

Environmental Consciousness In Vedas

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I. Introduction

All issues related to mankind are clearly and categorically explained in Vedas and all these are useful for the benefit and enrichment of human life only. In Sanskrit, Veda means Vid-Jnane iti Vedah, which means Knowledge. In other words, Vedas are those which are explaining everything or everything is explained in it. Hence, Vedas are those which give us the knowledge of all the sciences with which the universe is surviving. The vitality of Vedas is such that no issues of this world are left in it. The greatness of Vedas is explained in Manu Dharma Shastra in the following verses-

यः कश्चित् कथञ्चिद् धर्ममनना परकांतिशतः।
स सर्वसिंहितो वेदे सर्वानमयो हि सः॥ (मनु)

II. Benefits of Vedic Culture

Vedic Culture teaches us about the value of moral in our lives. Following Vedic culture will help reduce chaos in the society. Everyone will think about the benefit of entire society not just about themselves. Reading inspiring books change the way of thinking. Law of Karma will help us to be alert about our deeds. Revival of Rishi Culture or Vedic Culture is important to have a healthy society.

III. Problems associate with the Modern culture

Lack of faith, Selfish attitude Dependency on Machines for each and everything, Stressful life, Stress induced Health problems, there is a major threat of Global warming and we may face lot of problems in near future. Vedic Culture will help us to lead a balanced life style, stress Free. Will help improve the day to day family and social problems by Following a disciplined life style, doing meditation and yoga will keep us in good health.

IV. Five Elements of Environment

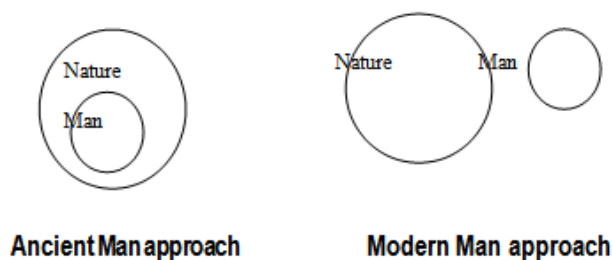
The issues of Environment are explained in Vedas in a vivid manner. Air, Water, Earth, Sky, Sun and Trees are the ingredients of Environment. If these are protected properly, the universe will always be remains safe and favorable to the mankind, who find the survival based on them.

In Vedas, all these are treated as deities. Then, you may get a doubt in this context that what is God and who is he? Sanskrit definition for God is Divyaguna Samanvitam, means that contains the ultimate purity. All the ingredients of Environment are making every one pure. By swallowing fresh air, drinking pure water, by taking nice food, one can lead the life happily till last breath.

The message of the Vedas is that if man is going to keep all the five elements in safe manner, then they would help the man in many folds. It is not exaggerations that the Vedas are aspiring the well being of man time and again where he can lead the life in a comfortable way by keeping environmental protection.

V. Man's approach towards Nature

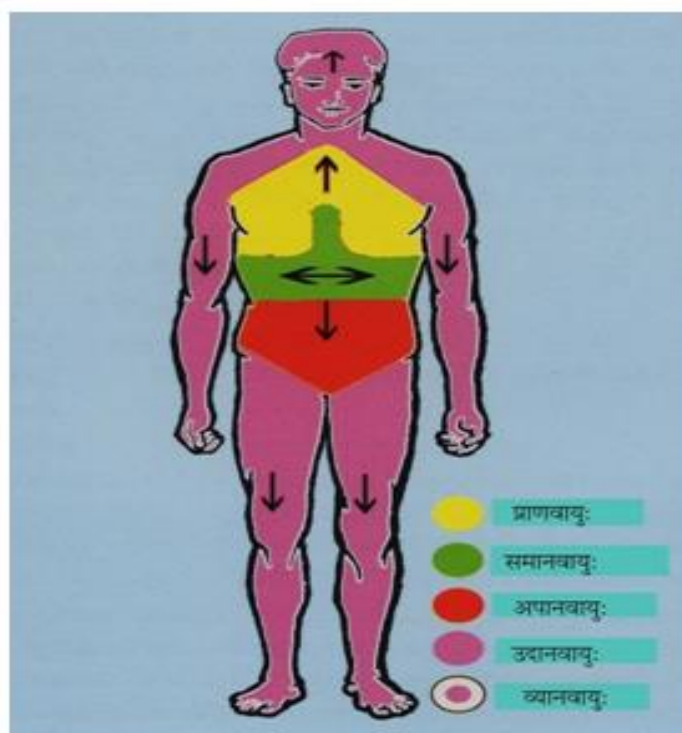
But unfortunately, human being has become hindrances to the nature. The perception of man towards nature has totally changed. Once up a time man felt himself as part of nature. But, today, the condition is changed. And this was discussed in Vedas with lot of evidences.



