



# Sanatana Mitra

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## Nectar Of Immortality

One of the most hidden treasures of yogic knowledge is that of Soma or Amrita – the nectar of immortality and bliss. There are lots of misinformation and confusion on this subject and unfortunately very little in the way of clarity because of the sacredness of the knowledge. It is sacred because of its profound effect and mysterious because it cannot be experienced without the proper consciousness.

In the ancient Vedic scriptures, it appears that Soma is the substance that is offered to the gods – however its description is couched in mystery and no clear information is given on how to manufacture that Soma. This has not stopped the experiments or claims that the extract from this moon plant or other will yield the fabled nectar. Disappointment seems to follow all such claims.

There are numerous passages where Soma is associated with the word suta (meaning pressed or squeezed) and there are verses which say that the god Indra became intoxicated after drinking the Soma and was able to destroy the cosmic serpent that was wrapped around the cosmic egg. However, in the Rig Veda 10.85.3, it is also said,

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## The Uniqueness Of Ishavasya

There is one ancient text which holds a high position not only because of its lofty philosophical exposition but also due to several unique aspects. The text is called the Ishavasya Upanishad. In the tradition of Upanishads, they all have the common theme of the Atman or the Spirit and its realization. Each Upanishad should also present a method called upasana for realizing the Atman – most times, it is explicitly stated but sometimes only hinted at or made known through oral transmission.

A unique theme of the Ishavasya is that of a personal divinity called Isha. This is a different vision called up by the sage of this text because other Upanishads have concentrated on either the Atman or the Brahman.

The Atman is the true Self – “the

form of the Self cannot be seen or grasped by the senses because it is the grasper and seer of everything.” It is by abandoning all the false states of consciousness that involve the mind and the senses, that the Self is revealed like the sky when the clouds disappear. Brahman is the term used by the seers to denote the universal, absolute principle that forms the substrate of all beings, divine, semi-divine, human, animal, vegetation, mineral and so on.

The seer of the Ishavasya equates the Atman with the Brahman, the inner Self with the Universal Being. This sage then calls this Divine Being, Isha or Lord, prescribing both a personal and an impersonal aspect to the Divine. This unknown king of yogis has

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## Aspiration For The Inner Light

Each human being has an inner Light, but most people do not make contact with their Divinity, even once in their life-time. The physical sun that we observe every-day is very far from our planet. It appears as a small disc, but we know from our science classes, that it is really enormous. Similarly, the inner Light that we have deep within us, seems to be very far from us, and it seems very tiny and insignificant. However, when we approach our inner Light we are illumined and transformed by the transcendental Light of Truth that permeates all existence.

If one is on the path of spirituality, one is bound to see his inner Sun. At

first, it might be just a glimpse of it, but the great Masters of Yoga have assured us that if we persevere in our practice, someday will dawn when we will see our inner Sun fully in all its glory. In still higher realizations, we will eventually merge with the Light itself, in Divine Consciousness.

This inner Sun appears to move, which is why the inner light moves and illumines the objects that are sensed by the mind. When it appears to remain still, we enter into silence. That is why in the Isha Upanishad, one of the most famous Upanishads (an ancient class of spiritual text), we have a description of

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# The Uniqueness Of Ishavasya

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attempted to unite the material with the spiritual by asserting that the Lord Isha permeates the universe and is the Spirit.

The seer then brings together the yogic paths of knowledge and devotion. Traditionally, the followers of the knowledge path would try to directly reach the impersonal Brahman by their intellection and would consider the followers of devotion towards a personal divine aspect as inferiors on the spiritual path. However, our seer points out the merits of both paths and counsels the practice of an integrated path.

In the same grand theme of a uniting

vision, the seer brings together the life paths of meditation and action. There is danger in pursuing either one without the other and it is the path of action with awareness that is counseled by the wise. There is danger in devoting one's whole life only to meditation and equally a danger for those who devote their whole life only to activity. A harmonious balance must be sought.

The sage of the Ishavasya tells us further that the Lord will answer our prayers and help us overcome the barriers that prevent us from achieving our Self-Realization. The Lord is not just a dispassionate observer but can get

actively involved in our welfare. Such a philosophical position is distinct among the major Upanishads.

The Lord who permeates the universe and is also within us, the seer addresses as Isha. The aspect of the Lord who sustains us is equated with the Spirit behind the visible sun or Surya and is called the nourisher or Pushan. That aspect of the Lord who leads us on the right path is called Agni or the light of the fire.

This text is very short, only eighteen stanzas and is unique in the profundity of its brevity. Most of the other Upanishads explain their visions in much more detail. However, if one can make the effort, one will derive immense benefit from its study.

