

तस्मै स होवाच पितामहश्च
श्रद्धाभक्तित्थ्यानयोगादवैहि ।
न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन
त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानवुः ॥२॥

2. And to him, the Grandsire (Brahmā)¹ said, "Know (this) by means of faith,² devotion, and meditation. Not by work,³ nor by progeny, nor by wealth, but by renunciation,⁴ some attained immortality.

1 *The Grandsire (Brahmā)*—A common epithet of the Creator, who is the father of the Prajāpatis, from whom all beings have proceeded.

2 *Faith etc.*—As knowledge of Brahman cannot be given through words, these methods are prescribed.

3 *Work*—Sakāma Karma, or work done with the motive of egotistic sense-gratifications, is meant here, not selfless work, which helps to remove bondage.

4 *Renunciation*—Just as the three means mentioned above are the means to Brahman, so also Sannyāsa is a fourth means to Brahman.

परेण नाकं निहितं गुहायां
विभ्रजते यद्यतयो विशन्ति ।
वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः
संन्यासयोगाद्यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः ॥
ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले
परामृतात्परिसुच्यन्ति सर्वे ॥३॥

3. Higher than heaven, seated in the cave (Buddhi), that shines, (which) the self-controlled attain —the self-controlled, who being of pure minds have well ascertained the Reality,¹ by the knowledge of Vedānta, and through

6A

KAIVALYOPANISHAD

This is another Upanishad belonging to the Atharva-Veda. The commentator Nārāyana calls it the Brahman-Shatarudriya, i.e. the Shatarudriya which glorifies the unconditioned Brahman as opposed to the Personal God Shiva, who is glorified in the other Shatarudriya which forms a part of the Taittiriya Samhitā. It is at once clear, concise, and poetic, and withal, highly philosophical. All this makes it one of the most valuable among the Minor Upanishads. The story form is an apt device to make the subject easily intelligible as well as to give a pedigree to teachings inculcated. Ashvalāyana was a teacher of the Rig-Veda.

अथाश्वलायनो भगवन्तं परमेष्ठिनमुपसमेत्योवाच—

अधीहि भगवन् ब्रह्मविद्यां वरिष्ठां
सदा सद्भिः सेव्यमानां निगूढास् ।
ययाञ्चिरात् सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य
परात्परं पुरुषं याति विद्वान् ॥१॥

1. Then¹ Ashvalāyana approached the Lord Parameshthi (Brahmā) and said :

Teach, O Lord, the knowledge of Brahman, the highest, always cultivated by the good, hidden, and by which a wise man drives away instantly all the sins and reaches the Purusha higher than the high.²

1 *Then*—That is, after having divinely qualified himself, by possessing the fourfold requisites for the highest knowledge.

2 *Higher than the high*—Prakriti, the Mother of all manifestation, is called high. Purusha is higher than Prakriti even.

Sannyāsa or renunciation. In the sphere of Brahmā, at the time of cosmic dissolution,² they all get liberated from the highest (apparent) immortality of the manifested universe.

1 *The reality*—which is the identity of the individual self with Brahman.

2 *Cosmic dissolution etc.*—This portion of the stanza speaks of those who through some obstacle or other fail to realise Brahman in this life. They remain in Brahmāloka, and at the time of Pralaya become merged in Brahman along with everything else. Upto this point they can attain to various grades of authority, lasting for durations which from the human standpoint would be very long and would be considered as tantamount to immortality, but which can never be absolute immortality, being connected with the manifested universe. This explains the last two lines in the translation of this stanza. The last four lines in the text are found almost verbatim in the Mundakopaniṣad, Ch. VI. 6th verse.

विविक्तदेशे च सुखासनस्थः

शुचिः समग्रीवशिरःशरीरः ॥४॥

अत्याश्रमस्थः सकलेन्द्रियाणि

निरुध्य भक्त्या स्वगुरुं प्रणम्य ।

हत्युष्टरीकं विरजं विशुद्धं

विचिन्त्य मध्ये विशदं विशोकम् ॥५॥

4-5. In a secluded place, sitting in an easy posture, pure, with a neck, head, and body erect, living in the last of the orders¹ of religious life, having controlled all the senses, saluting his own preceptor with reverence, meditating within the lotus of the heart (on Brahman), untainted, pure, clear, and griefless.

