

Imbibing Vedic Knowledge into Contemporary World : A Path towards Peace & Sustainability (with special reference to Sri Isopanisad)

Suksham R. Aneja* and Dinesh Chand**

Peace and sustainability are two sides of same coin as only a peaceful world can be sustainable and flourishing. In general sense, a person is satisfied when all of his rights are protected well. Real human right is the right of enlightenment, which is coherent understanding of the purpose of life and corresponding harmonization of our living with that purpose. It is only in human form that one can imbibe Vedic knowledge and live accordingly. Being human is a special opportunity providing a chance to know the absolute truth with developed consciousness capable of perceiving higher realities. In this article some basic facts from the book of Sri Isopanisad are presented. As the name suggests, the term "Isa" refers to the "Ishvara" which means the Supreme Lord. The whole Sri Isopanisad is centered of "Ishvara". Here the main message is to live with harmony with "Ishvara" who can be known through Spiritual vision. Such Spiritual vision can be developed through cultivating proper Vedic

* Assistant Professor, Faculty of Commerce, Government (PG) College, Noida, Uttar Pradesh (India) E-mail: <suksham.aneja@gmail.com>

** Associate Professor, Faculty of Commerce, Government (PG) College, Noida, Uttar Pradesh (India) E-mail: <Dineshpvd27@gmail.com>

**JOURNAL OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Winter), 2021
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal**

knowledge and developing the right disposition of consciousness. This article can be divided into five sections. Section I introduces the topic of the present study. Section II presents “Ishavasya” principle which means everything is perfect and everything belongs to the Ishvara. Section III discusses how living with this underlying unifying principle brings immense benefits leading to Peace and global sustainability. Section IV presents harmful effects as evident in the present world due to living in disharmony of “Ishavasya” principle. In Section V different stages of realizations of the real proprietor, “Ishvara”, the Absolute Truth is analyzed. In the end, concluding remarks are given along with recommendations and suggestions for cultivating a better living environment through understanding and applying Lord’s proprietorship.

[**Keywords** : Ishavasya, Sri Isopanisad, Absolute truth, Peace, Sustainability]

Introduction

World Peace is one of the prominent Sustainable Development Goals 2030 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015. It entails that not only peace and security are prerequisites for achieving sustainable development, but that sustainable development provides the pathway to peaceful societies. In this article, an attempt has been made to understand and apply this principle through the study of *Sri Isopanisad*, which is one of the prominent 11 Upanisads out of total 108 Upanisads in the Vedic Knowledge. *Sri Isopanisad* contains an invocation mantra, followed by 18 mantras revealing the essence of the Absolute Truth. Here *Sri Isopanisad* means to sit close by Lord and to request Him to reveal the absolute truth himself. *Sri Isopanisad* is a part of Yajur Veda comprising prayers offered by Manu to the Lord. This paper talks about “Isavasya” and The Absolute Truth which are the underlying and unifying principles of *Sri Isopanisad*. Essential message of this whole paper is to awaken the consciousness to live in harmony with Lord, Supreme personality of Godhead, who is creator as well as maintainer of the whole creation. Only the Supreme lord is independently perfect and complete whereas everything else is dependently perfect.

“Isavasya” Principle - Quota System

This section presents the understanding of Mantra 1 of *Sri Isopanisad* :

isavasyam idam sarvam
yat kinca jagatyam jagat

tena tyaktena bhunjitha
ma grdhah kasya svid dhanam

Translation by Srila Prabhupada :

“Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong.”

In general sense, everyone wants to be proprietor like the world conqueror Alexander had an idea to be ruler of the whole earth. The idea that the Lord is the proprietor of everything, can be established from Bhagavad Gita (7.4-7.5) which means all the elements of nature - earth, fire, water, air, ether, mind, intelligence and ego- all belong to Lord comprising inferior or material energy of the Lord, whereas the living being, the organic energy, is the para prakrti (superior energy) of the Lord. Both of the prakrtis, or energies, are emanations from the Lord, and ultimately, He is the controller of everything that exists. One needs to accept as given by Lord depending upon his/her past karmas. Srila Prabhupada has given an example of a cow who gives milk, doesn't drink that milk; She takes only her quota i.e. grass and grain.

Living in Harmony with Ishvara - Mantra 2

This section presents the understanding of Mantra 2 of *Sri Isopanisad* :

kurvann eveha karmani
jijivisec chatam samah
evam tvayi nanyatheto 'sti
na karma lipyate nare

Translation by Srila Prabhupada :

“One may aspire to live for hundreds of years if he continuously goes on working in that way, for that sort of work will not bind him to the law of karma. There is no alternative to this way for man.”

Soul being eternal by nature, one wants to live eternally, Srila Prabhupada says whether it is an individual, community, society or nation, all can survive eternally if they follow Isavasya principle as discussed above in Section 1. This can be understood with an

example, if a person hires a carpenter to build a table and later on the carpenter claims the proprietorship, since he has been the maker, then it would be completely unjustified. But the irony is that we all are doing the same. We all are claiming proprietorship to all what Lord has given to us to use and assemble things for the time being. If everyone follows this principle and focus on one's quota only then there will be more peaceful situation in the world.

