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Conceptual similarity about the word 'Daiva' And 'Karma' and its ethical impact in Hindu society

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Abstract

Humans hold a unique place among living beings due to their remarkable capacity for thought and resilience in facing life's challenges. This quality stems from a deep well of wisdom gained through the pursuit of knowledge, which elevates individuals into sages possessing insights that transcend ordinary understanding. The teachings of these sages relate to the karma theorem, or *Daivam*, a universal law that dictates that every action has corresponding consequences. This principle binds all beings to a moral framework. As humans interacted with divine entities, the tendency to seek favors without understanding led to a disconnect from genuine spirituality and accumulated negative karma through misguided actions. Hindu philosophy, however, teaches that individuals can change their karmic paths. One can create positive change and harmonize with natural law by aligning with dharma—the ethical order of the universe. By purifying actions and intentions, individuals can influence their destinies, fostering balance within the universe and embodying the ideals of ancient wisdom.

Keywords: *Daivam*; Deity; Universal Law; Karma; Karmic Path; Sages

1. Introduction

In Sanskrit, humans are called "*Manushyah*," a term with profound significance. The essence of this designation suggests a thoughtful awareness of one's actions, captured succinctly in the phrase "*Matva Karmani Seevyanti*," which implies that humans can understand and engage in deeds with intention and purpose. This unique cognitive capability places humanity at the pinnacle of the creature hierarchy, highlighting the extraordinary nature of our existence. From birth, all living beings, including humans, emerge into the world enveloped in ignorance. However, as they navigate the complexities of life, humans possess the remarkable ability to rise above these challenges. This empowerment comes from the wisdom imparted by their ancestors and the insights gained through personal experiences. Fear, an inherent aspect of life, accompanies every being from the moment of creation. It is a fundamental emotion rooted in the unpredictable oscillations of pleasure and pain that define our existence. Additionally, the ever-looming specters of death instill deep-seated anxiety, influencing behavior and thought. Thus, the human experience is a continuous interplay of striving to overcome fear while navigating the intricacies of life's fleeting joys and sorrows.

Humanity, the pinnacle of evolution, has the potential to achieve what seems impossible for other species. Yet, we often confine ourselves to the material environment and the living world. This environment, however, can be a catalyst for self-discovery, enhancing our cognitive abilities. Those who truly embrace this intellectual beauty live with an awareness of the past, present, and future. They become sages, passing on their wisdom to future generations. The teachings of these sages, known as the karma theorem, are not exclusive to a select few but a universal law that all living beings, including you, must adhere to. The entire cosmos operates within this framework, resembling a symphony of

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various rhythms united by a singular melody. Even when the rhythm shifts, one sequence seamlessly follows the previous one.

This continuity can vary—sometimes slow, at other times brisk—yet any disruption in this rhythm can diminish its beauty. Should it become dissonant, enjoyment is lost, and the harmony is distorted. Every entity within the universe exists within this same rhythmic structure, akin to engaging music. All movements, whether from the living or the non-living, from predator to prey, occur in this orchestrated order. Even the mighty sun and moon respect this cosmic rhythm, reflecting the wisdom of the Upanishadic verse: "*Na Suryah na Bhaati na Chandratarakam*," which conveys that even the sun, moon, and stars fulfil their duties flawlessly out of reverence for that ultimate essence, Brahman.

2. The Significance and Concept of Daivam

Over time, the notion of *Daiva* within Hindu philosophy evolved, taking on various interpretations and manifestations. For those who lacked a deeper understanding of Brahman—the ultimate consciousness and source of refuge, often described as the unchanging reality amidst the changing world—these diverse forces of the universe were perceived as *Daiva*. Brahman, in Hindu philosophy, is the ultimate, unchanging reality amidst the changing world. Such interpretations of *Daivam* often led to the emergence of primitive and magical rituals, transforming these concepts into objects of veneration and worship among the general populace. Unfortunately, this shift in focus steered individuals away from the core of reality, clouding their minds with the burdens of karma generated by unwholesome actions. This study aims to engage discerning individuals in exploring potential pathways to liberate society from the clutter and confusion produced by these misguided beliefs.

