



## A Longer Life with the Help of Yojna

Kathak Samhita of the YajurVed (5/3) says: May the Yajna support my life. Similarly, the Mantra in the YajurVed Madhyadin Shakha Chapter 9 says almost the same thing. All these Mantras say the same thing: We should live longer and better our health with the help of a Yajna.

### ?1. What is meant by ‘Devhit Aayu’?

?In the RigVed (1/89/8), there is a prayer: May we attain the Devhit Aayu by listening only good things with our ears, seeing only good sights with our eyes, and by making our bodies properly stable and equipped with good health.

?Now, the question is, what exactly is the ‘Devhit Aayu’?

?Today, in India, the average life of a man is just 62 years. The average life of a man in prosperous countries in Europe, Russia and America is said to be 70 years. Many of the African countries have an average human life of just 45 years or even less. In Africa, man’s life length has drastically come down because of hunger, malnutrition, poverty etc. in many areas.

?With reference to the ‘Devhit Aayu’, there is a sentence in Maitrayani as well as the Kathak Samhita (Maitrayani 1/7/5) and Kathak Samhita 9/2), saying that ‘Devhit Aayu’ is living for at least 100 years and growing old enjoying life with excellent health.

?Presently, no nation in the world has an average human life of 100 years. The Aitareya Aranyak says about the average human life span(2/2/9), man’s average life length must be considered as at least 100 years. There is a popular Mantra in the YajurVed (Madhyadin Samhita 36/24), which also has the word ‘Devhit’. There is a prayer here, saying, may we humans in our predetermined life of at least 100 years, have excellent organs for seeing, listening and speaking, and moreover, may we wish for excellent health even after 100 years of our life.

?There is other evidence in our Vedic literature as well, which proves that a man’s average length of life is 100 years (Madhyadin Shatapath Brahman 5/4/1/13, Maitrayani Samhita 1/6/4, Taitik Samhita 2/3/11/5).

?But as said earlier, this is the common average life length. A religiously, purely living man should expect to live even longer. Madhyadin Shatapath Brahman says so in 1/9/3/19.

?In the final, 40<sup>th</sup> chapter of the YajurVed, it says clearly that man should wish to live 100 years with a fully functioning body in healthy condition (40/2).

?This is the Devhit Aayu. It does not consider untimely death, or death due to illness or accident. Only a death because of old age, and that too after 100 years is Devhit Aayu.

## **2. How to attain the 'Devhit Aayu'?**

To attain the Devhit Aayu, man has to become a Yajnik, who performs Yajnas. A Yajnik is almost always healthy, happy, religious and helps others. Maitrayani Samhita (2/3/5) says: Man can attain the Devhit, pure life only with the help of a Yajna. He hosts the Yajna, and gets himself examined in the company of the Ritwij, i.e., the actual performers of the Yajna, and attains full and long life.

?AtharvaVed says clearly that a Yajna removes our old age which occurs because of various persons and incidents and accidents, and saving us from an untimely death, gives a full length, 100 year life (3/11/5).

?There is a prayer in the AtharvaVed that may we make such offerings in the Yajna, which will cause us to live a 100 springs, and we attain a full 100 years of life with the blessings of deities like Indra, Agni, Savita etc.(3/11/4).

?The deity of the above Yajna is Aayu, who destroys diseases and ailments, suggesting that a Yajna performed with various medicinal plants destroys even extremely serious diseases like tuberculosis, and man attains a healthy, full length life.

## **?3. Yajna for Health**

?Everybody knows that a body eaten away by diseases cannot enjoy a long life full of activities. Thus, it is very important to remain completely healthy and free of diseases to attain the Devhit Aayu.

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Clinical sciences give detailed information about various medicines, as well as creating more medicines with their various mixtures to cure diseases.

?The famous book Charak Samhita of Ayurved says that performing various Yajna in the prescribed manner in the Veds increases man's life length and he remains disease-free. The

writer of the Charak Samhita has clearly accepted that one should wish for good health by performing various Yajnas and Ishtikas, and also that performing such Yajnas and Ishtikas increases the length of life.

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The 19th Kand of the AtharvaVed clearly mentions that one who uses the Guggul in the Agnihotra never contracts diseases like tuberculosis and any diseases of infections occurring due to touch. Thus, using the fragrant Guggul in the Yajna destroys diseases, improves health and leads to attaining the DevHit Aayu (AtharvaVed 19/32/1).

#### **?4. Yajna and Thoughts**

?The various fragrant smelling materials and used and burnt in a Yajna kill the germs and viruses and because of a better health, we can live much longer on a physical level. But more importantly, the chanting of various Mantras leads to purification of our heart and mind, leading further to pure thoughts and increasing tendency to help others and also to the joy of the soul, because of which the life length increases.

?Those who do not perform Yajnas do not have the purity of thoughts and mind like that of those who do perform, and thus they remain mired in the smaller, selfish activities for the life. The life of a man not living purely and enjoying carnal pleasures and sinful life becomes weaker, whereas a purely living man lives much longer and functions longer. That was why our Rishis lived so long. They were selfless, pure and straight in their hearts and minds.

?In the Anushasan Parva of the epic Mahabharat, Bhishma says to Yudhishtir, those who lead a sinful life without following the religion and without doing their duties, and those who have no limits on their behaviour and thinking become short-lived, whereas those with a pure character and pure thinking live to be 100 years.

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The Purushsukta from the RigVed and YajurVed must be mentioned here, wherein Prajapati manifested himself in the form of a Yajna and commenced the creation of the universe. In that Yajna, Brahma Himself is the Yajna and the Host as well as the offerings. A similar description appears in the Chhandogya Upanishad of a person who is making his 100 years plus life one with the Yajna, and attaining the Devhit Aayu (3/16). It means that the entire life of a man is a Yajna by itself, the first 24 years being the early morning prayers, the next 44 years being the afternoon prayers, and the last 42 years being the evening prayers. This makes a common man's life to be 110 years.

## **?5. Yajna for a Long and Healthy Life**

?To attain Devhit Aayu or Abhishta Aayu or a full length life, one must become a Yajnik. A man who performs Yajnas constantly attains a full length life of 100 years.

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Lord Krishna says in the BhagwadGeeta (3/10), that at the time of creation of the Yajnas, Lord Prajapati suggested that one who constantly performs Yanjas, also collects wishes for an Abhishta Aayu constantly. This suggests that for attaining Abhishta Aayu, i.e., living as much as you wish, man must perform Yajnas.

?The word ‘Yajna’ has a very broad meaning. It is not limited just to a DevYajna or Havan or Agnihotra. It includes five MahaYajnas which are supposed to be performed by man routinely. Because of this broader meaning, Yajna also means ‘BrahmaYajna which includes Sandhya, Gayatri Chanting etc.

## **?6. Long Life by performing a Long Sandhya**

In the Fourth Chapter of Manu Smriti (4/94), it is mentioned that the Rishis attained a longer life by performing Sandhya and Gayatri Chanting for long durations.

?The following Mantra from the AtharvaVed also suggests (19/71/9) a man who constantly performs chanting of Vedic Mantras and Gayatri etc. attains long life, subjects, Prans, cattle etc.

‘Atithi Yajna’ is also included in the five MahaYajnas. The broad meaning of Yajna includes honouring guests coming to the household, touching the feet of parents and other senior people and accepting their blessings. The words of blessings said by them also help increase our life length. A Shlok from the Manu Smriti also reiterates the same thing.

?Thus, when we think closely about the broad meaning of Yajna, it becomes clear to us that Yajna helps increase the length of our life, and even the Veds acknowledge this (yajurVed 9/21).

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