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## Aspiration For The Inner Light

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something that moves and at the same time moves not:

That moves and that moves not.  
That is far and that is near.  
That is within and that is without.  
Ishavasya Upanishad 5

This is a description of Divinity that permeates the universe and in our solar system is best symbolized by the Sun. This Divinity is the creator that has created something without beginning or end. A great Master once said, "If the beginning comes from anything, then it cannot be a beginning. Beginning cannot come from anything."

In the Rig Veda we learn that existence came from non-existence. Here, non-existence does not signify nothing. It is not something that never existed, it is 'something' which we cannot see with our eyes or detect with our instruments. The seers of the Vedas, through their spiritual sight, through their third-eye, saw non-existence as something

which had not yet taken proper form and substance in the outer world.

We all want to bathe in the sea of sunlight. The outer sunlight will give us purification while the inner sunlight will give us illumination. When we want to bathe in water, we need a soap and towel. But when we have a sun-bath, we don't need these things. When we bathe in the inner sun, we need only one thing to satisfy all our inner needs - our soul's communion with our true Self.

The morning Sun comes as the day dawns, and we see beauty all around. God the Beautiful, comes to us in the morning in the form of inspiration. The poet is inspired to write soulful poems, the musician is inspired to compose beautiful music. People going to work from all walks of life, everywhere on this globe, are all getting abundant inspiration from their Inner Light to fulfill their daily duties.

The divine Sun comes to us in mid-day as dynamic aspiration. We have to

perform the duties of the day. We have to fulfill our outer demands as well as our inner demands. The inner Sun comes to us with its fiery flames, giving us powerful, soulful, dynamic will which will hasten our inner evolution and outer manifestation.

The inner Sun comes to us in the evening as realization. When the sun sets, silence and purity reign supreme all around. Nature is resting, Mother Earth is resting and all is peace and love within and without. With evening comes realization, as we offer ourselves for the consummation of the inner and outer fruits of aspiration. When realization dawns and we perceive the inner light directly, the roles of inspiration and aspiration end.

Today we are aspiring, tomorrow we shall be realized. When we are all realized, we shall see that our aspiration and our realization are absolutely inseparable, just as the inner and outer Sun is inseparable.

# Nectar Of Immortality

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“Those priests may regard Soma as a creeper which is crushed for getting its juice for use in the ritual. But to the seers, Soma is not something to be drunk.” Therefore there seems to be multiple meanings for Soma even within the Vedas.

In the later mythical stories, a stronger hint is given for the manufacture of this nectar. There is the story of the churning of the great universal ocean of milk by means of the cosmic serpent wrapped around a sacred mountain – this imagery would now evoke the raising of the potential energy called Kundalini in the astral spine. We may then suspect that the nectar is something that is produced by the raising of this Kundalini energy, which is the result of certain yogic and tantric practices.

This becomes even clearer when we consult the early medieval text from the Mahayogi, Shiva-Goraksha-Babaji:

Who seal bindu by jewel of Kechari  
Even embraced by heavenly damsels

Their essence does not fall to waste  
Instead they immortal soma taste

The later yogic texts all subscribe to the identification of Soma as a substance secreted by the yogi's body as a result of perfecting certain practices and attaining a higher consciousness. The practice most often cited is that of Kechari Mudra which stimulate the production and retention of the nectar. It is not possible to go into detail to talk about this advanced technique although it is described in various texts because there are also lots of mistaken lore about it. My advice is to only practice this mudra after proper initiation and verbal instruction.

It is necessary to understand that the texts all say that the nectar can only be attained through the Kechari mudra. However, the majority only focus on the physical attainment of lengthening their tongues but neglect to practice the stilling of the mind. The Kechari stops the movement of prana or life-force energy in the side channels and enables it

to move into the central channel. When the prana moves properly in the central channel, the mind stills and the practitioner enters into a heightened state of awareness. Even then, the nectar is not produced unless the Kundalini rises in the central channel and that can only happen if there is sufficient sexual essence or prana to fuel its passage. A period of celibacy is required for such an endeavor.

You might now be rather bemused by the technicalities involved and that is good because it is my goal only to caution against the premature practice of this Kechari mudra for the sake of tasting the Soma. I will also caution against trying to find this nectar through experimenting with drugs or plants – that is also doomed to failure and can also lead to negative karmic effects.

So, what am I trying say? Persevere in your spiritual practice and the Soma will be secreted when the right conditions are present. It is a by-product of higher consciousness and not something to be desired after for its own sake.

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## The Joy Of Tranquility

It is required of the yogic classics to point out the goal of the spiritual discipline, explain the method of practice and the observable result. These three parts usually take up most of the text. The same three parts are given completely in just one famous verse of the Ishavasya Upanishad which has been quoted ever since by saints and sages for over two thousand years:

For one who constantly sees  
everywhere all existence in the Self,  
And the Self in all beings and forms,  
Such a one can feel no hatred for  
anything.

