

FIRE MEDITATION IN THE VEDIC TRADITION: AGNIHOTRA**Ajitkumar Gokulprasad Jaiswal***Principal, J. K. Shah Adarsh Mahavidyalay Nijampur-Jaitane, Tal. Sakri District Dhule 424305
(Maharashtra).**Email: acanjspm@yahoo.in***Abstract**

The word Agnihotra is made up of two words, Agni and Hotra. This means offering various oblations into the fire in a ritualistic manner. Simply burning an object in the fire is not considered Agnihotra, but offering it in a proper manner is essential.

Keywords: Agnihotra, Fire, Agni, Hotra.

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Introduction

The epic Raghuvansh describes the secret of the Raghuvanshi kings' victory as "YathaVidhiHutagni Na." The practice of Agnihotra in India dates back thousands of years. The importance of this fire is recognized throughout the world, and this is why various sects around the world advocate the worship of fire, such as the Parsi community.

Agnihotra involves offering various medicinal herbs, ghee, and grains to a fire.

Description

The ritual itself consists of three parts: Agnihotra, followed by mantras and incense, and the use of the remaining ingredients. Regarding its effectiveness, it rests on four pillars: fire, mantras, incense, and ash. The proper use of these four pillars at the right time impacts the entire universe and environment.

The first is fire – it is lit on cow dung cakes, which is called a small yajna. Yajna has both scientific and scientific significance. Yajna is performed by lighting the fire using cow dung cakes. According to modern science, an element called Decomardi Hyde enters the atmosphere, increasing the influence of the fire element in the atmosphere, meaning it increases energy. The generation of energy in the atmosphere has a positive effect.

The second is mantras – mantras are specific types of sound waves. Mantras affect not only the conscious mind but also the subconscious, unconscious, and the mind. By purifying the environment with mantras, children's energy levels increase, greatly aiding their development.

The third component of Agnihotra is ash. Applying or consuming Agnihotra ash is extremely beneficial. It is essential for medicinal purposes in many diseases. It has been shown to have antibacterial and antiviral properties.

Fourth is Dhoop - The Dhoop which is produced by adding various medicinal substances to whatever is left after Agnihotra has medicinal uses. Dhoopkal and aromatherapy are popular all over the world today. The great importance of Dhoop has been described in the oldest book of Ayurveda called Kashyap Samhita. Based on modern science and Ayurvedic texts, the atomic particles of Dhoop-smoke are very tiny. The smoke enters through the tiny pores of our body and

is very beneficial for the body. It protects the body of children from various types of diseases. Various medicinal fragrances bring happiness in the minds of children, hence Dhoop is very important for all, young and old.

The benefits of Agnihotra Yagya include protection from incurable diseases, cure of acquired diseases, purification of air and water, confirmation of medicinal leaves, flowers, fruits, roots etc., health, longevity, strength, sensory power, forgiveness of sins, defeat of enemies, glory, fame, good thoughts, inspiration in good deeds, protection of home, noble feelings, well-being, truthfulness, all kinds of happiness etc. Are there. The benefits of getting rid of infertility, having a son, rain, increasing intelligence, salvation etc. are also mentioned among the benefits of Yagya. Therefore, we should give proper importance to Agnihotra Yagya in our life. With this, our environment remains safe and life becomes better and by remaining free from diseases, we can live a strong and happy long life.

The four Vedas, Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda, are the divine knowledge which was given by the omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent Creator God to the four sages Agni, Vayu, Aditya and Angira at the beginning of the creation. This knowledge given by God is the book of all true knowledge. Vedas prescribe performing Yagya for all human beings. In the mantra 1/13/12 of Rigveda, God has given permission to perform self-sacrificing yagya by saying 'Swahayajnakrinotan'. In Mantra 2/2/1 of Rigveda, there is a command to increase the fire through Yagya by saying 'YajyenVardhatJatvedasam'. Similarly, in Mantra 3/1 of Yajurveda, there is a command to worship Agni with Samidha by saying 'SamidhagnimDuvasyatDhritairbodhiyatatithim' and to awaken the guest of Agni Dev with Ghee. The commandment, "SusamidhaayaShochisheGhritamTeeveramJuhotan" (Yajurveda 3/2), is to offer hot ghee as an oblation in a well-lit fire. This world was created by God, and He gave birth to all humans and creatures. Therefore, God is the mother, father, and teacher of all human beings. Obeying His commandments is a human duty, and not obeying is a sin. On this basis, performing a yajna is a human duty, and not doing so is a sin.

