

Taitreya Upanishad Class 11

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 6:

These above mentioned four are themselves fourfold and the four Vyahrtis are each four in number. He, who knows these, knows Brahman. All the devas carry offering unto Him.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, we are completing anuvakaha # 5 dealing with Vyahrati Upasana, the second upasana. The first upasana was Samshito upasana. In Vyahrthi upasana four objects were invoked one on each of the four Vyahrthi's and an upasana was performed on each of them. This process was performed four times, each time with varying four objects. Thus, all together, they became a composite upasana at four levels.

Shankaracharya says objects of meditation should always be in proper sequence. First is Rg (Bhu), second is Sama (Bhuvaha) and the Third is Yajur (Suvaha). This sequence should not be changed. Objects should also not be interchanged.

Now the phalam is discussed.

Suppose one practices these four Vyahrithi upsanas as mentioned in Upanishads, one is actually practicing Hiranyagarbha Upasana. In the shloka, Veda means upasana. Brahman, in shloka, means Hiranyagarbha. In previous shloka Brahman meant Omkara. Such an Upasaka will become one with Hiranyagarbha through this upasana.

What is Hiranyagarbha? It is samashti chaitanyam. It is reflected consciousness reflected in sukshma sharira. Therefore, Hiranya garbha =Total mind (all minds) +Total Prana.

Now shankaracharya raises a question. If a person is practicing Vyahrati Upasana, why does he obtain Hiranyagarbha

as Phalam? He is, after all, not performing Upasana on Hiranyagarbha? When one performs saraswathi upsana one gets knowledge. When one performs Lakshmi upasana one obtains wealth. But, here, why is it different? Swamiji says, it is a question of interpretation. Shankacharya answers his own question and says when Vyahrati upasana is performed with Hiranyagarbha upasana one obtains Hiranyagarbha as phalam. The next anuvaka, number 6, in fact starts off with Hiranyagarbha upasana.

One obtains this Hiranyagarbha phalam only after death. The advantage of Hiranyagarbha phalam is that he obtains infinite power of the Totality. Therefore, all devatas worship him as well.

How do you say all devatas worship hiranyagarbha? Surya represents chakshu or total eye power. Dig devata (god of space) represents total hearing power. Thus, each devata represents the total power of each sense organ. Hiranyagarbha represents total power of all indriyas, pancha pranas and manaha. So, he is total power. Therefore, all devatas worship him.

What benefit accrues to an upasaka? The upasaka becomes one with Hirnayagarbha after death. He will be worshipped by all devatas. This phalam is obtained only through a sakama upasana. If one is not interested in Hiranyagarbha phalam, can one practice this upasana as a nishkama karma? Yes. This upasana then provides chitta shudhi and chitta vishalata (expansion of mind). What is benefit of chitta shuddhi and chitta vishalata? It gives the seeker nirguna brahma aikyam.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 6, Shloka # 1:

Here in this space within the heart resides the intelligent, imperishable, effulgent “Purusa” or “Entity”. Between the palates, that which hangs like a nipple (the uvula), that is the birthplace of Indira, where the root of hair is made to

part, opening the skull in the center.

Starting anuvaka # 6, swamiji said, in this shloka he is invoking hiranyagarbha or total sukshma shariram (total knowledge). The meaning of the word Hiranya is gold but here it means knowledge. Why compare gold with knowledge? The reason is both of them shine. Thus knowledge removes darkness of ignorance; hence it is compared to gold, like shining knowledge. The word garbha means inside or within. The one within who is of infinite knowledge is called Hiranyagarbha. He is to be meditated upon.

Since it is difficult to conceive of Hiranyagarbha in our minds, due to its huge size and its invisibility as a subtle body, how do we conceive it? Here, we use a symbol or an alambanam to conceive it. Thus, a flag stands for a country. So, too, the symbol for Hiranyagarbha is my own individual mind. Vyashti manas is the alambanam for Total mind. Often one thinks of God as someone outside of us. It is our orientation. So long as we think of him as outside of us, Vedanta vichara becomes difficult. After all, in Vedanta, God is conceived as within me or as Me. In Karma kanda, however, the thinking is different. There, I am a Dasa while You are Swami. I am small and useless. Vedanta however teaches that I am the purest of pure Brahman. How do we reconcile this huge gap in understanding? In this shloka this understanding is reconciled by invoking God in your self. May my Dvaita budhi vanish gradually. May my Bheda Budhi (god and I are separate) also vanish gradually. This process is known as Aham Graha upsasana. Here God is invoked in myself. Lalita sahasranamam and Sandhya vandanam both include Aham graha upasana. Here one starts to think first as an imagination (aham graha) then converts it to a fact, aikya gyanam.

Where is this individual mind located? Shastras talk of a mind, which is different from brain. Science only recognizes the brain. It does not recognize a mind as in Vedanta. Mind is subtle while brain is physical. Brain is burned after

death. The Mind, however, continues after death and travels in search of another body.

Every subtle instrument, indriyam, has a physical location called Golakam. One can see the golakam but not the indriyas. Thus, ears are the golakam while hearing ability itself is the indriyam. Scriptures say mind is in the Hridayam or heart. Which heart? It is the physical heart that resides in the left side of the body. In this physical heart resides antahakaranam where the mind resides. In jagrita avastha the mind functions all over the body. In sushupti avastha it withdraws into hridayam alone. In hridayam there is an inner space. The space is as big as the thumb. The heart is as big as the size of a fist. The fist covers the thumb like space. In this thumb like space is the individual mind. In this mind one invokes Hiranyagarbha. What type of Hiranyagarbha is invoked? One who has many virtues. The virtues are:

- Mano mayaha. The Total mind pervades the individual mind as well.
- Amrita: immortal one. This immortality is relative only. It just indicates that Hiranyagarbha has a very long life. Brahma's life is supposed to be 2000 chatur yogas. Hiranyagarbha's life is shorter than that.
- Hiranyamaha: He is everywhere.

Such a hiranyagarbha should be invoked during meditation. Now, the phala sruthi starts. If I meditate upon him, what happens? The Hiranyagarbha upsaka, after death, will go to Brahma loka. Who actually goes to Brahma loka? It is not the sthula sharira, as it is burned after death. Atma cannot go, as it is everywhere, as such it cannot travel. So, only sukshma shariram travels via Shukla gathi. Shukla gathi is known as the well-lit path. Shukla gathi starts at Hridayam. Sukshma shariram is withdrawn at death into hridayam. Several nadi's go out of Hridayam. Nadi's are subtle paths. Sushumna Nadi originates from Hridayam and travels through the middle to the throat and then to head and then to the top of the skull

(uchi). The brahma-randram is the opening on top of the skull. The sukshma shariram passes through Brahma randram through solar disc via shukla gati and reaches the Brahma Loka. This path is also called Indriya Yoni or Brahmaji's marga leading to Brahma Loka.

Some word meanings: Taluka means inner throat; Sthana means nipple; Keshanta means roots of hair are parted.

When a Sanyasi dies we do not know if he was a gyani or not. Sanyasi has two goals. If he gets gyanam he a slo gets moksha as such there is no travel. Even without gyanam he will still go to Brahma loka. This is the reason some people, just before death, tend to take sanyasa and it is called Apat sanyasa.

How about a Grihasta? He too will go to Brahma Loka if he practices this upasana.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 10

Greetings All,

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 3:

May I become successful among the people. Svaha. May I become superior among rich. Svaha. O lord of Prosperity, may I enter into thee. Svaha. Mayest thou enter into me. In that Self of Thine with a thousand branches. O lord may I purify myself from all of my sins. Svaha. As water flows downwards, as

months fly into years, so too O creator, may students of Brahavidya come to me from everywhere. Svaha. Thou art refuge! Beam upon me! Come to me!

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda concluded the Anuvakaha # 4. In summary, this anuvakaha talks of two sadhanas, Japa and Homa. Both are meant for Gyana Yogyata as well as Gyana Praptihi. These sadhanas can be performed both as Sakama Karma as well as Nishkama Karma. Sakama Karma is for fulfilling worldly desires while Nishkama karma is performed for Chitta shudhi without any specific desire. Kama karmas must always be performed properly, if not the results may not be positive. Nishkama karma always produces positive results.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 1:

Bhuh, Bhuvah, Suvah are the three short utterances of mystical significance. In addition to these, there is, the fourth one Mahah, made known by seer, Mahacamasya. That is Brahman. That is the body; other gods are its limbs.

