



## Glory of Bharath » Bharatheeya Samskrithi

### Sama Vedic Upanishads - IV

#### Maitrayani Upanishad

This Upanishad tells us about the penance of a king called Brahadhratha. The king asked the sage Sakanya about the feeling of desire in this meaningless world. Sage Sakanya relates to him what had been told to him by Sage Maithreya. He teaches him the great science of Brahma Vidya. Finally he tells him that the mind and illusion are responsible for this contradiction.

The King Brihadhratha, setting up his eldest son as king, deeming the body to be impermanent, getting detachment, went to the forest. He performed great penance and stood looking at the sun, arms uplifted. At the end of a thousand years the sage Sakayana approached (him) like, fire without smoke, burning with his lustre and said 'Oh King, arise and choose a boon'. He bowed and said, 'Sir, I am ignorant of the self. You know it; please impart it'.

'This has happened in the past, and is impossible, ask for other desires'. But the King touched his feet and said, 'Sir, what is the use of enjoyment in this body which smells badly and is a mass of bones, skins, etc., attacked by lust, anger, etc., separation from near and dear people, hunger, thirst etc. We see that all this is decaying, like flies and mosquitoes which live and die. Great kings Dudyumna, Bhuridyumna, Indradyumna, Kuvalayasva, Yauvanasva etc., of Suryavamsa, Marutta etc., of the Somavamsa, relinquished this world and went to the other, even as the relatives were watching. We also see how Gandharvas, Asuras, Yaksas and others are dead and gone. The oceans become dry, mountains fall, Dhruva star is shaken, trees and earth are uprooted. There is only rebirth in this world after all the enjoyment. You should uplift me who am like a frog in a dark well. You are my refuge.

The sage Sakayanya being pleased said, 'O King, the flag (ornament) of the Ikshvaku dynasty, you know the self, have done your duty, famous as the son of king Marut. This indeed, is your self'. 'Which, O Lord' (he asked). He replied: 'It cannot be described. This one, bound by external causes, going upward, suffering and yet not (really) suffering, dispels ignorance like the sun dispelling darkness. The tranquil one rising from this body and approaching the supreme manifests itself in its own essence, immortal, fearless.

This Brahma-vidya has been imparted to us by Lord Maitreya. I shall teach you the same. The sinless, powerfully radiant and chaste Valakhilyas spoke to Prajapati, 'Lord, this body is inert like a cart. Which subtle being has such greatness that the body is set up as a conscious thing? Who is the driver of this body?'

He told them 'He who is beyond speech, is pure, holy, empty of delusion, placid, breathless, independent, endless, unchangeable, eternal, unborn, free, in his own glory. He is the driver.

They said, 'How can this body be set up like this by one who is devoid of desire?' He replied 'The self is subtle, non-object, invisible and called Purusha. In part he is consciously present here and awakens the sleeper. That conscious part of this Purusha is the knower of the body in every individual. His marks are imagination, determination and conceit - he is the Lord of creatures, the eye of all. By that conscious being is the body set up. He is the driver.

They asked, 'Lord, how can such a being exist in part?'

He told them, 'This Prajapati was there in the beginning. Being alone he was not happy. He contemplated on himself and made numerous beings. They were unaware of him, breathless, inert like a post. He was not happy and thought, 'To kindle their awareness, I shall enter into them'. Making himself like air, he entered, not as one but making himself five-fold Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana airs. The breath that moves upward is Prana, Apana moves down. Samana is that which causes the eaten food to settle and circulates it to every limb equally. Udana throws up and sends down the drink and food. That which pervades the nerves is Vyana. The Vaisvanara wind overpowers the Antaryami wind and vice versa. In between these two the warmth is exuded - the warmth is the spirit - spirit is cosmic fire. Also this has been stated elsewhere. The fire within is the cosmic fire, the inner fire by which food is digested. The sound of digestion is heard with closed ears, not when one is about to die.

This Supreme Being dividing himself into five, established in the cave (heart) is all mental, his body is the vital breath. He has many forms, his imaginations are true. Standing in the core of the heart, he strives and thinks: Let me become all things. Up risen, dividing things by the five rays, he experiences them. The sense organs are the rays, the motor organs are the horses; the body the chariot, mind is the driver, of the nature of Prakriti; driving with the whip, he makes the body revolve like a wheel. Due to him is the body a conscious entity.

This self is truly led to depend on the non-self by the fruit of actions, white and dark, is overwhelmed, as it were, by them and flits from body to body. Being un-manifest, subtle, invisible, non-object, un-possessive, free from states, non-agent, (but) abides like an agent. He is truly pure, steadfast, immutable, untarnished, unear, desire less, abiding as witness, experiences 'fruits of actions', is loved by a sheet (of Prakriti).