But, in the modern days, the entire environment is polluted because of the selfishness of man. The existing condition has provoked the man not to have the fresh air, water and food. The explosion of population, the wastages of the industries has leded the air and water to be polluted. Due to the polluted environment, both man and trees are getting vanished. Ancient structures like Taj Mahal and Charminar are some of the evidences of air pollution which are getting turn in to different color and so on. If it is going to increases, then the existences of man as well as the animals will be in vain. Therefore many issues related to environment are discussed in Vedas in direct and indirect manner.

VI. Five Types of Air

- | | | |
|-------------|---|--------------------------|
| a. Eastern | - | prana (up-breath) |
| b. Southern | - | vyana (diffused breath) |
| c. Western | - | Apana (downward breath) |
| d. Northern | - | Samana(equalized breath) |
| e. Upper | - | Udana (breath out) |



A) Prana

Literally meaning "air flowing forward", it governs the flow of energy from the head down to the navel, the Pranic center in the physical body. It is responsible for all types of inward reception from inhalation to eating, drinking to reception of sense perceptions and experiences. Propulsive in nature, it sets and guides things in motion, thereby governing the basic energy that sustains our lives.

B) Apana

Apana, means "regressing air" and, like the name suggests, it moves downward and outward. It governs the movement of energy from the navel down to the root chakra and is responsible for all forms of systemic discharge, including carbon dioxide in the breath, stools, urine, semen, menstrual fluids and the fetus. On a deeper level it forms the basis of our immune system and governs the expulsion of all negative sensory, mental and emotional experiences.

C) Samana

Meaning "balanced air", Samana flows from the perimeter to the center, in a judicious churning movement. It channels the flow of energy from the entire body back to the navel. Primarily, though, it governs the gastrointestinal tract, i.e. it facilitates digestion of food and absorption of oxygen in the lungs. Mentally it serves to digest and assimilate all sensory, mental and emotional inputs.

D) Vyana

Vyana, means "air flowing outward". Contrariwise Samana, this one governs flow of energy from the navel throughout the body. Flowing from the center to the periphery, it governs all circulatory functions and, in the bargain, assists the task of all other Pranas. It regulates the flow of oxygen, nutrition and water throughout the system, as well as disseminates our thoughts and emotions.

E) Udana

Udana, "upward moving air," literally moves upwards. It governs energy movement up from the navel to the head. Naturally, it is responsible for growth, aids and abets all bodily effort, enthusiasm and will, including the ability to stand and speak. Our main positive energy in life, it facilitates development of our different bodies as well as in evolving consciousness. In summation, Prana governs the intake of all forms of nutrients, Samana regulates their digestion, Vyana sees to their circulation, Udana administers the release of positive energy and Apana, the elimination of waste matter from the system. Pretty much like operations of an organization, Prana fetches the fuel, Samana transforms it into energy, Vyana distributes it to the various departments and Apana discharges the waste matter produced in the process. Finally, Udana decides how the positive energy generated is to be used.

The secret of good health lies in balance and harmony. Since all the Pranas are interlinked, if even one becomes unstable, the others are susceptible to similar imbalance. Result, the working of the entire machine goes out of gear. This gets translated into mental and physical afflictions and indispositions.

