

Gayatri Mantra

ॐ भूर्भुवः स्वः, तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं ।
भर्गोदेवस्य धीमहि, धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ।

Om Bhur-Bhuvah-Svah, Tat-Savitur-Varenyam,
Bhargo-Devasya-Dheemahi, Dhiyo-Yo-Nah-Prachodayaata.

Gayatri mantra

... embodies the collective wisdom of the entire Vedic revelation. Found in the Rig Veda, the gayatri mantra takes its name in part because it is written in the gayatri meter (twenty-four syllables divided into three lines of eight syllables each). But gayatri also means "she who protects the singer" (from gai—"to sing," and trai—"to protect"). Thus, gayatri is a name for the Divine Mother, she who protects her children and leads them toward self-realization. The gayatri mantra reads:

**Tat savitur varenyam bhargo
devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah
prachodayat**



When the mantra is recited in meditation, however, an additional line is added at the beginning. This line contains the sound Om, followed by three short sounds called the maha vyahritis (the "great utterances": bhur, bhuvah, and svah). These 3 sounds are essence of the Vedas; the seeds of fire, vital energy, and the sun—as well as the seed sounds of the earth, sky, and heaven. Thus the complete mantra as it is used in meditation is:

Om bhur, bhuvah, svah
tat savitur varenyam
bhargo devasya dhimahi
dhiyo yo nah prachodayat

The 2nd and 3rd lines of the gayatri mantra venerate the concept of solar light, energy, purity, transcendence, illumination, and compassion (the sun shines for all). They read:

tat savitur varenyam
bhargo devasya dhimahi

This translates as: "We recall within ourselves and meditate upon that wondrous Spirit of the Divine Solar Being."

The final line (dhiyo yo nah prachodayat) changes the tone. It makes a request—a petition for inner clarity and intuitive awareness. "Guide us," the mantra asks. The essence of this final line is contained in its first and last words. The final word, prachodayat, means "may he guide, lead, direct." The first word, dhiyah (dhiyo), may mean simply "thoughts," but, more important, it refers to the mind's higher faculty and intuitive vision (Dhi). The mantra asks that the finest force of the mind, its intuitive capacity, be guided by "that wondrous Spirit of the Divine Solar Being."

Thus, the complete translation of the gayatri mantra is:

Om. In each of the three planes of existence, we recall within ourselves and meditate upon that wondrous Spirit of the Divine Solar Being; may he guide our inner vision.

Gayatri is a prayer as well as a mantra. As a mantra, it is a set of sounds used by meditators to realize a higher state of consciousness—a state symbolized by the sun. As a prayer it petitions God for guidance. "Direct my mind," it asks. Contained in this prayer is an elaborate exposition of spiritual philosophy. It describes the bhargah (the solar spirit), who is the



essence of Savitri (the solar being), who is yet the inner identity of Surya (the sun). The gayatri as a prayer is a petition to tat (that) which is the infinite light of pure consciousness.

In its dual role as mantra and prayer the gayatri both purifies the mind and invites the finest forces of the mind to awaken.

There are many beautiful traditional vedic melodious renditions of *Gayatri*, check out *"The Power of Gayatri"* compilation by Devaki Pandit, 2008 (available on iTunes) As well as modern popular adaptations, also beautiful, such as Deva Premal's famous version.