Living in Disharmony with Ishvara - Mantra 3

This section presents the understanding of Mantra 3 of *Sri Isopanisad* :

asurya nama te loka
andhena tamasavrtah
tams te pretyabhigacchanti
ye ke catma-hano janah

Translation by Srila Prabhupada :

“The killer of the soul, whoever he may be, must enter into the planets known as the worlds of the faithless, full of darkness and ignorance”.

Humans and Animals are quite similar as both are engaged in four basic activities of eating, sleeping, mating and defending. However, its only in human form of life that one can aspire for self realization. That's a big responsibility of a human life to quest for the Absolute Truth. There are only two types of humans - those who fulfil this responsibility and adhere to Principle of Ishavasya are called suras (godly persons), and those who are forgetful of these responsibilities are called asuras (demons). These demoniac mentality people are a big threat to world peace and sustainability as they always tend to acquire other's quota and making world dangerous place. Many countries have various weapons of destruction such as Nuclear bombs, but if they do not recognize the proprietorship of the Supreme Lord, then they may misuse it to the detriment of whole world. Actually here we need to work on the root cause which is deliberate disobedience to the laws of nature through disregarding the proprietorship of the Lord. Vedas also tell the fate of such asuras, who are devoid of self-realization and knowledge of isavasya, the Lord, are going to enter into the darkest regions of ignorance and can't come out of repeated cycle of Birth and Death.

The Absolute Truth - Mantra 4

This section presents the understanding of Mantra 4 of *Sri Isopanisad* :

anejad ekam manaso javiyo
 nainad deva apnuvan purvam arsat
 tad dhavato 'nyan atyeti tisthat
 tasminn apo matarisva dadhati.

Translation by Srila Prabhupada :

Although fixed in His abode, the Personality of Godhead is swifter than the mind and can overcome all others running. The powerful demigods cannot approach Him. Although in one place, He controls those who supply the air and rain. He surpasses all in excellence.

To know the Supreme Lord, the Absolute personality of Godhead, only way is to be associated with Devotees and follow Guru, sadhu and sastra. Srila Prabhupada clearly explains that the Absolute truth is ultimately the absolute person by giving various details about the Lord such as He stays in his own abode. But still he is faster than all others including mind and wind. He controls everything and surpasses all in excellence. These qualities can never be present in a Zero or just a light as propagated by Mayavadis. Hence, it is proved that the Absolute truth is a Person. Lord surpasses all excellence because he has main six opulence, although Lord is limitless so are his potencies likewise, most beautiful, most famous, most intelligent, most powerful, most wealthy and above all most renounced. When one considers all part and parcel of Lord then he becomes a true knower of things. And then people can come out of illusion or anxiety living peacefully

Conclusion

These principles of Isavasya and Absolute truth have the capacity to solve all our problems on various platform like materially, spiritually, economically personally as well as globally placed by the laws of nature. The main idea is to become detached from material life and attached to spiritual life through devotional service. All the mantras of *Sri Isopanisad* need to be learned but due to limitations of time only first four mantras have been discussed in these paper which bring out a general understanding of "Ishavasya" principle

and the Absolute Truth, which present the basic fact that everything is emanating from the Absolute Truth, Supreme Person, and thus everything is meant for His enjoyment. We should accept only quota and engage all our senses in the Lord's service. It will bring peace and happiness in everyone's heart by purifying their consciousness and giving them a higher taste. Srila Prabhupada used to say that if even one percent people of the world follow these principles of Krishna consciousness, the world will be a better place to live - Peaceful & Sustainable!

References

- Prabhu, M., "Kautilya's axiom to peace, power and prosperity" (July 23, 2019). Retrieved from [www.vedic-management.com: https://www.vedic-management.com/decoding-artha-sutras-kautilyas-axiom-to-peace-power-and-prosperity/](https://www.vedic-management.com/decoding-artha-sutras-kautilyas-axiom-to-peace-power-and-prosperity/)
- Prabhu, M., "The VEDIC Approach To MANAGEMENT For Sustainable LEADERHIP" (Nov 13, 2020). Retrieved from [https:// usakochnet.com/download/ the-vedic-approach-to-management-for-sustainable-leaderhip/](https://usakochnet.com/download/the-vedic-approach-to-management-for-sustainable-leaderhip/)
- Prabhupada, A. C., *Sri Isopanisad*, Mumbai : Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 2014.
- Prabhupada, A. C., *Bhagavad Gita as It is*, Mumbai : Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 2020.
- shantatmananda, S., "Sustainable Vedic Lifestyle" (April 18, 2020). Retrieved from [www.speakingtree.in: https://www.speakingtree.in/article/sustainable-vedic-lifestyle](https://www.speakingtree.in/article/sustainable-vedic-lifestyle). ★