VII. Importance of Air in Life

Air is considered to be the source of life in the universe. Man's life would be impossible without Air. It is known that fresh air does favors the man. And it is proved in the following Vedic verse-

वात आ वातु भषजं शुभु मयोधु नो ददति
आयं ष तांरषत।। (ऋग्वेदः)

Air does help man as medicine. It makes the heart feel happy. And it is very useful the enhancement of life span and in the protection of environment.

ददो वात तेग ह
यनिधिहितः।
ततो नो देहि जीवस।। (ऋग्वेदः)

The ancient Rishis tried at their level best to bestow immortality to the Air and they made it as great as Nectar that makes someone to be free from death. Oh Air! Nectar is placed in your house. Hence, you may kindly present it to me and allow me to be able to live for long time. The above Hymn indirectly explaining that Air has got such power with which man to be free death, bestows long life and that ruins the impurities of body.

VIII. Benefits of Fresh Air in Human Body

The following two verses explain the benefits of fresh air for the human being.

आविमौवातौवात आसिधोरापरावतः।
देते अय आवातु परायोवातु यदस्वः॥ (ऋग्वेदः)
आवातवाहि भषजं विवातवाहितदस्वः।
इविहिवभषजोदेवानां द ईयसे॥ (ऋग्वेदः)

Oh Human being! Pranavayu (forward-moving air) makes the body to be strong and Apaanavayu (outward flow of energy on the breath) helps the body to exit the impurities and waste substances from body. Oh Fresh Air! You are a Medicine. Oh Air! Please eject the waste materials from body. You are remained as medicine to cure all types of diseases. You are doing the duty as Angel. The importance and appreciation of Forward and Outward flow of air is discussed in these two verses. Human body get strengthened by Forward-moving air. And these two airs remain in the body in form of inhalation and exhalation.

The nature would not be in the favor of man because of carbon dioxide, for which air is getting polluted. But trees are providing the fresh air to the human beings by swallowing carbon dioxide. But Vedas are propagating that one has to grow the trees to evacuate the carbon dioxide from nature. Hence, Yajurveda says that **वनं आरुथायिव.**

It is condemned that destruction of trees is considered to be one of the wicked actions. If man destruct the trees for sake of his selfishness and if he does not attempt to grow the trees, then the rate of carbon dioxide get increases on earth because of which, the nature would not be in the favor of him. **2)**

Greatness of Tree:

In the following verses Vedas have explained the remedies to avoid the vicious situations.

यावतीः कियतीमेमाः पृथिव्यामप्येषथीः।
तामासहेपयाम् योमश्च वृहसः॥ (अथर्वणवेदः)

All the Vedic sages say that all the medicines are competing with the death cause by pollution. That pollution is getting converted in form of cause of death. The word Sahasraparnee says that the death of man is purely depending upon the thousands of leafs.

Hence it is said that the leafs of trees are the source of survival of man and as well as the power to ruin the pollution of air.

IX. How to construct a House

आयनेते परायणेद्वौ आरुहतु पृथिव्याः।
उवाताजायतां च दोवा पठरीकवान्। (अथर्वणवेदः)

Atharvanaveda says that one has to construct pond and grow the trees of grace in front of house for the greater benefit. All these actions enhance the purity of environment.

X. Vitality of Trees and Forests:

वनानां पतये नमः।
वृक्षाणां पतये नमः। (यजुर्वेदः)

All the verses like the above hymn of Yajurveda, explain and remind the importance of Trees and Forests. By polluting the Air, Earth and by using artificial chemicals, the food is getting polluted.

अनपतेऽवयनो देहि अनमीव यशुमिणः। (यजुर्वेदः)

Food gives the strength and power and polluting of it does generate the diseases.

XI. Conclusion

Fresh Air is getting generated by growing the trees with which man can lead healthy life. By growing the trees, the entire environment becomes favorable by which, rains fall in time in order to make earth flourish. Trees are only source to maintain the pollution free environment. One can prevent even the sound pollution by huge trees. Hence, maintenance of trees is the ultimate duty of man. Hence, our ancestors said that वृक्षो रपित रिपतः।

सर्व भवतु सखिः स वसतु निरामयाः सर्व भूतानि पश्यतु
मा किं ददुःखं भावेत् ।।