One who diligently fulfils their responsibilities can be aptly referred to as *Daiva*. This concept is articulated in the Matsya Purana with the verse "*Swameva Karma Daivakhya*" (Matsyapurna-195), underscoring the significance of one's actions. The Amarakhosha further clarifies *Daivam* as "*Bhagyam*" (1.1.18), emphasizing its connection to fortune and destiny. *Daivam* embodies the sacred offerings or rites dedicated to the Supreme Spirit, highlighting the deep spiritual significance of such acts.

In the context of Bharata, the idea of service—performing one's duty—takes precedence over all else. This principle manifests in the understanding that every being, from the smallest ant to the grand creator, Brahma, plays a vital role within the cosmic order. This hierarchical structure governs the universe. Each entity has its unique duty or karma, much like employees within a vast organization. For instance, consider a large office environment: each employee has distinct responsibilities. When everyone executes their tasks with dedication and efficiency, the organization thrives, ensuring the security and stability of all its members. As part of this cosmic order, you have a unique duty to fulfil, and your actions are integral to the smooth functioning of the universe. Conversely, the company's integrity may falter if any individual or group neglects their duties or acts against the collective goal. This decline can occur gradually or lead to a swift collapse, primarily influenced by the actions of those who deviate from their responsibilities.

Similarly, the universe operates within its structured system, where every being—from the tiniest insect to the highest deity—is akin to an employee. Their adherence to duty and collaboration is essential for maintaining the balance and harmony of existence. No matter how small, each action contributes to the greater whole, reinforcing that service and duty are at the heart of individual and universal resilience. The proprietor's intimate understanding of every function and movement within his company enables him to safeguard its integrity precisely. Through a series of notices, warnings, or outright expulsions, he efficiently addresses those whose actions deviate from the established system. In this intricate balance, the *Daivams* or *Karmayogis* play a crucial role, embodying the essence of perfect selfless action. They draw upon the forces of nature—be it the radiant sun, the nurturing earth, or the celestial spheres—to counteract any disruptors that threaten the system's harmony.

These *Karmayogis* are vigilant guardians, ready to neutralize or eliminate any elements—living organisms, celestial bodies, or vital water sources—that pose a risk to the equilibrium they strive to maintain. If they discern that a particular element could compromise their environment's overall harmony or stability, these diligent, devout practitioners are prepared to take decisive action, removing the disruptive influences altogether to preserve the system's integrity.

3. Discussions, Research Analysis and Findings

In the complex and interconnected landscape of the food-consumer chain, entities possessing a higher energy mass wield a powerful authority over those with a lower energy mass. This relationship is not merely transactional; it reflects a fundamental principle of the universe where the balance of energy shapes the dynamics of existence. In this cosmic

dance, two categories of energy masses manifest: those that generate positive outcomes—enhancing well-being, growth, and harmony in the ecosystem—and those that yield negative consequences, contributing to imbalance and discord. The universe is replete with these energy masses in varying degrees, with positive energies fostering interdependence and flourishing life. In contrast, negative energies often remain in the shadows, their effects quietly pervasive. Entities operating at lower energy levels find themselves constrained in their perception; they can only sense and interact with energies immediately above them in the hierarchy. This limitation can render them oblivious to the more magnificent, powerful energies that exist just beyond their reach as if they are caught in a dense fog that obscures their broader surroundings.

Within this framework of energy hierarchy, the concept of '*Daivam*' emerges, encapsulating a higher form of energy that surpasses its lesser counterparts. *Daivam* embodies strength and a unique form of autonomy, representing a force that can govern itself and navigate through realms of influence that are typically inaccessible to those of lower energy. This higher energy is more than just a powerful entity; it serves as a guiding light, exuding an aura of transcendence that enables it to perform actions that defy ordinary constraints. As such, *Daivam* symbolizes the essence of divinity—a presence that encompasses authority, wisdom, and the capacity to evoke change in both subtle and profound ways. It manifests as a vital force in the universe, shaping the flow of energy and destiny while inviting all life forms to aspire to greater heights. It embodies the intricate interplay of control, potential, and the divine essence that threads through the fabric of existence itself.