This is the second Upasana of Shikshavalli named Vyahriti. As a reminder, the first Upasana was Samshito Upasana.

In Samshito Upasana we took four factors that served as symbols for invoking various objects. We meditated upon those objects. A symbol is known as an Alambanam in Sanskrit.

Now, in Vyahriti Upasana, the Vyahriti mantras are used as alambanam. On these mantras four objects are invoked. What are these four mantras? They are Bhu, Bhuvaha, Suvaha and Mahaha. Why is it called Vyahriti mantra? It is so called because Brahmaji took the essence of the three Vedas (Rig, Yajur and Sama) to create AUM, the Omkara mantra. Omkara expanded is Vyahrithi and Vyahrithi expanded is Gayathri mantra. Brahmaji uttered the Vyahriti mantra for the first time hence it is very sacred. A second meaning is that since Brahmaji uttered it and since it is an extract of the Vedas,

it is very scared. Chanting this mantra removes all papapams. So second meaning is that it is a destroyer of all papams. Later a fourth mantra, Mahaha, was added.

These four mantras are symbols or alambanams. We invoke four objects on these symbols and meditate upon them. By chanting the mantras Bhu, Bhuvaha, and Suvaha everything is sanctified. These mantras are used in many rituals including Karma Kanda, Upasana Kanda and Gyana Kanda. Bhu, Bhuvaha and Suvaha all together become Vai. The word Vai then becomes Vaa as per rules of Sanskrit grammar.

Now the fourth Vyahriti is added. Who discovered this fourth vyahriti? Sage Mahachamasya, son of Mahachamas, discovered it. Mahachamas means one who uses big spoons in a yaga. He is supposed to have revealed the fourth Alambanam.

Now the objects are introduced. What types of objects are introduced? One is a main object and others are subordinate objects. Main object is called an Angi while subordinates one's are called angani. The glory of the main mantra pervades all subordinate mantras as well. It is like a prime minister who dominates his ministers.

In this shloka, the fourth Vyahriti, Mahah, is the main while other three mantras are subordinate ones. Since Maha is main mantra it is also called Atma.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 2:

Bhu is this world. Bhuvaha is the sky. Suvah is the next world. Mahah is the sun. It is by the sun that all worlds are nourished.

Four objects are invoked. They are in the form of four Lokas or known as Adhilokas. The four objects are taken from Adhilokas. So, imagine four chairs.

They are:

Bhu: Bhu Loka (The chair is Bhu and Bhu Loka devata is sitting on it)

Bhuva: Antariksham or Bhuvar Loka

Suvaha: Suvar loka or Swarga Loka.

Mahah: Aditya Loka.

All Lokas function due to grace of Aditya or Sun. Hence it is main Loka. In the Gita too Sun is glorified. The four lokas have been identified. Here, Surya is the Angi. After meditation the Lokas are requested to move on.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 3:

Bhu is fire. Bhuvah is air. Suvah is the sun. Mahah is the moon. Indeed, it is by the moon that all vitalities thrive.

The next four objects are now selected. They are from field of Devatas. Thus they are:

Bhu: Agni

Bhuvaha: Vayu

Suvaha: Aditya

Maha: Chandra

Why is Chandra Devata Mahah? All other devatas are glorious due to blessing of Chandra Devata. How can Chandra Devata bless Surya? After all Chandra Prakasha is borrowed from Surya? We are discussing about Devatas not physical objects, here. Devatas have powers. Thus:

Aditya presides over Chakshu indriya.

Chandra presides over antahakarana or the mind.

Thus, organs cannot function without the mind. Swamiji says some people in our class can't hear as their mind is

elsewhere. You are here but don't hear. Mind, however, can function without sense organs as evident in the state of meditation. Hence Chandra is the Angi and others are Angani.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 4:

Bhu is the Rk. Bhuvah is the Saman. Suvah is the Yajus. Mahah is the Brahman (as represented by the symbol Om). It is by Brahman, indeed, that Vedas thrive.

Continuing the Vyahriti Upasana another four objects from field of Vedas are chosen. Thus, it is known as Adhiveda Vyahriti.

Bhu: Rig veda

Bhuvaha: Sama Veda

Suvaha: Yajur Veda

Mahah: Brahma or Omkara.

Brahma here means Omkara. Omkara has the essence of three Vedas. Omkara pervades all Vedas. All Vedas get glory from Omkara.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 5:

Bhu is prana. Bhuvaha is apana. Suvaha is Vyana. Mahah is food. Indeed, it is by food that the pranas thrive.

This is the fourth and final Vyahrithi Upasana. Objects are chosen from field of Prana hence it is called Adhi Prana Vyahriti Upasana.

Bhu: Prana

Bhuvaha: Apana

Suvaha: Vyana

Mahah: Annam

All pranas function only with food. Without food they become weak. All pranas are glorious until food is available. Hence it is called Adi Prana Upasana.

A total of 16 objects are invoked in Vyahriti Upasana.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 6:

These above mentioned four are themselves fourfold and the four Vyahrtis are each four in number. He, who knows these, knows Brahman. All the devas carry offering unto Him.

This is the concluding shloka. In this manner four Vyahriti's are meditated upon in four fold ways. Four objects are meditated upon in each Vyahriti. Thus, a total of 16 objects were meditated upon. Shankaracharya says, one has to invoke the deities in the same order as prescribed in the Upanishad

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishads, Class 9

Homa sadhana (Fire rituals) students ask for fourfold prayer

1. Dhana prapthi; asking for prosperity primarily meant for dharma for completing karma yoga
2. Chitha sudhi prabthi; purifying the mind; this is described as deivi sampth in Baghawat Geeta.
3. Gyana prapthi
4. Sishya prapthi; share the knowledge by sharing with the next generation;

Money should lead to purity; purity should lead to knowledge; and knowledge should lead to teaching.

Fourth Anuravaga (Continued)

May students come to me. May students come to me with varied interests. May students come to me with intelligence. May students come to me with sense control. May students come to me with mind control. May I be well known as a teacher among the people. May I be the greatest among the wealthy. Oh Lord! May I merge into you. Oh Lord! May you merge into me. Oh Lord! May students come to me from all directions. May students come to me just as waters rush downwards and just as the months rush towards the next year. Oh Lord! You are like a rest house. Reveal yourself until me and enter into me

In this verse, the seeker is praying for shishya prapthi so that he can share his knowledge.

Brahma means vedas and chari is the one who has a disciplined life; one who is not concerned about sthula sareeram but strives for vedic knowledge; Brhamachari primary meaning is a dedicated student, not necessarily a bachelor.

The seeker is praying for students with varied interests. There are three types of students:

1. Mandha students: Stem of like plantain stem – one who is difficult to light up,
2. Madhyama student – like coal, can be lit after an extended time
3. Uthama student – like camphor; easy to light up.

Bha – light of knowledge; ratha – revel; Bharatham is reveling in the light of knowledge. The seeker is praying for students with sense control and mind control. The seeker is praying for wealth so that he can provide for the students who come to him for education. The one who spends for Saraswathy (Knowledge) should not worry about Lakshmi (Money).

The seeker is praying for jivatma paramatma aikyam, similar to the river merging into ocean. Not only the river merges into ocean, ocean also merges with the river. This is why the river water before the point of merger is salty.

Each manifestation of god is like a branch of Eeswara similar to the tributaries of a great river. By dipping in any tributary of the river, we purify our body; similarly, by worshiping any of the form of the lord, you are purifying your mind. Physical purity is obtained by dipping into river; mental purity is obtained by remembering the Lord. This is nothing but worshiping the Lord.

The prayer is concluded asking for students:

- Just as the water gushes through the slope, students should come to me
- Just like each month is rusing towards next year, students should come to me from all directions.

By comparing Lord to a rest house, the seeker says when we are frustrated with our pursuit of gyna, Bakthi and devotion will help us overcome the frustration. Surrendering to the Lord is the solution when one is over whelmed by frustration.