Verse 6

The goal that is described in this verse is the achievement of Self-Realization and an observable result is the absence of hatred for any “other”. The seer has correctly diagnosed the disease as the mental concept of repulsion, dislike, fear and hatred for things in a universe that is comprehended as a multiplicity and plurality of beings similar separate to oneself. There arises in the mind an individual and personal opposition to other beings and objects around us. Such a mind is constantly in stress and overcome with feelings of unhappiness. The mind wavers between the twin blades of repulsion and attraction.

When the mind no longer apprehends the “other” in reality, when the person of wisdom has experienced and realized the Oneness of the Self, then the hatred disappears from the mind. Such a mind becomes tranquil and profound joy arises. As the experience of Oneness becomes more and more established, the tranquility and joy becomes more and more permanent.

The meditation given for achieving this mental tranquility and joy is two-fold.

First, one must practice seeing the Self, the Atman, pervading all existence – animate subjects and inanimate objects. The neighbor who said hello to you this morning, the cat that made

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# The Joy Of Tranquility

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a mess on your driveway, the dog that you just walked, the stone that hurt your toe, the air that you breathe, the mosquito that bit you, the bacteria all around and so on, and so on. The Self is everywhere in this country, and all the countries of earth, in the Sun and planets of our solar system, in the solar systems of our milky way galaxy, in

the galaxies of our galactic cluster and so on throughout the universe. This is expressed succinctly by the later seers as, "THAT I AM."

As one becomes established in the first mode of apprehension, one moves into the second phase of realization, when one sees One's Self in all beings and forms everywhere. One then ex-

periences that "I" am the neighbor, the drunken driver who smashed into the lamppost outside my house, the tiger in the zoo, the giant redwood and so on and so on. This can best be expressed if that is at all possible as, "I AM THAT."

In one verse, our seer has summed up the work of a life-time, if not for many life-times. Even repeating this verse in its original Sanskrit is considered to bring one closer to the goal, such is its power and lofty vision.

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## The Moon In Kriya Yoga

As we learn of the passing of a true hero, that of Neil Armstrong who took a small step on the Moon and expanded the boundaries of humanity, I'm reminded of the significance of the moon as a powerful symbol in the yogic tradition. Just as the effect of Armstrong's feat will take generations to be felt, the effect of the moon principle is hidden although manifest in all our thoughts.

In Yoga, the moon is a symbol of the mind. The moon is fast moving and waxes and wanes, sometimes dark and hidden and sometimes bright and shining. The mind is restless and fast moving - it is moody and changing, sometimes happy and sometimes sad. The moon can only be seen at night and is hidden in the day just as the mind is hidden in activity and only when one stops and reflects on it, does one begin to unravel its mysteries.

There is a dark side of the moon which is hidden from our view just as there is a portion of the mind that is hidden from us, that of the subconscious. The moon has no light of its own and can only reflect the light of the sun, just as the mind has no volition and direction without the light of the soul.

The moon in Hatha yoga is associated with the left energy channel called the ida nadi in the subtle body while the sun is associated with the right energy channel called the pingala nadi. The

goal is to balance the sun and the moon in order to awaken the hidden potential called the Kundalini Shakti.

In Kriya Yoga, we are going beyond balancing and seek to actively merge the moon with the sun - that is to have the soul-spirit take control of the mind. In the first phase, the sun-fire is in the navel chakra or energy center and when it rises to the moon above the soft palate of the mouth, it causes the diffusion of the nectar of bliss which permeates the sensory mind to keep it under control. The moon-mind is like an unruly animal and must be tamed and controlled in order for the higher consciousness of wisdom-bliss to arise.

When the mind is somewhat controlled, it becomes possible for the moon-matter at the first chakra to merge with the sun-light at the third-eye center and this gives rise to a unity consciousness that transcends the moon-mind. In fact, the Kriya Yogi experiences the state of no-mind because she is now in the integrated super and supra-awareness state.

All this may seem a little esoteric to you but is nevertheless experientially verifiable during the course of sincere yogic practice.

Just as the moon is not the master of our solar system, so realize that the mind is not the master of our self and that there is the sun that gives the light

and life to our external world just as there is the Self that bestows the light and life to our subjective world. If we want to really realize the truth, we can experience that even the material sun is enlightened by our subjective Self, which is merged into the Universal Consciousness.

A journey, no matter how short or long, begins with a first step and just as Armstrong has helped humanity on the journey to the stars by taking that first step on the moon, so also, the yogis of the past have taken the steps that will help humanity journey to the heights of our evolutionary promise of Universal Consciousness.

## My Blog

I'm pleased to let you know that in order to increase the interactivity and frequency of my articles, they will now be available on my new blog at:

[www.sanatanamitra.com](http://www.sanatanamitra.com)

The blog format will enable me to post shorter and timely responses to your queries and world events while my journal will be used for more in-depth teachings of the yogic treatises such as the Upanishads. There will be some overlap as I'll be posting some of the journal articles to the blog.