4. Way to change the Destiny through *Daivam*

The Upanishads offer profound guidance on beneficially aligning with *Daivam* or *Karma's* forces. The phrase "*Pratikulam Thatha Daivam Paurushena Vihanyathe*" underscores the idea that a person, or Purusha, can influence *Daivam*—essentially, the pathway of self-directed karma—through conscious and intentional efforts. If there is any uncertainty about who holds the capacity to effect such transformations, it becomes clear that it resides within humanity. An evolved individual engages in deep reflection and critical thinking, empowering them to consciously harness their mental faculties to alter their karmic trajectory. One can confront and overturn past karmas that may have been detrimental or counterproductive through dedicated and purposeful actions or *Vikram*. This empowerment means that individuals have the potential to redefine their karmic path, steering it toward outcomes that harmonize with the greater cosmos. It invites the possibility of shifting one's life direction not only to seek personal benefit but also to contribute positively to the overarching system of the universe. By undertaking actions that yield constructive results, individuals can cultivate a life that resonates with the natural rhythms and flows of existence, ultimately leading to a more harmonious and fulfilling journey.

5. Difference between *Daivam* and Deity

The intriguing question arises: who has been called "*Daivam*" for so long? Hindu scriptures provide profound insights, including essential texts like the Puranas and the Bhagavad Gita. For instance, the Matsyapurana states, "*Swameva Karma Daivakhyam Viddhi Dehantarajitam*," suggesting a connection between one's actions and divine essence that transcends physical existence. Similarly, the Bhagavad Gita articulates, "*Daivee Hyesha Gunamayi Mama Maya Duratyaya*," emphasising the complexity and elusiveness of divine nature. In another poignant verse, it declares, "*Abhayam Satva Samshudhir, Daivamahijatasya Bharata*" (Bhagavad Gita 16.1-3), underlining the purity and fearlessness that comes from recognising the divine within. In contemplating the cosmos, we categorise existence into two fundamental aspects: *Bhokta* and *Bhogya*. "*Bhokta*" refers to the experience or the one who consumes, while "*Bhogya*" denotes the objects of knowledge. This distinction is eloquently captured in the Nasadiya Sukta (10.129.6-7), which presents the notion that all living beings capable of enhancing their life energy are, in essence, consumers of their surroundings. This consumption is not limited to physical food; it embodies all experiences.

Consequently, the human soul is intrinsically a consumer, and its journey through life is viewed as a quest for fortune, ultimately culminating in transcendental aspirations. Furthermore, the Brahma Sutra elucidates a profound concept: even deities, celestial beings often believed to possess immense power, can attain *moksha*, or self-realization, only upon their descent to Earth. This process necessitates the dissolution of the causal body that envelops them, highlighting the intricate relationship between divinity, existence, and the pursuit of ultimate knowledge. The entirety of matter within the universe can be intricately categorized into three distinct realms: mass, energy, and consciousness. Each form of matter possesses energy and consciousness, whether active or passive. Objects characterized by mass are perceivable through our visual senses, while energy can be detected through various forms of sensory perception. However, the flow and quantity of energy within each mass can be conceptualized as consciousness itself.

Consciousness, in this context, refers to the essence that animates each object, allowing it to be recognized by the human senses. These senses are limited to six primary forms of perception. Yet, these senses cannot directly comprehend the underlying consciousness that serves as the foundation for all existence. In this framework, a Devata, or deity, emerges as a unique entity—an intangible and massless form where energy and consciousness are harmoniously intertwined. The term's etymology reveals its essence: "*Deevyati iti Devah, Mantrena Chodyata*," suggesting that these deities are called forth and energized through specific incantations or mantras. Each deity possesses the remarkable capacity to manipulate energy in various ways, granting them an inevitable dominance over entities with mass. While deities can influence the trajectory of matter and alter the fate of physical beings, they do not wield absolute power. Instead, their role is to guide every living entity toward the outcomes dictated by their karma, ensuring that the interconnected web of existence unfolds according to the principles of cosmic order.