There is no physical movement in jivatma paramatma aikyam, because Bhagavan is not away from me. Merger into Bhagawan means dropping the notion that Bhagawan is away from me and with the clear knowing “Aham Brahma Asmi”

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 8

Greetings All,

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 1:

He whose form is manifold, who is preeminent among the sacred hymns of the Vedas and who has sprung up from the sacred Hymns which are immortal, that Indra (omkara) may fill me with intellectual vigor. O lord, may I become the possessor of the immortal revelations. May my body become able and active, my speech sweet and agreeable to the utmost. May I listen abundantly with my ears. Thou art the sheath of Brahman. May you preserve my learning.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, Shikshavalli, Chapter 1, Anuvakaha # 4, is a relatively bigger section. It has two spiritual sadhanas. They are: 1: Mantra Japa sadhana and 2) Homa sadhana, a physical ritual on fire.

Japa Sadhana:

In this sadhana the seeker is asking for Gyana Yogyatha Prapthihi. This prayer is addressed to God in the Omkara form. Therefore seeker glorifies Omkara first, then asks Omkara roopa parameshwara to strengthen him and immunize him from Samsara by giving him Medha shakti & dharana shakti. Medha Shakti is the capacity to absorb and Dharana Shakti is ability to retain the teaching.

Now, he says, O Lord, I should be possessor of amritam. Amritam here means atma gyanam. Amritam means immortality, which also means moksha. Atma gyanam is the giver of immortality. Therefore, let amritam as self-knowledge happen to me. Let me be a gyani.

Atma Gyanam requires a lot of preparation. Atma Gyanam is not a physical substance. It can only be given by a systematic consistent study by a teacher. After all it is only after 20 years of education that one becomes knowledgeable in a field such as physics or chemistry. So, systematic sravanam is required.

To perform sravanam one must be physically be fit. For

speaking, my tongue must be the sweetest one. The tongue is a gyanendriya (as for eating) as well as for karmendriya (as for speaking). Let my tongue be sweet. What is a sweet tongue? It means words uttered must be sweet. What is a sweet word? Noble (mangala) and auspicious words are considered sweet. How to define a mangala shabda? Chapter # 17 of the Gita addresses this topic in detail and it describes four criteria for words to be mangala. They are:

1. Words should **not be hurtful**. Speech should be in a relaxed manner, spoken slowly, at a mild pitch using right choice of words.
2. Words should be **positively pleasant**, encouraging, and pleasing. Appreciative words should be more than criticizing words.
3. Words should be truthful or **Satyam**.
4. Words should provide **Hitam** or must be beneficial to both speaker and listener.

If all above four criteria are met the words will be mangalam. This is result of a honeyed tongue. How do I know if I am honey tongued? If people like to speak to me I am probably honey tongued. If people do not like to speak to me I need to work on my speech.

Let my ears also be fit to be able to perform Sravanam. Ears must be used for listening to shastras. Therefore without obstacles let me listen again and again to shastras.

The student concludes by glorification of Omakra again. Kosha means box. He says this box called Omkara is the container of Brahman. But Brahman cannot be contained? If so, why is Omkara a container? The enquiry into the word Omkara can arrive at the truth of Brahman. Since Omkara is the means of discovering Brahman, it is known as a box.

How can Omkara enquiry lead to Brahman? Mandukya Upanishad discusses this topic in detail. If Omkara contains Brahman,

how come I cannot see it? The reason I cannot see it is because Brahman is covered and we need to uncover it. What covers Brahman? Anatma Gyanam covers Brahman. In shloka the word Medha is now used to mean Anatma as well. Most people are interested only in Anatma Gyanam. Therefore, they are extrovert. Therefore, they don't have time for Vedanta Vichara. Extroverted-ness is an obstacle for Vedanta Sravanam. Thus, time is also an obstacle. Even if we have time we tend to read Stardust and such non-spiritual material. The Seeker cries, O Omakra , help me move my mind inwards. Therefore, Brahman is covered by my extroverted-ness.

The student prays that whatever he hears in the class let it be preserved in his mind. With this the Japa Sadhana is over. This mantra is supposed to be repeated again and again.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 2:

Homa Sadhana:

O Lord , afterwards let prosperity be mine, consisting of hairy animals along with cattle. May fortune produce for me without delay and for all time, bringing continuous and in ever multiplying proportions food, clothing and cattle. All along, may celibate students, thirsty to know, come to me. Svaha! May they come to me from distant places and from all directions. May they come in large numbers. May the students , anxious to gain the knowledge of Brahman control their senses. May the students, anxious to live the knowledge of Brahman, be peaceful. Svaha!

Svaha in shloka means offering of oblation is involved. Here too Omkara is being addressed. This homa is known as Aavahanti Homa. It is a common homa. This homa is the topic till end of this fourth Anuvakaha. In this homa student asks for four things. They are:

- Dhanam prapthihi or wealth.
- Chitta Shuddhi prapthihi

- Gavaha Prapthihi
- Shishya prapthihi. After getting knowledge I must share the Gyanam with other people.

The order in which the student asks is also important. Money is required for Karma Yoga in the form of contribution to society. For Pancha Maha Yagna too money is needed. Dharma-anushtartham (for dharma) also we need money. Dharma will lead to Chitta shuddhi. Viveka and vairagya will also come in. Grihasthashrama should lead to urge for Vedanta Gyanam. It means mind is pure. **Only a pure mind has an interest in Vedanta.**

After Chitta shudhi I should get a guru and obtain Gyanam. After Gyanam I must enjoy sharing this knowledge with others. Therefore, Gyanam must be preserved.

Student asks for prosperity to arrive. Shankaracharya has said money is a two edged sword. It can lead to spiritual growth but it can also lead to spiritual destruction as well. It all depends on whether money is a master or servant. I have to decide this. How to make the decision? For this I must have knowledge of Dharma shastras (ethics and morality). Shatras say money is not to be utilized for purposes such as gambling or racing. Shankaracharya says don't ask for money first rather ask for knowledge of Dhamashastra first, and then ask for money. This is the reason our parents did not give us pocket money. We should not touch money until we are educated. Even in gurukula only after teaching is money given.

After Medha prapthihi money should be given. Lakshmi (acquisition of wealth) should come to me with a lot of things. Later it should expand and I should be able to preserve it as well.

In the shloka, Aavahanti means acquisition. Vitnavana means multiplying of wealth. Kurvana means wealth must be preserved.

What materials should Lakshmi Devi bring or bestow?

Clothing also called here Vasamsi.

Gavaha: Cattle.

Annam: Food.

Panam, water.

All four should be with me in plenty. When should Lakshmi arrive? She should come immediately (Achiram).

Artha is used mainly for Dharma and then later for moksha. A cultured man is Dharma pradhana. Student asks for many wooly animals such as sheep as well. Lomashaha means wooly animal.

May I become prosperous. It is clear from this shloka that Vedas do not look down upon money. Some religions do so. Criticism of money is not part of Vedic culture, although one must know how to handle it. Big ashramas do require wealthy patrons. Brahmachari, Vanaprastha and Sanyas ashramas all require Grihasta ashrama's patronage. Shastra say share the money. "Ownership" is not critical, Earner-ship is. Earn plenty but give.

Take Away:

Only a pure mind has an interest in Vedanta.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 7

Greetings All,

Chapter # 1, Anuvaka # 3, Shloka # 6:

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad and recapping the Anuvaka # 3 so far, Swami Paramarthananda said, we are in the last part of the Samshito Upasanas. All five upasanas put together are known as Maha Samshito Upasanas. In each Upasana the Alambanam (meditation) is the same, one meditates on the four factors of Poorva roopa, Uttara Roopa, Sandhihi and Sandhanam. In each Upasana objects from five different fields are invoked. The fields are: Adhilokas, Adhi-jyautisham, Adhi-vidhyam, Adhi-prajam, and Adhyatmam. Thus, there are five Upasanas and four objects in each upasana totaling 20 objects that are meditated upon.