Swami DayanandSaraswati has discussed yagnas from Agnihotra to Ashwamedha. Agnihotra is a daily duty which all householders have to perform daily as per the scriptures. It is not true that everyone is eligible to perform other yagnas. Even if one does not know the benefits, Agnihotra is mandatory for everyone due to Vedic rules. If it is performed after knowing the benefits, then there is more devotion in it. One gets inspiration to attain those benefits and one also makes efforts for it. Therefore, Vedas and other scriptures and Swami Dayanandji have also described many benefits of yagna and Agnihotra. These benefits include protection from acquired diseases, cure of acquired diseases, purification of air and water, confirmation of medicinal leaves, flowers, fruits, roots etc., health, longevity, strength, senses, power, forgiveness of sins, defeat of enemies, glory, fame, good thoughts, inspiration in good deeds, home protection, noble feelings, well-being, truthfulness, all kinds of happiness etc. The results of prevention of infertility, birth of a son, rain, increase in intelligence, salvation etc. have also been presented. The doubt here may be that because not every Agnihotri receives these results, hence this fruit report is false. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse it.

The benefits of yajna, agnihotra, or homa can be divided into two categories. The first category includes those inherently attainable through homa, such as air purification, water purification, health, sensory strength, longevity, and so on. If appropriate quantities of fragrant, sweet, nourishing, and healing substances are offered to the fire, the host has the opportunity to reap these benefits whether willingly or not. In winter, offering simple ingredients like jaggery, fenugreek, dry ginger, celery, and agapa has been shown to protect and relieve household members from many

winter ailments. The second category of benefits is those dependent on the will, inspiration, and efforts of the host, the Agnihotri. If the Yajaman, following the meaning of the mantras, contemplates on the qualities, actions and nature of God and the sacrificial fire created by God, and takes a vow to imbibe them within himself and makes efforts for the same, then he will gain the wisdom to follow the right path, will avoid sinful acts, will become virtuous, will become radiant and famous and will get the inspiration to do deeds in accordance with attaining salvation, then he can also attain salvation. If any Yajaman, i.e. the performer of the Yajna, does not make any effort to attain these benefits, and merely offers the oblation with a dry mind, as a result of which he does not get these benefits, then there is no fault of the Yajna in it.

As for curing major diseases and preventing epidemics (currently, the coronavirus or COVID-19 pandemic), such yagnas have been performed since ancient times. Putreshti rituals have also been performed to conceive a son. Their success depends partly on morale, faith, and optimism, while the medicinal herbs used in the homa (fire sacrifice) play a major role. Just as other medical systems, including Ayurveda, naturopathy, hydrotherapy, allopathy, and homeopathy, Agnihotra therapy is also a scientific method. Agnihotra therapy provides Vedic treatments for worm eradication, fever, insanity, goiter, and uterine defects, all of which yield successful results. For guidance on this topic, texts on yagna should be studied. The book "YagyaMimamsa" by Acharya Dr.RamnathVedalankar, a Samaveda commentator and renowned scholar, is particularly beneficial on this subject. In this book, the learned author provides valuable information on various aspects of yajna in seven chapters. The first chapter provides general insights into yajna and Agnihotra. The second chapter focuses on Vedic yajna therapy. The third chapter focuses on the Vedic mantras that inspire and demonstrate the benefits of Agnihotra. The fourth chapter explains the rituals and mantras of Agnihotra. The fifth chapter focuses on specific mantras for grand yagnas. The sixth chapter focuses on spiritual and emotional benefits of Agnihotra. The final, seventh chapter focuses on yajna and Agnihotra-related sutras. Studying this book provides knowledge about all aspects of yajna. This book is a must-read for all yajna-loving readers. These brief articles have been presented to awaken readers to the importance of yajna, enable them to live healthy, successful lives, and progress on the path of dharma, artha, kama, and moksha. The content of this article is based on Acharya Dr.RamnathVedalankar's book, Yajna-Mimamsa. We remember him and express our heartfelt gratitude.

Conclusion

Daily Agnihotra is a daily duty. Some people perform Agnihotra at home regularly, either twice a day or once a day. Some participate in the daily or weekly Agnihotra held collectively at Arya Samaj, but do not perform Agnihotra at home. In his book "Sanskarvidhi," Swami Dayanand Ji prescribes a minimum of six mashas of ghee for each offering. This ghee should be scented with musk, saffron, sandalwood, camphor, mace, cardamom, etc. Additionally, the havan materials should include fragrant, sweet, nutritious, and disease-curing substances. The offerings should also be made of sandalwood, palash, mango, etc. The benefits of Agnihotra that Rishi Dayanand has written about in his texts are based on the Agnihotra performed in every home. If Agnihotra is performed in this manner, it is estimated that the daily expenditure, including the yajnas performed at both times, will be considerable. Only a few have the capacity and enthusiasm to incur such expenditure. In such a situation, it is appropriate to perform whatever homa is possible according to one's faith and ability. The havya material, i.e., the havan material, should be of all four types, so that the atmosphere is fragrant and filled with molecules and atoms of healing medicines, and breathing it provides benefits. Those who wish to observe a fast for only one period can do so.

Efforts should be made to keep the fire burning and smoke free. It is hoped that readers will benefit from the ideas presented in this article regarding yagna.

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