6. Way to become one's own *Daivam*.

To transform one's destiny, it is essential to purify one's karma, as highlighted in the *Matsyapurana* Bhagavad Gita. This purification sets the stage for performing actions, called *Nishkama*, devoid of attachment to their outcomes. By adopting this approach, one minimizes the pursuit of materialistic interactions and endeavours, leading to a richer engagement with the intrinsic nature of Purusha—the principle of effort and will. As this practice unfolds, the entanglements of *Karmavyavahara*, or the transactional nature of actions, gradually decline while *Swamjnana*, or higher knowledge, begins to flourish. This shift in understanding is profound; even when the results of one's actions are not sought, the intrinsic joy derived from performing those actions is ensured by universal laws.

As *Karmavyavahara* wanes and the essence of pure action increases, an observant and astute person starts to contemplate the underlying reasons for this phenomenon. Upon reflection, they recognize that true happiness is closely intertwined with their actions. This realization leads to a pivotal search for the source of authentic joy, steering the individual away from the transient pleasures offered by external material objects. In moments when one feels deprived of happiness or struggles to find it through physical possessions, the journey inward commences. It becomes apparent that true fulfilment and contentment can only be discovered through the depths of one's being, an exploration that stems from embracing one's humanity.

7. The Place of *Daivam* in the Universe

Since the dawn of humanity, a fundamental question has lingered in our collective consciousness: Where is the divine presence, and will it seek out wrongdoers to administer justice? The universe, its vast and unseen dimensions, and its myriad living beings operate in a harmonious rhythm, much like a string of pearls delicately arranged. Each entity plays a role, and if one strays from this established order or veers in the opposite direction, the others instinctively distance themselves from the disruption, thereby maintaining the overall integrity of the whole. This intricate balance exemplifies the universal law that governs existence.

When we consider the concept of self-deed as a manifestation of the divine, it becomes evident that our actions—our *karmas*—serve as our deities. Each deed we perform is intertwined with its inevitable consequence, which is inherently woven into the fabric of our choices. The outcome of our actions mirrors the principle of purchasing a product from a store, where each item comes with its designated name, a user manual outlining its appropriate use, expiration details, and a list of ingredients. In this scenario, it is ultimately the buyer's responsibility to decide whether to select the product.

Similarly, our *karmas* can be viewed as the offerings produced in our universe's grand factory. Each choice we make leaves an imprint, meticulously recording its potential outcomes. Thus, the results we experience—whether they bring joy or suffering—are directly tied to the merit of our choices. In this understanding, the divine does not stand as a punitive figure waiting to chastise; instead, our actions lead us toward salvation or punishment. Ultimately, we are the architects of our destinies, shaped by the *karmas* we choose to embrace.

8. Conclusion

The concept of *Daivam* signifies a divine presence intricately woven into the very fabric of the universe, manifesting in every corner of existence. This encompasses the living beings that share the world with us and the inanimate objects that form our surroundings. Each action an individual takes can be regarded as a reflection of their *Daivam*, commonly called karma. In the grand tapestry of existence, every entity oscillates between the states of '*Aham*'—representing the individual self—and '*Etath*'—symbolizing the external world. This oscillation is influenced by the fundamental forces of

attraction and repulsion that govern both the physical and metaphysical realms. As a result of these dynamic interactions, living and non-living beings either thrive and flourish or face degradation and extinction, depending on the nature of their karma and the purity of their actions.

Those who attain a high level of purity in their karma, mainly through the virtues associated with true masculinity or manhood, can liberate themselves from the constraints of *Daivam*. They can rise above fate and embrace their authentic selves. The journey to understanding what types of karmas are worthy of pursuit or ought to be avoided in a life enriched by manhood is illuminated by the invaluable teachings of ancestral gurus. These time-honored insights and the profound wisdom encapsulated in spiritual scriptures and teachings serve as a guiding light for individuals seeking to navigate their paths with integrity. The profound saying, "*Paurushena Shresthamahur Manishinaha*," underscores the belief that manhood is superior to the deterministic forces of *Daivam* or fate. This perspective asserts that true manhood is not a mere attribute of gender but rather an acquired state of being that transcends the limitations of fate. It is cultivated through wisdom, self-awareness, and a commitment to virtuous living, enabling individuals to chart their destinies and redefine their lives beyond the preordained narratives established by divine forces.

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