Chapter # 1, Anuvaka # 3, Shloka # 7:

These are called “ The great blendings”; he who understands them as expounded here, becomes united with progeny, cattle, food and the like with the glory of the holy lustre, wealth and heavenly joys.

This shloka is glorification of this samshito upasana. They are great because they belong to the Vedas. We are invoking great objects; hence they are great as well. With this the Upsana is over. Now the benefits of the Upasana are given.

The phalam depends on the attitude of our Upasana. Our motive determines the type of result. A criminal uses a knife to kill a person with the motive of getting something. A doctor also uses knife to heal but in the process the person dies. The criminal is sent to prison while the doctor is praised for trying to save a life. The motive is based upon sankalpa. If Upasana is for material results it is Sakam Upasana. However, if motive is Dharmic and for Chitta –Shuddhi, it is called Nishkama Karma.

In the Gita Sri Krishna says if it is for Sakama Karma one has to perform the Upasana very carefully other wise the phalam may backfire on us. When the same Upsana is performed as a

Nishkama Karma the rules are relaxed. Even mistakes are accepted. They don't affect as much. Positive results are always obtained. Negative result will not occur. So this is the perspective on phalam looked at from two angles.

Benefits of Nishkama Karma are:

- 1. Expansion of mind for spiritual growth is the first benefit.** We are invoking three Lokas. Mind assumes the form of object meditated upon. If we visualize small, the form will be small. In olden times people visualized big, hence the reason we see very large temples. Nowadays we tend to visualize small and things are smaller as well.

Since I meditate on totality of universe, I revere the Earth as Bhuma Devi. I wake up and pray to the mother Earth. Earth, Water, Sun are all, sacred. This reverence helps me later in Vishwaroopa Darshanam. It expands the mind and transforms our attitude. I develop reverence for every object in this meditation including. reverence towards the teacher. Then I invoke and develop reverence towards parents. Then I develop reverence towards my own body and its organs. Body is the greatest gift of God. Once an organ is damaged we cannot recreate it. Therefore, respect the body. It does not mean attachment to or ownership of the body. Thus expansion of mind occurs, as does a change in perspective. This change in perspective happens due to the Gyana Chakshu. Citing an example, when we buy an apple from a store, we just cut it and eat it. The same apple when it is offered as prasadam at a temple, we apply it to our eyes first. This perspective is called divya Chakshu. **Divya chakshu is the second benefit.**

The third benefit is the focus of mind improves

Fourth benefit is that we get Chitta shuddhi as were are invoking Ishwara.

All this helps with Vedanta Sravanam, and Atma Gyanam.

Benefits of Sakama Upsana:

If one performs Upsana on all four factors (Poorva roopa, Uttara Roopa, Sandhihi and Sandhanam) and honor all the deities invoked, tangible benefits will come from association.

Benefits are of two types. They are: 1) Iha loka Phalam and 2) Para Loka phalam.

Iha Loka Phalam: You will get progeny. The nature of phalam is dependent upon the nature of the upsana. If God is worshipped as knowledge, one gets Gyana phalam. If worshipped as Shakti one gets Shakti. If worshipped as beauty one gets beauty. As the upsana, so is the phalam.

Here sandhi is the upsana, so one gets combination as children. From Vidhya upsana one gets knowledge. From Pashu upsana one gets wealth. From Brahma Varchas Upsana one gets attractive personality. From Annam one gets nutritious food.

Paraloka Upasana Phalam: After death one does not get moksha. For moksha atma gyanam is required. However, one gets to a higher loka. Which Loka depends upon quality and quantity of one's upsana.

Therefore one should perform Samshito Upasana. Vedas do not make this upsana compulsory. With this the third Anuvakaha is complete.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 1:

This is a bigger section. It has two spiritual sadhanas. They are: 1: Mantra Japa sadhana and 2) Homa sadhana, a physical ritual on fire.

In these two sadhanas Manasika, Vachika and Kayika karmani are practiced.

In this shloka we are offering prayer to God. God can be visualized in any form. God, himself, is formless as he is

limitless. Symbolically we worship a form such as a Linga or Turmeric powder etc. In this shloka "Omkaara" is worshipped.

What is benefit of Omkara Upasana? I seek Gyana Yogyatha Prapthihi through this sadhana. I seek all round fitness, physical, verbal (communication skill), emotional fitness (mind should be balanced) and intellectual sharpness are all required to understand Vedanta. The sadhanas do not offer any mystic experience. The student has to understand the teaching. Any knowledge is intellectual in nature. I am asking for Gyana Yogyatha. Since God is invoked as Omkara, it is glorified. On Omkara, I invoke parameshwara.

Rishabhaha in shloka means greatest.

Omkara is greatest among Vedic mantras. Why is a Vedic mantra called Chandus? Chand means pleasing or giving happiness. So learning to give joy is one meaning. Another meaning of Chandus is to protect from worldly problems.

How did Omkara originate? Scriptures say Omkara was extracted from the Vedas. Like butter from milk. Brahmaji himself churned the Vedas through his tapas, to obtain the Veda Sara. The first extract of his churning was the Gayathri Mantra.

Thus, from Gayathri mantra came:

Rig veda: Tatsa Vithuhu varenyam: Bhu: A

Yajur Veda: Bhargo Devasysa Dhimahi: Bhuvaha: U

Sama Veda: Dhiyo Yonaha Prachodayat: Suvaha: M

Thus AUM came into being created by Brahmaji for the benefit of Kaliyuga where people have very little time for spiritual activity.

Since Omkara is the essence of Vedas, when it is expanded it becomes the Vedas. Analogy is to orange juice concentrate when diluted with water become regular orange juice. This Omkara is

seen as God himself. So one prays to this God to strengthen one self.

He strengthens by:

1. Giving Medha Shakti or capacity to understand and absorb teaching.
2. Dharana Shakti: Capacity to retain the absorbed teaching.

Take Away:

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 6

Greetings All,

Chapter 1, Shikshavalli.

Anuvakaha or Paragraph # 3:

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, the chapter # 1, Shikshavalli, is Sadhana Pradhana. The sadhanas are meant for self-realization. Self-knowledge itself is discussed in chapter # 2. Chapter 1 started with the teaching of Shiksha shastram that provides the rules for pronunciation.

In paragraph # 3 it talks of five Upasanas. Upasana here means meditation. First Upasana is called Samshito Upasana. It is a Vedic combination of letters that are meditated upon. Samshito

upasana has four aspects to it. First is poorva or words on left side. Uttara are words on right side. Sandhi is the junction of the words. Sandhanam means another word is added.

Citing example of the word Isha + Tva, when they join the point of joining is by A+Ta or ATa and this is further joined by a new word T, thus it becomes ATaTa.

Now imagine the four letters as four chairs. Four objects will be invoked to sit on these chairs.

The first four objects will be related to Lokas or Adhilokas samshito Upsana. After meditation they are sent back from their chairs.

The second upasana is related to Adhi Jyothisha (luminous bodies) samshito Upasana.

Third is related to adhi vidhya (education) samshito Upasana.

Fourth is related to Praja (family) samshito Upasana.

Fifth is related to Adhyatma (body parts) Samshito upasana

Thus, five upsanas and 20 objects are meditated upon.

One samshito Upasana has five branches. These combinations of Upasanas are called great combinations. They are great because the objects meditated upon are great.

Citing example of Lord Ganapathy who is invoked upon Turmeric powder, the Turmeric powder becomes scared by association with Lord Ganapathy. Similarly, a book read by Mahatma Gandhi is considered great because of its association. Hence it is called Maha Samshito Upasana.

Now we are entering the five Samshito Upasanas.

Chapter # 1, Anuvaka # 3, Shloka # 2:

The teaching concerning the universe is this: the earth is

prior form, the heaven (firmament) is the posterior form; the atmosphere is the junction, air is the connection. Thus one should meditate upon the universe.

This is about adhilokam upasana. The four chairs will now be filled. Thus,

Poorva roopam is Prithvi.

Uttara Roopam is Dhou or Swarga Loka.

Sandhi is Akasha or intermediate space or anthariksham.

Sandhanam is Atmosphere.

Thus the entire cosmos is visualized in this sandhi. The Bhur, Bhuvar and Suvar Lokas are visualized in the Vedic conjunction. Ithi means conclusion of the meditation on the macro world.