1 *The last of the orders etc.*—The Paramahansa order of Sannyāsins is meant here.

अचिन्त्यमव्यक्तमनसस्थं

शिवं प्रशान्तममृतं ब्रह्मयोनिम् ।

तथाऽऽदिमध्यान्तविहीनमेकं

विभुं चिदानन्दमरूपमद्भुतम् ॥६॥

6. (Who is) unthinkable, unmanifest, of endless forms, the good, the peaceful, Immortal, the origin of the worlds, without beginning, middle, and end, the only one, all-pervading, Consciousness, and Bliss, the formless and the wonderful.

उभासहायं परमेश्वरं ब्रह्मं

त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम् ।

ध्यात्वा मुनिर्गच्छति भूतयोनिं

समस्तसाक्षिं तमसः परस्तात् ॥७॥

7. Meditating on the highest Lord, allied to Umā,¹ powerful, three-eyed, blue-necked, and tranquil, the holy man reaches Him who is the source of all, the witness of all and is beyond darkness (i.e. Avidyā).

1 *Allied to Umā*—This and the subsequent epithets of “three-eyed” and “dark-necked” point to the Lord Shiva who is to be meditated upon in His Saguna aspect when the aspirant is incapable of meditating on His Nirguna aspect, as a means to attaining the highest state, Umā-Bhāvāni as associated with Shiva, as half man and half woman Ardhanārīshvara or, “Umā” may stand for the Brahnavidyā or the knowledge of Brahman, (which protects Shiva from passion, love, etc.); “Trilochana” may mean, who, as the Turiya, is the eye of the three lower states Vishva, Taijasa, and Prājna, or Virāt, Hiraṇyagarbha, and Ishvara—for all these shine after Brahman who alone is self-effulgent. “Nīla-kantha may likewise be explained thus : Brahman being of the essence of knowledge, darkness or nescience lies subjugated in what may be called only a part of it; in other words, It transcends Avidyā.

स ब्रह्मा स शिवः सेन्द्रः सोऽक्षरः परमः स्वराद् ।

स एव विष्णुः स प्राणः स कालोऽग्निः स चन्द्रमाः ॥८॥

8. He is Brahmā, He is Shiva, He is Indra, He is the Immutible, the Supreme, the Self-luminous, He alone is Vishnu, He is Prāna, He is Time and Fire, He is the Moon.

स एव सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यं सनातनम् ।

ज्ञात्वा तं मृत्युमत्येति नान्यः पन्था विमुक्तये ॥९॥

9. He alone is all that was, and all that will be, the Eternal ; knowing Him, one transcends death ; there is no other way to freedom.

All these are the Maheshvara and none else ; just as one man alone becomes many in dream so the one deity exists as many.

सर्वभूतस्थयात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

सम्पद्यन् ब्रह्म परमं याति नत्येत् हेतुना ॥१०॥

10. Seeing the Ātman in all beings, and all beings in the Ātman, one attains the highest Brahman — not by any other means.

The first line in this verse occurs in the Gītā also (VI. 29). The oneness of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm through Samādhi is meant.

आत्मानमरणं कृत्वा प्रणवं चोत्तरारणिम् ।

ज्ञाननिर्मथनाभ्यासात् पाशं दहति पण्डितः ॥११॥

11. Making the Ātman the (lower) Arani,¹ and OM the upper Arani, by the repeated friction of knowledge, a wise man burns up the bond.

Compare Shvetāshvatara I.14 and Brahmopaniṣad p.61.

If the knowledge of Brahman is not obtained by the meditation spoken of above, the meditation on the Pranava is prescribed.

¹ Arani—One of the two pieces of wood used in ancient times for kindling the sacred fire by friction. As by constant friction fire is produced from the Arani, so by constant meditation on the unity of the Jiva and Brahman the fire of realisation is produced, which burns off the bond of nescience and restores the aspirant to his pristine freedom.

स एव सायापरिमोहितात्मा
शरीरमास्थाय करोति सर्वम् ।

स्त्रियज्ञपानादिविचित्रभोगैः
स एव जायत्परितृप्तिमेति ॥१२॥

12. With his self thus deluded by Māyā or ignorance, it is he who identifies himself with the body and does all sorts of things. In the waking state it is he (the Jiva) who attains satisfaction¹ through the varied objects of enjoyment, such as women, food, drink, etc.