They said, 'O Lord, who then is the other self, overwhelmed by the white and dark fruits of actions and goes to wombs, good and bad, who goes down or up wandering, overcome by dualities?'

He replied: There is indeed another self in elements, overwhelmed by actions white and dark. Elements mean the five root-elements as well as the five concrete elements. Their complex is the body.

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The self is like a drop of water in the lotus (leaf). This is overwhelmed by Prakriti. Being overcome he is in a state of delusion and does not see the Lord in himself making him act. Content with the mass of constituents and confused, unsteady, in eager pursuit, smitten by desire, yearning, conceited, thinking 'I am that, this is mine' he binds himself by himself as in a net, he roams about.

Elsewhere also it has been said. 'The agent indeed is the Elemental self. The inner spirit causes actions by means of instruments just as iron pervaded by fire and beaten by workers is split into may, so, the elemental self pervaded by the inner spirit and pressed by Prakriti becomes many. The group of three aspects, assuming the forms of 84 Lakhs of living beings constitutes the mass of elemental beings. This is the form of plurality. The constituents are impelled by the spirit as a wheel by its driver. As the fire is not beaten (only the iron is), so the elemental self and not the spirit is over-powered.

It has been stated: this body without consciousness has been generated by the sex-act - it is hell - has via the urinary passage, sustained by bones, covered with flesh and skin, filled with faeces, urine etc., - it is a shattered sheath. It has been affirmed 'Delusion, fear, depression, sleep, wound, old age etc., being full of these Tamasa and Rajasa traits (like desire), and the elemental self is overwhelmed. Hence indeed, it inevitably assumes different forms.

It has been said: 'As waves in great rivers, the past deeds are one's safeguard - like the coast line for the ocean. Rebirth is unavoidable - bound by good and bad results (of actions), as a beast by ropes. Like a prisoner, one in the clutches of Death is not free; dwells in the midst of many fears. He who is maddened by worldly pleasures is like one intoxicated. He is in the grip of sin and roams, like one bitten by a snake he is in the jaws of danger, as in darkness one is blinded by passion. As caught in a magic show one is in the midst of Maya. He sees every thing wrongly as in a dream, essence less like the pith of plantain - like an actor dressed up for a moment - falsely attractive like a painted wall. It has been stated 'sense-objects' like sound are there, sources of trouble. Attached to them, the self forgets the supreme place.

The remedy is the winning of knowledge - following one's own Dharma, one's law of life supports all like a tree-trunk. By this law does one go upwards; without it one tumbles down - this has been laid down in the Vedas. A transmission of the law cannot really be in the Ashrama (stage of life). One who is in the Ashrama is said to be a real ascetic.

It has also been said: 'By penance is Sattva got and by Sattva is the (refined) mind; by mind is the spirit got and by the spirit attained, does (transmigration) stop.

Just as fire without fuel dies in its own source, so the mind by the dying of its modes calms down in the source. The modes of mind, withdrawn, of the lover of Truth, not deceived by sense objects, are false. They follow laws of action -migrating life is mind indeed. Take pains to purge it well. What the mind dwells on, that fills one's life. This is the everlasting mystery. With the purged mind, fixed on the self, one fears the endless bliss. If the mind attached to sense objects is fixed upon the supreme spirit, who will not be liberated?

Mind is of two kinds: the impure is filled with desires; the pure is without them. When a person makes his mind free from dissolution and restlessness, reaches the mindless state, it is the high place. The mind is to be restrained only so long as it is not dissolved in the heart. This is knowledge and release too - rest is mere details. The joy got by the mind which is purified by Samadhi and fixed upon the spirit, cannot be described by words but grasped only by the mind. Water mixed in water cannot be distinguished, so also fire in fire and sky in sky, so the mind spirit - man is freed. Mind is the only cause of bondage and liberation: attached to objects, it gives bondage - without them, liberation.

You are Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Prajapati, Agni, Varuna, Vayu, Indra, Moon, Manu, Yama, Bhumi, Achyuta. In heaven you dwell in your own self in many ways. I bow to you, the lord of all, the soul of all, doer of allocations, protector of all; all illusion, all sport are you. It was all Tamas - then impelled by the Supreme, it became uneven - Rajas compelled, becomes uneven. This all came out of Sattva, the conscious being, in every person, indicated by thought, determination and conceit. Prajapati spoke about it. The first bodies are Brahma etc. He is the aspects of Tamas, Rudra of Sattva. Vishnu became three-fold, eight-fold etc., unlimited and moves among creatures - the support of all creatures and their lord, inside and outside them.

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