Chapter # 1, Anuvaka # 3, Shloka # 3:

Now concerning the luminaries or meditations upon light, fire is the prior form, the sun is the posterior form, water is intermediate form and lightning is the connection. Thus one should meditate upon light.

This is about Adhi jyauthisham upsana. After the first Upasana now Jyoti, shining ones, are invoked. Here Jyotisham does not mean astrology. Thus:

Poorva roopam is Agni, the light principle of Bhuloka.

Uttararoopam is Aditya, the light from sky

Sandhi is Aapaha, the moisture in the cloud and it lies between Agni and aditya.

Sandhanam: is lightning or Vaidhyuthaha. Earth to sky connection is via lightning.

Ithi adhi jyothisham means the various natural forces are meditated upon.

Chapter # 1, Anuvaka # 3, Shloka # 4:

Now concerning knowledge: the teacher is the prior form; the taught is the posterior form; learning is the intermediate form and the instruction is the means of joining. Thus one should meditate upon learning.

Here education is discussed or Adhi vidya samshitam.

Poorva roopam: is Acharya. The teacher culls information from shastra for student and requests student to learn and follow.

Uttara roopam: is Antevasi. It means student who lives with teacher or a resident student. They used to live for 10-12 years. Why live with teacher? The teaching was more by practice and observation.

Sandhi: Vidhya or education.

Sandhanam: Pravachan sandhanam. Verbal communication, psychological communication, eye-to-eye contact etc. are different forms of communication. A mother and child communication very often is via eye-to-eye contact. Such a contact is deep. Book learning does not provide eye-to-eye contact. Eye -to- eye contact with acharya was important.

Ithi adhividyam or one should meditate on learning.

Chapter # 1, Anuvaka # 3, Shloka # 5:

Now concerning progeny: mother is the prior form, father is the posterior form; progeny is the junction and procreation is the connection. Thus one should meditate upon progeny.

This samshito upasanam is about progeny. It is also a discussion about Grihasta ashrama. Previous shloka was about Brahmacharya ashrama or student life.

Adhi Prajam samshito upasanam.

Poorva roopam: Mother (or wife) (left)

Uttara roopam: Father (right)

Sandhi: Praja: Progeny

Sandhanam: Prajnanam, procreation. It is the connection.

Ithi: thus one should meditate upon progeny.

Man and woman come together. Society thinks they come together for artha, kama etc. Swamiji called it DINK syndrome (double income no kids). However, Vedas think other wise. Per Vedas, a man and woman come together with goal of progeny.

Pamsam are: Yajamana, Pathihi, Putra, Daiva titha and Manu vithaha are required for vedic karmas. Children are called Dharma praja. The idea is to teach values to the next generation.

Core personality is formed in the first five or six years of a child. Values must be taught at this time. Grihasta ashrama is to bring up children who follow dharma and to raise dharmic children. Parents teach by their living.

Praja- means marriage.

Prajanagam means conjugal union.

One wishes children of Values and not for money. So, dharma is primary goal. With dharma even a poor man can be happy. It is a religious union.

Chapter # 1, Anuvaka # 3, Shloka # 6:

What follows is concerning the individual or the body. The lower jaw is the prior form, the upper jaw is the posterior form, and speech is the conjunction, the tongue the means of union. Thus one should meditate upon oneself.

Now comes Adhyatmam or the organs of the physical body. In this shloka they are being invoked.

Poorva roopam: Adhara hanu, the lower jaw. Verbal activity is the most active part of our body. We communicate extensively. This requires the lower jaw.

Uttararoopam: Hanuhu or upper jaw. Hanuman comes from hanuhu or one with long jaw.

Sandhi: Vak or speech. It occurs when two jaws come together.

Sandhaanam: Jihva or tongue is the means of the connection or union. Tongue, the softest part of the body is caught between the hardest parts, the teeth. May you meditate upon the individual.

Thus, five upsanas are complete. All five together are known as Maha Samshito Upasana.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreaya Upanishads, Class 5

Greetings All,

Chapter 1,Shikshavalli.

Paragraph # 2:

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, the chapter # 1, Shikshavalli, is Sadhana Pradhana. We started the teaching with Shiksha shastram that provides the rules for mantra chanting.

Shankaracharya pointed out that the method of chanting is very important in Vedas. He says, initially the student learns or Veda Adhyayanam. At this time one learns only the chanting not necessarily the meaning of the shlokas. This stage is Shabda Pradhanam and must be learnt properly. Veda Adhyayanam is also used for Veda Parayanam or Brahma Yagyam. This parayanam helps with Chitta Shuddhi. The Vedas must be chanted properly to obtain the Adrishta balam. This adrishta balam takes a person on the path to spiritual growth. The Veda Adhyayanam, where students learn proper chanting, but may not yet know meaning of the shlokas, will be used to understand it's meaning now in a process known as Veda Mimamsa. Veda Mimamsa is Vedic enquiry. It is divided into two parts called Poorva mimasa and Uttara mimasa. Poorva mimasa is also known as Karma Kanda and its study results in Adrishta balam. Uttara mimasa also called Veda-anta is same as Gyana Kanda and it results in Drishta balam. For this enquiry one has to learn the Vedic mantras. Through an analysis of the Vedic mantras one obtains Karma Gyanam and later Brahma Gyanam.

Gyanam is Drishta Phalam. Punyam is Adrishta Phalam or Karma phalam.

The rules for proper chanting have six factors and we discussed this in the last class. In this manner the science of pronunciation has been presented.

In Paragraph # 2, or Anvaka # 2, Veda Parayanam or Brahma yoga is discussed. Gayathri parayanam is considered equivalent to chanting the Vedas. Ramayana parayanam or any other scriptural parayanam are all part of Brahma Yagna.

Paragraph or Anuvakaha # 3: In introduction we said that Shikshavalli talks of different disciplines of Pancha Maha Yagna, Proper Values (moral, ethical), Verbal Sadhanas, (parayanam, Japam) and five types of Upasanas or meditation. These meditations are not Vedantic meditations while **Nidhidhysanam is a vedantic meditation. The five upasanas**

are:

1. Sagumhito Upasana: These upasanas are difficult and some say more difficult than Vedanta itself. Nowadays, they are mostly of academic interest only. Today, puranic upasanas such as praying to deities is more common. The study of upasanas itself is considered very sacred and results in great punyam.

This anuvaka begins with a prayer that says, “ May my Guru and myself become popular in society. May I have an attractive personality, born out of spiritual life or as the shloka calls it Brahma Varchas”. Why is student asking for such a boon? Especially when we are studying Vedanta it does not seem to make sense. Swamiji clarified every Vedantic student wants to receive knowledge and share it with others. They were concerned about future generations. All Vedantic students, especially Brahmin students had to teach. A Kshatriya or Vaishya did not have to teach others. In Vedic times a Brahmin could not take up any other profession. His only profession was to spread the teachings of the Vedas. In studying the Vedas you become indebted to the Rishi's who brought this knowledge to you. So, I have to express my gratitude to the Rishi Parampara. This is called Rishi Rinum. One way to remove the Rinum (debt) is to share your knowledge or support an organization that supports teachings of the Vedas.

For above reasons you should be a popular Guru is the prayer.

The Sagamhitaya is derived from Sagumshita. Here M followed by sh, sa or Ha becomes Gum.

So, what is the Upasana? Any upsana requires two things. 1. An Object of the Upasana. This can be a deity such as Shiva, Vishnu etc. This then is the Upasana Vishayaha. Since most objects are too big and invisible, hence often we need a symbol to conceptualize the object. Citing an example, when we worship our country we end up worshipping a flag that

represents the country. The country is too big and diverse physically to conceptualize, while the flag is easy to see. This worship of flag or a symbol is called Alambanam. While a Vishaya may not be concrete, an alambanam usually is. Thus, Vinayaka is worshipped in the turmeric powder, a book represents Sarswathi and the cow represents Laxmi.