¹ Satisfaction : Implying also the opposite, viz pain due to undesirable experiences.

The compound *stiryanna* in place of *Stryanna* is Vedic.

स्वप्ने स जीवः सुखदुःखभोक्ता

स्वमायया कल्पितजीवलोकै ।

सुषुप्तिकाले सकले विलीने

तमोऽभिभूतः सुखरूपमेति ॥१३॥

13. In the dream-state that Jiva feels pleasure and pain in a sphere of existence created by his own Māyā or ignorance. During the state of profound sleep, when everything is dissolved (into their causal state), he is overpowered by Tamas or non-manifestation and comes to exist in his form of Bliss.¹

¹ Ignorance and Bliss—These are the two characteristics of the experience in the state of Sushupti or profound sleep. This element of ignorance makes this state of Sushupti the opposite pole of Samādhi, the highest illumination. It prevents the Jiva from being conscious of his having attained the state of inherent Bliss. Vide Chhāndogya, VIII. 11.

पुनश्च जन्मातरकर्मयोगात्

स एव जीवः स्वपिति प्रबुद्धः ।

पुरत्रये क्रीडति यश्च जीव-

स्ततस्तु जातं सकलं विचित्रम् ॥

आधारमानन्दमखण्डबोधं

यस्मिंलयं याति पुरत्रयं च ॥१४॥

14. Again, through his connection with deeds done in previous births, that very jiva returns to the dream-state, or the waking state. The being who sports in the three cities (viz the states of wakefulness, dream and profound sleep)—from Him has sprung up all diversity. He is the substratum, the bliss, the indivisible Consciousness, in whom the three cities dissolve themselves.

The Turiya or the Transcendental state is referred to in this Shloka. No distinction is made here between the Jiva and Brahman, which are eternally one, the difference between them being only apparent, due to ignorance.

एतस्मात्प्रजायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।

खं वायुर्ज्योतिरसः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥१५॥

15. From This spring up Prāna (Vitality), mind, all the organs, sky, air, fire, water and the earth that supports all.¹

¹ This identical Shloka occurs also in Mundāka, II.3.

¹ Supports all—that is, sentient and insentient objects.

अक्षरं ब्रह्म सर्वात्मा विश्वस्यायतनं महत् ।

सूक्ष्मात्सूक्ष्मतरं नित्यं तत्त्वमेव त्वमेव तत् ॥१६॥

16. That which is the Supreme Brahman, the soul of all, the great support of the universe, subtler than the subtle, and eternal—that is thyself, and thou art That.

जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्त्यादिप्रपञ्चं यत्प्रकाशते ।

तद्ब्रह्माहमिति ज्ञात्वा सर्वबन्धैः प्रमुच्यते ॥१७॥

17. "That which manifests the phenomena, such as the states of wakefulness, dream and profound sleep, I am that Brahman"—realising thus one is liberated from all bonds.

त्रिषु धामसु यद्भोग्यं भोक्ता भोगश्च यद्भवेत् ।

तेभ्यो विलक्षणः साक्षी चिन्मात्रोऽहं सदाशिवः ॥१८॥

18. What constitute the enjoyable, the enjoyer, and the enjoyment, in the three abodes¹—different from them all am I, the Witness, the Pure Consciousness, the Eternal Good.

¹ Three abodes—the "three cities" or states mentioned in Shloka 14.

सयमेव सकलं जातं मयि सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।

मयि सर्वं लयं याति तद्ब्रह्माद्वयमस्म्यहम् ॥१९॥

19. In me alone is everything born, in me does everything rest, and in me is everything dissolved. I am that Brahman, the secondless.

अणोरणीयानहमेव तद्वन्-

सहानहं विश्वमहं विचित्रम् ।

पुरातनोऽहं पुरुषोऽहमीदो

हिरण्यमोऽहं शिवरूपमस्मि ॥२०॥

20. I am minuter than the minute, I am likewise the greatest of all, I am the manifold universe. I am the Ancient One, the Purusha and the Ruler, I am the Effulgent One, and the All-good.

For a similar idea compare Katha, II.20.

