

Ati Rudra Mahā Yajña – Highest form of worship of Lord Śiva

„What is the meaning of Yajña? Any action that you perform, if you offer the fruit there of to the Lord, it becomes a Yajña. In other words, a true Yajña involves unity of mind, action and words.” – Bhagavān Śrī Sathya Sāi Baba, during ARMY in PN, August 2006.

„People think that only offering oblations in fire is Yajña, but the true Yajña is offering oneself to God, to please God and to become worthy of His love.”

– Śrī Sathya Sāi Baba, *Sacred company confers mental purification and bliss*, Divine Discourse on 10th August 2006, ARMY in Praśānti Nilayam



Ati Rudra Mahā Yajña is the ultimate spiritual offering for world peace that entails chanting of the **Śrī Rudram** 14,641 times as *japa* (contemplation), *abhiṣeka* (unification), and 1,465 times as *homa* (sacred offering symbolic of losing identification).

A Yajña incorporates various aspects of the fostering of the Vedas. It is akin to an ultra-wide spectrum antibiotic. Through the tremendous positive energy that it generates the Yajña elevates consciousness to a higher level. Involving more than 135 priests and ritviks (*rtvij*), that divine *pūjā* is conducted over 11 days.

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The history of Ati Rudra Mahā Yajña

... is very short. ☺ As we know, it has been performed only once before – by Lord Śiva for the Good of the World – and 2006 and 2007 it was performed by Sāi Śiva. It is said that Lord Śiva, after Bhasmāsura was killed with the help of Lord Viṣṇu, performed the Tāṇḍava Dance and then performed the Rudra Yagña for the betterment of humanity. This place where the Rudra Yagña was performed is where the Śrī Kalahasti Temple stands now. This temple also has one of the 12 Jyotirlingas of Parameśwara. Śrī Kalahasti is the Vayu Kṣetra (Wind Representation) among the five places dedicated to nature. It is situated in Chittoor District, in Andhra Pradesh. The light in the *sanctum sanctorum* is always seen gently swaying as if blown by a wind. The blowing is caused; it is said, by the breath of Lord Śiva. This *linga* was worshipped by a Spider (*śrī*), snake (*kalash*), and an elephant (*hasti*), hence the name as Śrī Kalahasti. Mahaśivarātri is celebrated with great reverence and fervor in the temple. There is no other mention of this Rudra Yagña ever been performed after that, as this Mahā Yagñam has to be performed in the Presence of Divinity itself.

As the most sacred and powerful among all the Mahā Yajña's the Rudra Yajña encompassing two *niṣkāma karmas* namely, Deiva Yajña (worship of Śiva and Other divinities), and

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Mānuṣya Yajña (performed with large devotees who partake prasādam or grace of the Lord). It is very rare that a Yagñam of this significance and magnitude can be witnessed. Equally rare is the opportunity for the people to actually participate in the worship. This most powerful Yajña is done only with the Presence of a Divine Being and done in a most serene environment for meditation, spiritual study and practice. It is also done particularly for the sake of washing away ones sins and afflictions, for bringing peace, prosperity and happiness, along with family togetherness.

“Yajña originates in Karma. Karma takes its birth from Brahman. Brahman is in the form of Akṣara Puruṣa. Praṇavam (*AUM*) is the very form of that Akṣara. And Praṇavam is at the root of the Vedas. That is why it has been laid down that a Yajña, which is performed and directed in My name and My form, is the most suitable one for humans. Those who have partaken of the fruits (*prasādam*) of this Yajña will be ever content and happy in their worldly life; and when they depart this world attain merger with the Supreme Divinity Principle. There is absolutely no doubt about it.” – Bhagavān Śrī Sathya Sāi Baba, Divine Discourse, October, 1961



It may be asked that though the **Veda Puruṣa Saptāha Jñāna Yagñā** has been performed right from 1961 during *Dasara* celebrations, what was the necessity for Swami to perform another Yagñam on such a grand scale at that point in time (2006)? Swami clarified this on

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the final day of Yagñam (ARMY, PN, 2006) when He said, “The Yagñam done during *Dasara* is *Gyāna* Yagñam, while this is an *Adhyātma* Yagñam”, meaning, this Yagñam is for the spiritual health of the whole world and much wider in scope and purpose than the Yagñam performed during *Dasara* which is related only to the “mental principle”.

ATI RUDRA MAHĀ YAJÑA IN DIVINE PRESENCE OF BHAGAVĀN ŚRĪ SATYHA SĀĪ BABA, PRAŚĀNTI NILAYAM (9-20 August 2006)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LUxlcQJqM>



„The Ati Rudra Mahā Yagñā is the highest form of worship of Lord Śiva. At present the same Ati Rudra is being performed in the presence of Rudra Himself...it is a unique opportunity for everyone to enjoy the blessings of Bhagavān, as this Yagñā is for the spiritual progress of humanity as a whole. At the same time it is the duty of each one of us to express our gratitude for our existence and also to spread the message of love and peace, highlighted by Bhagavān so that His dream of establishing a Nation of Humanity is realized.” - Head priest of the Yagñam, Veda Brahma Śrī B.S. Nanjunda Dixit

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The Yagñam stood for Universal Love and Peace. Thousands who had filled literally every inch of the richly decorated Sāi Kulwant Hall felt themselves bathed in these two emotions as they watched the seven-tongued flames, leap and dance, accepting the oblations offered into the eleven *homa kuṇḍas* (fire-altars), delivering the prayers from thousands of yearning souls to the divine.

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Here is the experience of a one devotee from Canada:

“When I contemplate back on the Athi Rudra Mahā Yagña, words like priceless, heavenly, revitalizing and auspicious come to mind. The hours spent in lines to sit in the Sāi Kulwant hall and the early mornings were all worth it. As I sat amongst devotees from all nooks and corners of the world, I was overcome by a unique sensation. I felt at peace during the chanting of the Vedas. The Vedas seem to have an exceptional cleansing and energizing property contained within them. Although, in all honesty, I had little idea of what was being chanted, the hairs on my arms seem to stand and chills ran down my spine at times. Perhaps it was the ancient hymns (whose origin is that of mysticism); or perhaps it was the fact that the Mahā Yagña, in praise of Lord Rudra, was being performed in the midst of Rudra himself? The series of Bhagavān’s divine discourses only made the experience sweeter. It was the cherry on the cake. Svāmī reminded us that we are verily God - that we are sparks of divinity. All we have to do is realize it.”

“You have participated in this sacred Yajña for your good, for your welfare, and the welfare of humanity at large. This Yajña is not merely for a few individuals, it is for the entire world. The mantras chanted here have mixed in the air and spread to the entire universe. These sacred sounds entered our hearts and purified them. Hence, do not think that the mantras chanted in this Yajña are confined to only this place. They have spread to the entire world. This Yajña is not only for the benefit of India, but to all the countries in the world.”

– Bhagavān Śrī Sathya Sāi Baba, *Yajñas and the Vedas are for the whole World*, divine discourse during ARMY in PN, 19. August 2006.

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