So, what is the Sagumhitaya? It is a Vedic combination of letters; it is an alambanam. It is also called a sandhi. The shloka says:

Sagumhithayaha Upanishdam. Here the visarga drops out. For this upasana four factors are considered. Swamiji discussed these four factors through an example. The first mantra of Yajur Veda is: Ishe Tva. E (Ay) and T are thus joined. In this the E is the swaraha and is called Purva rupa and T is called Uttara rupa. Thus, Poorva and Uttara join together and their junction is called Sandhi. Through this joining a new letter comes in and it called Sandhanam. Thus, when E + T join another T comes in. Thus, the four factors are: Purva, Uttara, Sandhi and Samshanam. Hence, it is called Samshito Upsana, On these four symbols, four Vishayaha, one for each symbol, is invoked.

To further clarify this idea, Swamiji cited following example. Consider the four factors are like four chairs. Four people (Upsana Vishaya) are honored to sit on each chair.

The four Vishayas are associated with a particular field such as say sports, music etc. In the first Upasana a puja is performed to all four people, say from sports field and then they are asked to vacate the chair.

In second Upasana another four people, say from field of music, are asked to sit and puja is performed.

In this manner five rounds of pujas or Samhito Upasanas are performed. In total 20 objects are worshipped in five different fields. Each field is called Adhikaranam. From each

field four objects are invoked.

Why should Upanishad prescribe such a difficult Upasana, asks Shankaracharya? Why not keep it simple like worship of a cow? Answering his own question, Shankaracharya says, in those days people studied Vedas for 8 to 12 years. There were a variety of chanting's one learned. A lot of time was spent in learning Vedic chanting. Thus, we have chanting methods of Vakya patha, Pada patha, Krama Patha, Jatha Patha, and Ghana Patha. Here the combination of how the words are chanted, vary. Sandhi plays an important role in chanting. Every student was thorough with each "Letter" of Vedas. Experts in this field were called Salakshna Ghanapady. Vedic students were experts in words and they came to this Upasana with this knowledge. So, they were naturally inclined in its direction.

The five fields chosen are:

1. Adhilokam: Various Lokas
2. AdhiJyautisham: Luminaries such as the Sun, moon, stars etc.
3. Adi Vidhyam: Educational or learning
4. Adi Prajam: Progeny or family
5. Adhyatma or Shariram; our own bodies and its parts.

Each selected one is meditated upon. Thus, there are twenty meditations. We invoke 20 objects. Hence, they are called alambanams. What are these twenty objects?With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Foot note:

Chanting methods:

Pada Patha: "Gajaananam Bootha Ganaathi Sevitham"

Krama Patha: "Gajaananam Bootha, Bootha Ganaathi, Ganaathi Sevitham"

Jata Patha: “Gajaananam Bootha Bootha Gajaananam Gajaananam Bootha;

Bootha Ganaathi Ganaathi Bootha Bootha Ganaathi;

Ganaathi Sevitham Sevitham Ganaathi Ganaathi Sevitham”

Ghana patha: “Gajaananam Bootha Bootha Gajaananam Gajaananam Bootha Ganaathi Ganaathi Bootha Gajaananam Gajaananam Bootha Ganaathi;

Bootha Ganaathi Ganaathi Bootha Bootha Ganaathi Sevitham Sevitham Ganaathi Bootha Bootha Ganaathi Sevitham;”

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 4

Greetings All,

Chapter 1,Shikshavalli.

Paragraph # 1:

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, Taittiriya Upanishad is written in prose. The first chapter that we are getting into is called Shikshavalli and it has 12 anuvakaha's. Anuvakaha means a paragraph. It can also sometimes mean a chapter. Shikshavalli's first and the last or twelfth anuvakaha's are both shantipatha's.

The content of Shikshavalli occurs between these two shaniti-pathas. The entire chapter # 1 is Sadhana pradhana and relates to preparation of the seeker. It does not have any Vedantic teaching. Many Sadhanas are mentioned for preparation. The Sadhanas are:

1. Kayika Karmani: Here the physical body plays a role. It is also called Karma Yoga or Pancha Maha Yagnaha. All these are required to purify our mind and beat Tamoguna or laziness. Tamoguna exists at the intellectual as well, however, physical activity makes one alert.
2. Vachika Karmani: Many karmas are prescribed at the verbal level. They include: Japam, Parayanam, etc. Parayanam is chanting of shlokas. It can be performed knowing the meaning or not knowing the meaning of the shloka. Chanting, knowing the meaning, is considered more effective. Japa is repetition of a mantra several times. Some mantras are chanted even 108 times. In Parayanam, however, one does not repeat the mantra.

There are two types of Japas.

1. Gyana Yogyatha Sidhi Japas and
2. Gyana Sidhi Japa.
3. Manas Karmani: These are mental activities. The organs of speech and organs of body are not involved in this activity. It is a purely mental activity or Upasana. Five Upasanas are mentioned in Shikshavalli. They are, however, not practiced anymore as such they are only of a theoretical interest to us.

Thus, the three karmani's, two Japas and five Upasanas are all part of Shikshavalli.

Paragraph # 2:

The second paragraph starts with the word Shiksha, which gives the name to the chapter. Mere chanting or parayanam of scriptures is sacred. During chanting we are in touch with the

Mahatmas who created them. Among parayanams, Veda parayanam is considered the highest. All others are smriti's. Vedas come from God. In this paragraph Veda parayanam is glorified. It is very important to chant the Veda parayanam correctly. There are rules established on how one should chant. There are sign rules used for chanting. This science of chanting is called Shiksha Shastram or science of phonetics or proper pronunciation. Mundaka Upanishad talks about 6 Vedangas. They are Shiksha (Phonetics), Vyakarana (grammar), Chandas (Prosody), Nirukta (Etymology), Jyotisa (astronomy) and Kalpa (sacrificial lore). The rules for pronunciation described in Shiksha shastram are six in number. They are: 1) Varna, 2) Swara, 3) Matra, 4) Balam, 5) Sama and 6) Santanaha.

Varnaha: It tells us how every letter of the alphabet is pronounced. It describes from which part of the body the pronunciation comes out. Eight parts of the body are recognized. Based on this the alphabets are categorized as vowels (swaras) and consonants (vyanjan). Consonants are categorized according to source of body part from which sound emanates. Thus we have: Kanta, Talu, Murdha, Danta, Oshta, Nasika, etc.

Swara: This describes the accent or intonation or pitch of sound usually as high, medium or low. The pitch is very important in Vedic chanting and is usually marked in the text. The pronunciation is very important as the wrong pronunciation can change the meaning of the word.

Narrating a story in this context, there was a Devapurohita named Vishwarupa. Secretly he liked asuras. Indra got angry with him because of this and killed him. Vishwarupa's father Twashta wanted to revenge his son. He wanted a son who would kill Indra. He performed a Yaga and got a son named Vitrasura, an Indra Shatru. Instead of him killing Indra, Indra killed him. The father was very upset about this. He learnt that the chanting of Indra Shatru was performed in wrong manner. It was chanted as a Bahuvrihi Samas. The difference between Tatpurush

and Bahuvrihi samas is the pronunciation. Here Tatpurush became Bahuvrihi and came out, as “I want a son for whom Indra is the killer”. Thus, due to a wrong pronunciation his son was killed. It is for this reason that Veda mantras are not chanted en masse or even from a book. These situations can lead to wrong chanting of Vedas resulting in results that may be different from the originally intended one. In mass chanting errors are covered up by others. Such errors are acceptable for Nish Kama Karma mantras but not for Kami kama mantras.

Matra: The measure or length of a vowel. Consonants are uniform and are of ardha matra. For Swaras (vowels) there are three measures: Short (hrishwa), Long (dirgha) and very Long (plutha). A Plutha can be three or more matras long.

Balam: The stress or effort involved in uttering a letter. Some require more emphasis such as the difference between Ka and Kha. Effort comes from two sources, the mouth (abhyantra prayathna) and throat (bahya Prayathna). Abyantras are of five types while Bahya antra are of eleven types.

Sama: The pace or speed of chanting. It should not be slow or fast, usually medium pace is suggested. Sama is governed by certain rules. It is considered Chanting only when one can chant from memory. One has to learn the chant from a Guru. To memorize one must chant regularly. While performing Brahma Yagya, a part of Pancha Maha Yagya, one can chant fast. However, in a ritual chanting one has to chant the letters clearly and at a medium pace. When teaching some one to chant it should be done at a slow pace.