अपाणिपादोऽहमचिन्त्यशक्तिः

षड्याप्यवक्षुः स शृणोम्यकर्णः ।

अहं विजानामि विविक्तरूपो

न चास्ति वेत्ता मम चित्सदाऽहम् ॥२१॥

21. Without arms and legs am I,¹ of unthinkable power ; I see without eyes, and I hear without ears. I know all, and am different from all.² None can know me. I am always the Intelligence.

1 Compare Shvetāshvatara, III.19-20

2 *All*—Buddhi etc.

वेदेनेकं रहमेव वेद्यो
वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ।
न पुण्यपापे मम नास्ति नाशो
न जन्म देहेन्द्रियबुद्धिरस्ति ॥२२॥

22. I alone am taught in the various Vedas, I am the revealer of the Vedānta or Upanishads, and I am also the Knower of the Vedas. For me there is neither merit nor demerit, I suffer no destruction, I have no birth, nor any self-identity with the body and the organs.

The first half of the Skloka also occurs almost verbatim in the Gītā, XV.15.

न भूमिरापो न च वह्निरस्ति
न चानिलो मेऽस्ति न चाम्बरं च ।
एवं चित्त्वा परमात्मरूपं
गुहाशयं निष्कलमद्वितीयम् ॥२३॥
ससत्सार्थं सवसद्धिहेनं
प्रयाति शुद्धं परमात्मरूपम् ॥२४॥

23-24. For me there is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air, nor ether. Thus realising the Paramātman, who lies in the cavity of the heart, who is without parts, and without a second, the Witness of all, beyond both existence and non-existence—one attai the pure Paramatman Itself.

इति प्रथमः खण्डः ॥

End of the First Part

यः शतश्रेयसधीते सोऽग्निपूतो भवति सुरापाना-
त्पूतो भवति ब्रह्महत्यात्पूतो भवति कृत्याकृत्यात्पूतो भवति
तस्मादविमुच्यतमाश्रितो भवति । अत्याश्रमी सर्वदा
सकृद्वा जपेत् ॥

1. He who studies the Shatarudriya,¹ is purified as by the Fires,² is purified from the sin of drinking, purified from the sin of killing a Brāhmana, from deeds done knowingly or unaware. Through this he has his refuge in Shiva, the Supreme, Self.³ One who belongs to the highest order of life⁴ should repeat this always or once (a day).

This part prescribes an easier mode of Sādhanā or practice for those who are not adepts in the meditation of the Oneness of Brahman. It is meant for purifying the mind to make it fit for higher meditations.

1 *Shatarudriya*.—The hundred Shlokas in praise of Rudra, that form a part of the Yajur-Veda. They are considered very holy and are daily recited by thousands of Hindus as it causes purity of heart and produces Vairāgya. According to the commentator Nārāyana, by Shatarudriya is meant the first part of this Upanishad which he terms as Brahma-Shatarudriya.

2 *Fires*.—that is, the sacrificial fires enjoined for daily tending and care by the Shrūitis and Smritis. They used to form a lifelong companion of every Vedic household in India ever since his investiture with the holy thread.

3 *Shiva or the Supreme Self*.—In this Upanishad, the meditation on Shiva has been recommended in several previous Shlokas, of course regard being had to His Supreme or Nūrguna aspect. The word Avimukta in the text, which is a common epithet of Shiva, literally means one never deviating from his inmost essence of oneness, never mixing up with the phantasm of Māyā. Avimukta also means a place in Vārānasi which it is believed is not deserted by Shiva and Fārvati even at the time of Pralaya.—hence a place of Bliss.

4 *Highest order of life*.—viz Sannyāsa.

अनेन ज्ञानमाप्नोति संसारार्णवनाशनम् ।
तस्मादेवं चित्त्वेन कैवल्यं फलमश्नुते
कैवल्यं फलमश्नुत इति ॥२॥

By means of this, one attains the Knowledge that destroys the ocean of Samsāra or repeated transmigration. Therefore, knowing thus one attains the fruit of Kaivalya or liberation, verily one attains liberation.

इत्यथर्ववेदे कैवल्योपनिषत्समाप्ता ।

Here ends the Kaivalyopanishad included in the Atharva-Veda.

Aedanta Society
Bookshop
2323 VALLEJO STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94123
(415) 922-2323