in the form of the universe (i.e. viśvarūpā Medhā = that Medhā Devi in the form of all disciplines of knowledge that are known to the mind)

hiraṇyavarṇā - lit. one of golden complexion (i.e. hiraṇyavarṇā Medhā = that Medhā Devi in the form of brilliance of intellect which flashes as 'presence of mind'.)

jagatī - lit. the universe (i.e. jagatī Medhā = that Medhā Devi in the form of the intelligence backing the order behind the functions in all life forms)

jagamyā - lit. accessible (i.e. jagamyā Medhā = that Medhā Devi in the form of the intelligence which is worth gaining)

Coming to me, (may She) by whom one gains self-knowledge, who manifests as all forms of knowledge, who flashes as presence of mind, who manifests as the intelligence behind the order involved in the functions in all life forms, who is worth possessing, ...

ऊर्जस्वती पयसा पिन्वमाना सा मां मेधा सुप्रतीका जुषन्ताम् ॥

ūrjasvatī - lit. powerful (i.e. gain strength in me)

payasā - lit. with milk of boons (i.e. with knowledge)

pinvamānā - showering

sā - she

mām - me

Medhā - intellection

supratikā - auspicious beginning (to study of scripture)

juṣantām - may (he/she/it) bless

... gain strength in me, shower me with knowledge, may that Medhā Devī bless me with an auspicious beginning to the study of scriptures.

May that Medhā Devī,

by whom one gains self-knowledge,

who is the intelligence behind all disciplines known to the mind,

who flashes as presence of mind in any situation,

who manifests as the intelligent order behind the functions in all life forms,

who is worth possessing...

come to me,

grow in me,

shower me with knowledge,

bless me with an auspicious beginning to my study of scripture.

मयि मेधां मयि प्रजां मय्यग्निस्तेजो दधातु

mayi - in me

medhām - intellection

mayi - in me

prajāṃ - progeny

mayi - in me

agnistejo - the Lord in the form of fire (agni devatā) and strength (tejas)

dadhātu - place, infuse

May Agni, deity of speech, infuse me with strength and intelligence and bless me with good progeny.

मयि मेधां मयि प्रजां मयीन्द्र इन्द्रियं दधातु

mayi - in me

medhām - intellection

mayi - in me

prajāṃ - progeny

mayi - in me

indra - Indra

indriyam - virility

dadhātu - place, infuse

May Indra, deity of the power of action, infuse me with virility and intelligence and bless me with good progeny.

मयि मेधां मयि प्रजां मयि सूर्यो भ्राजो दधातु ॥

mayi - in me

medhām - intellection

mayi - in me

prajāṃ - progeny

mayi - in me

sūryo - the sun

bhrājo - brilliance

dadhātu - place, infuse

May Sūrya, deity of seeing, who inspires our thoughts, infuse me with brilliance and intelligence and bless me with good progeny.

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

Om peace, peace, peace