Santanaha: Continuity of words. This is a combination of words and letters. Chanting rules do not allow splitting and joining as one likes. Compound words can't be split. During teaching one may split but later, it must be compounded. When you combine, the word can change.

Thus: Sham Naha Mitra becomes Shannomitra. These rules for combining are called Sandhi rules and are very important.

Usually one learns chanting from a Guru by imitating him. The above are the six factors to be followed in chanting Vedas. One should avoid Veda chanting, as wrong chanting may give adverse results. For Chitta Shudhi non-Vedic mantras can be chanted as well.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 3

Greetings All,

Continuing his introduction to the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, in the last class he pointed out that among many Upanishads ten are most important due to Shankaracharya writing commentaries on them. All of them are chosen from the Vedas. Taittiriya Upanishad is from Yajur Veda. Yajur veda has two branches. Krishna Yajur and Shukla Yajur veda. Katho and Taittiriya Upanishads are from Krishna Yajur Veda. Ishavasa and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads are from Shukla Yajur Veda. Taittiriya Upanishad occurs at the end of of Taittiriya Aranyakam. This Aranyakam has 10 chapters. The last 4 chapters are philosophical ones. The famous Suyra namaskra or Aruna Prashna occurs in Taittiriya Aranyakam. Last four chapters 7,8, 9 and 10 of the Aranyakam are called Taittiriya Upanishad. Shankaracharya has commented on chapters 7, 8 and 9 only. He did not comment on the last chapter 10

called Mahanarayanam. Taittiriya and Ishawasa Upanishads have an uniqueness to them. They are used for pararayanam due to their swaras or intonation. They were preserved in the sampradaya of chanting. Mundako and Keno upanishad's were not preserved in the sampradaya of chanting. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also has swaras but they are not very popular.

Two reasons are given as to how the name Taittiriya Upanishad has come about.

The first story comes from the Puranas or is of mythological origins and is considered more a symbolic one. Once there was a sage by name of Vaishampayana and he had a great disciple by the name of Yagnavalkiya. Yagnavalkiya was a brilliant student. On one occasion he insulted one of his classmates. Vaishampayana came to know about it. He knew Yagnavalkiya had a big ego. He wanted to punish him. He asked Yagnavalkiya to return all the Vedas taught to him. Yagnavalkiya vomited all the food he had eaten and in that vomit all Vedas were surrendered as well. He lost all the wisdom he had learnt. In the vomit was also all his well-digested knowledge. A bird also digests its food and feeds that to its young. All the Rishi's who were with Yagnavalkiya thought it would be a great idea if they could become birds and eat his vomit, so that they would get the wisdom very quickly. So all Rishi's converted themselves to Tittiri birds (partridge) and they ate up his vomit. The Tittiri bird is small but it can consume a lot of food. Thus, all the Rishi's gained wisdom. It is said that because the vomit was mixed with some blood it had become dark or "Krishna", hence this knowledge is known as Krishna Yajur Veda. Later, Yagnavalkiya learnt the Vedas from Surya Bhagavan and he created the Shukla Yajur Veda. All the Rishi's who got their wisdom from the vomit, taught others the Krishna Yajur Veda and thus the Veda spread.

The symbology in this story is that Yagnavalkiya's vomit was like teaching the students a second time. Brilliant students usually grasp information very fast or the very first time.

Others, slower students, need more time. It was not unusual for a teacher to ask his brilliant student to teach the slower students or his Co-brahmachari's. So, Yagnavalkiya is supposed to have taught the students who were also very eager to learn. The Tittiri bird also symbolizes a desire to learn quickly. Thus, like a Tittiri bird they received their teaching.

The second story is a simpler one. There was a Rishi named Taittiri. It was an Acharyas name not that of a bird. He was from Yajur veda paramapara. Hence, the name of the Upanishad.

This Upanishad has 3 sections that were commented upon by Shankaracharya. He did not comment on the fourth section. The last or fourth section (chapter) is the Narayanavalli and it is usually chanted while welcoming a Sanyasi. Each of the three chapters or sections is named after the very first word used in the chapter.

Thus, chapter 1, beginning with word Shiksha, is called Shikshavalli.

The chapter 2 begins with Brahma and is called Brahmavalli.

Chapter 3 begins with Brighu and as such is called Brighuvalli.

Fourth chapter is called Narayanavalli but it is not studied.

First and third chapters are not dealing with Vedanta. Vedanta occurs only in chapter 2 and is the most important one. Shankaracharya's commentary on this chapter is very famous. Chapters 1 and 2 are about preparation for gaining Gyanam and deal with Karma Yoga and Upasana.

These two subjects are discussed in chapters 1 and 3. Between these three chapters they have two shanti pathas. First chapter has a Shanti patha and chapters 2 and 3 together have another shanti patha. The invocation Sahana Vavatu comes from this shanti patha.

Shikshavalli or chapter 1:

The Shanti patha:

May Mitra be propitious to us. May Varuna bless us. May the blessings of Aryama be with us. May the grace of Indra and Brihaspathi be upon us. May Vishnu, the all pervading (wide-striding) be propitious to us. Salutations to Brahman. Salutations to Thee O Vayu! Thou art the visible Brahman. Thee alone shall I consider as the visible Brahman. I shall declare: Thou art the "Right"; Thou art the "Good". May that protect me; may that protect the speaker. Please protect me. Please protect the speaker.

Through shanti patha students are asking for Gyana Yogyatha prapthihi. All of my organs must be in a fit condition to receive knowledge. The 17 organs (The karmendriyas, Gyanendriyas etc.) should also cooperate. During Sravanam my gyanendriyas must be active, not Karmendriyas. I must obtain Karana Yogyata prapthihi. Each organ has a Devata. I invoke these devatas so that they keep my organs fit. Various Devatas are mentioned in prayers. Prayers ask that there be no obstacles. Parthibandha Nibhadhyathi.

In this shanti patha following seven gods are invoked. They are:

Mitra: God of exhalation (outbound breath)

Varuna: Apana: God of inhalation

Aryama or Surya: God of the Eyes.

Indra: God of the hand.

Brihaspati: God of wisdom, intelligence and communication. The ability to communicate and ask questions is important. Precision and brevity in communication is required.

Urukrama or Vishnu: Is God of the feet or the ability to move

and sit. Urukrama means one with big strides.

Vayu: is the Hiranyagarbha Devata or the Total subtle body. It is not visible. The visible part is Prana or Vayu. Samashti Prana is Vayu. It is total Sukshma shariram.

He is the Mangala Karta perceptible through the breath in our nostrils.

Students invoke these seven gods for auspiciousness, strength and Mangala Karta. This prayer includes prayer for fitness of teacher as well. It prays for teacher's organs and memory as well.

Naha: Student and teacher.

Namaha: Prostrating to Hiranyagarbha Tatva as it includes all Devatas or the Totality.

Hence, we worship the Pancha Maha Bhutas of Prithvi, Jalam, Vayu, Agni, and Akash Tatvam. All are worshipped during Sandhya Vandanam as well.

You are the perceptible God. I want to spread the good news.

Ritum: Living a life according to my studies. Not being a hypocrite.

Satyam: Since I should act according to my knowledge, my knowledge should be the right understanding. My knowledge should be right. It should be Right knowledge in keeping with Shastra, Reasoning and my Experience. When these three sources of knowledge are right, I have right knowledge. **Satyam is Right knowledge.**

Ritum and Satyam are embodied in Hiranyagarbha. All these are prayers for Yogya Prapthihi.

Prathibandha Nivriithi: means May god protect me. Let the obstacles go away. May God bless the Guru (Vaktaram) as well.

The Shantihi is chanted three times for removal of obstacles. These obstacles are Adhidaivika (of divine origin), Adhibhautika (originated in the physical, material beings) and Adhyatmika (created by ourselves).

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Foot Note:

Karmendriyas:

1.pāyu – the excretory organ.

Is the organ of excretion. Associated with the mooladhara chakra and the earth element.

2.upastha – the sexual organs

This is the generative organ.

3.pāda – the locomotion organ

Legs are the locomotory organs.

4.pāni – the organ of apprehension

Hands are the most complex organ of action as they can express, feel and touch.

5.vāk – the speech organ

Gyanendriyas: are the five sense organs :1. ghrāṇa – nose
2.rasanā – tongue 3.cakṣu – eye 4.tvak – skin 5.śrotra – ear

Panchamahabhootas:

- 1)Prithivi (earth) corresponds to the mooladhara chakra
 - 2)Apas or Jala (water) corresponds to the Svadhistana chakra
 - 3)Agni (fire) corresponds to the manipura chakra
 - 4)Vayu (air) corresponds to the anahata chakra
 - 5)Akasha (ether) corresponds to the vishuddha chakra.
-

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 2

Greetings All,

Introduction:

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, we saw in the last class that Self-knowledge can be gained through shastra pramanam. It is a mirror that I need, to reflect my Self. It can, however, communicate its message correctly only with the help of a Guru. That Shastra Darpanam gives me knowledge of myself. It is also called Gyana Yoga. This Gyana Yoga has three specific exercises. They are Sravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam. Thus,

Sravanam: means consistently listening to teachers six fold clues that are used to extract the core teaching of Vedanta. The six fold clues or six *pramanas* are the correct means of accurate knowledge and to the truth. They are:

- 1) *Pratyakṣa* (perception),
- 2) *Anumāṇa* (inference),
- 3) *Upamāṇa* (comparison and analogy),
- 4) *Arthāpatti* (postulation, derivation from circumstances),
- 5) *Anupalabdi* (non-perception, negative/cognitive proof) and
- 6) *Śabda* (word, testimony of past or present reliable experts).

Without these clues one cannot get to the core of the teaching. Now, there are several interpretations of Upanishads. They include:

3. I am different and God is different.

4. God and I are only partially different and that I am part of God;
5. I am neither part nor different from God. Rather, I am that.

These several interpretations indicate the need for analysis of scriptures or a reverential enquiry into scriptures also known as Mimamsa. This process of enquiry is known as Sravanam. **Here, I learn that I am Brahman and that there is no second thing other than Me. I am the whole. I am All.** This process is called Sravanam.

Mananam:

It is meant to remove doubts about teaching. **These are the obstacles between knowledge and conviction.** Doubtful knowledge is as good as ignorance. Citing an example, you see a power chord and don't know if it is live. Someone says it is not live. As you are about to touch it, he says, he is only 99% sure it is not live. In this case, you probably will not touch the power chord. Here, even one percent ignorance is ignorance.

The main Vedantic teachings are extraordinary and unswallowable. "I am infinite" is difficult to swallow. I am very sure that I am a mortal human being who is growing old and will die one day. My lifestyle is based on the fact that "I am aging and I will die". The statement I am infinite is not acceptable to me.

With respect to the world, Vedanta says, this world that we are experiencing solidly is not there at all, rather it is a mistaken version of the formless Brahman. Formless Brahman alone exists. Form-full world does not exist. Vedanta tells me, I am something I don't experience. So, with respect to Jiva, Jagat and Brahman, all three of them, I find Vedanta's position difficult to swallow. Therefore, I am full of doubts. The reason for the doubt is that my sense organs reveal a

world contrary to the Vedanta. My eyes, ears, nose etc., reveal a world of plurality or Dvaitam, while Vedanta asserts that there is only Advaitam. When there is a clash between direct experience and scriptures, we tend to believe the direct experience. Scriptures are, after all, words written a long time ago by some unknown person(s). So, How can I trust this knowledge while I am experiencing something different everyday. This conflict is called **Prameya Virodha**, or object revealed only by scripture (Advaitam) rather than by direct experience (Dvaitam).

Dvaitam and Advaitam are directly opposite to each other. This intellectual problem can be resolved only through thinking. This process of removing doubts is called Mananam. It alone can give me conviction. Only thinking can validate Vedantic teaching. Many think scriptural teaching has to be proved. It is not possible to do so. No experience can remove an intellectual problem. All intellectual problems arise from non-thinking or wrong thinking. Only right thinking can solve it. We think meditation and Samadhi will remove these doubts. This is wrong. It is said that Patanjali never got his intellectual conviction through his Yoga Samadhi. Samadhi cannot remove doubts. It can only be removed by the thinking, "I am Satyam and Jagat is Mithya".

Nidhidhyasanam:

This consists of different types of exercises. Central aim is dwelling on teaching for assimilation and internalization. Here, I am soaked in Advaita Gyanam. Nidhidhyasanam can be performed in different ways. They are:

1. Repeated Sravanam. Keep listening to teaching again and again. Be reminded of the teaching again and again.
2. Repeated reading.
3. Writing on the teaching.
4. Students of equal knowledge share their knowledge.
5. Teaching some one who does not have the knowledge.

6. Try to imitate the behavior of a Jivan Mukta. I try to imitate life of a Gyani, until I get Gyanam. As they say, fake it to make it. Citing example of namaskara to elders by children, this should be encouraged. Although it is initially a mechanical process one can hope that after some time they will discover the inner reverence too. Thus, fake namaskara becomes reverent namaskara. Chapter 2, shlokas 54-72 and other chapters of Gita deal with Jivan mukta and how they behave. It is called an alert life.
7. Samadhi Abhyasaha: This is different from other forms that you can practice any time and at any place. In this, a sitting meditation is performed in a proper posture, as per scriptures. The goal is focusing on any aspect of the teaching or behavioral problem of the individual. Some people have Kshama, Depression, Kama, Madha, Krodha, and Matsarya. One focuses on his or her area of weakness and meditates on poornatvam.

We don't insist on a type of meditation. During meditation we should dwell on the Shastra. **Purpose of this meditation is not Moksha.** Moksha is not a future event. It is an eternal fact. It is the knowledge that " I am free in spite of the situation". Nidhidhyasanam is not for Gyanam. For Gyanam one performs Sravanam. Nidhidhyasanam is not meant to prove the knowledge. Proving is only through Mananam. Nidhidhyasanam is not meant for any extraordinary experience. All experiences belong to Anatma. They come and go. Mystic experiences have no connection to Self Knowledge. A Gyani may not get any mystic experience. A Gyani may not have any Sidhi.

In this context four types of people were cited:

- 1) Gyani and Sidha;
- 2) Gyani and not Siddha;
- 3) Sidha and not Gyani;

4) Neither Gyani nor Sidha.

Among these four, only the Gyani is liberated. An Adharmic Sidha is also possible as known from stories of Rakshasas. Therefore, Nidhidhyasanam is only for assimilation of knowledge. What are the signs of assimilation?

Samasaraic reactions to life situations will change. Reactions will be healthy. You will not get a halo. Unhealthy reactions should come down. As you practice Nidhidhyasanam, there will be a gradual reduction in unhealthy reactions. This assimilation can be measured by the following:

1. **Frequency** of unhealthy reactions will be reduced. There will be more shanti or Brahmagyana phalam anubhavam.
2. **Intensity** of reaction is lower. The reaction is usually felt in mind, body and speech. Now, there will be no physical reaction. While mental reaction may occur, I can control it. I do not respond verbally as well.
3. **Recovery** period is reduced. In the past it could affect one for years. Now, it comes and goes in minutes.

Vedanta does not say we should not have a reaction. It just says we should have a reaction that is healthy. Citing another example, it is like the bouncing back of a rubber ball versus the lack of resilience in a clay ball. Thus, psychological resilience comes from Nidhidhyasanam.

From these three exercises we get Gyana Phalam or Jivan Mukti. This teaching is called:

1. Vedanta or the end part of the Vedas
2. or Gyana Kandam (Karma is not discussed)
3. or Brahma Vidya
4. or Atma Vidya.
5. or knowledge of myself as the ever-free one and it is also called Upanishad.
6. Upanishad: Shankaracharya has defined Upanishad as a teaching in which the freedom is hidden. You are

discovering freedom in yourself.

Take Away:

Vedanta says, this world that we are experiencing solidly is not there at all, rather it is a mistaken version of the formless Brahman. Formless Brahman alone exists. Form-full world does not exist.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy