

Katha Upanishad 1.3

First Cycle: Third Chapter

ṛtam pibantau sukṛtasya loke guhām praviṣṭau parame parārdhe/
chāyātapau brahmavido vadanti pañcāgnayo ye ca triṅāciketāḥ 1

Yama speaks:

1. "There are two that drink deep of the truth in the world of work well accomplished: they are lodged in the secret plane of being and in the highest kingdom of the most High is their dwelling: as of light and shade the knowers of the Brahman speak of them and those of the five fires and those who kindle thrice the fire of Nachiketas."

yaḥ setur iḥānānām akṣaram brahma yat param /
abhayaṃ titirṣatām pāram nāciketam śakemahi 2

2. "May we have strength to kindle Agni Nachiketas, for he is the bridge of those who do sacrifice and he is Brahman supreme and imperishable, and the far shore of security to those who would cross this ocean."

ātmānaṃ rathinaṃ viddhi śarīraṃ ratham eva tu /
buddhiṃ tu sārathiṃ viddhi manaḥ pragraham eva ca 3

3. "Know the body for a chariot and the soul for the master of the chariot: know Reason for the charioteer and the mind for the reins only."

indriyāṇi hayān āhur viṣayāṃs teṣu gocarān /
ātmendriyamanoyuktaṃ bhoktety āhur manīṣiṇaḥ 4

4. "The senses they speak of as the steeds and the objects of sense as the paths in which they move; and One yoked with Self and the mind and the senses, is the enjoyer, say the thinkers."

yas tv avijñānavān bhavaty ayuktena manasā sadā /
tasyendriyāṇy avaśyāni duṣṭāśvā iva sāratheḥ 5

5. "Now he that is without knowledge with his mind ever unapplied, his senses are to him as wild horses and will not obey the driver of the chariot."

yas tu vijñānavān bhavati yuktena manasā sadā,
tasyendriyāṇi vaśyāni sadaśvā iva sāratheḥ 6

6. "But, he that has knowledge with his mind ever applied, his senses are to him as noble steeds and they obey the driver.

yas tv avijñānavān bhavaty amanaskaḥ sadāśuciḥ /
na sa tatpadam āpnoti saṃsāraṃ cādhigacchati 7

7. "Yea, he that is without knowledge and is unmindful and is ever unclean, reaches not that goal, but wanders in the cycle of phenomena.

yas tu vijñānavān bhavati samanaskaḥ sadā śuciḥ /
sa tu tatpadam āpnoti yasmād bhūyo na jāyate 8

8. "But he that has knowledge and is mindful and pure always, reaches that goal whence he is not born again.

vijñāna-sārathir yas tu manaḥpragrahavān naraḥ /
so'dhvanaḥ pāram āpnoti tadviṣṇoḥ paramaṃ padam 9

9. "That man who uses the mind for reins and the knowledge for the driver, reaches the end of his road, that highest seat of Vishnu.

indriyebhyaḥ parā hyarthā arthebhyaś ca paraṃ manaḥ /
manasas tu parā buddhir buddher ātmā mahān paraḥ 10

10. "Than the senses the objects of sense are higher: and higher than the objects of sense is the Mind: and higher than the Mind is the faculty of knowledge: and than that the Great-Self is higher.

mahataḥ param avyaktam avyaktāt puruṣaḥ paraḥ /
puruṣān na paraṃ kiñcit sā kāṣṭhā sā parā gatiḥ 11

11. "And higher than the Great-Self is the Unmanifest and higher than the Unmanifest is the Purusha: than the Purusha there is none higher: He is the culmination, He is the highest goal of the journey.

Vocabulary:

kāṣṭhā, f. *a place for running, raceground, course* (also the course, path or track of the wind and clouds in the atmosphere) RV.; *the mark, goal, limit* VS. TS. ŚBr. &c.; *the highest limit, top, summit, pitch* Kum. Daś. &c.; *a quarter or region of the world, cardinal point* Naigh. Nir. MBh. &c.

eṣa sarveṣu bhūteṣu gūdhomā na prakāśate /
dṛṣyate tv agryayā buddhyā sūkṣmayā sūkṣmadarśibhiḥ 12

12. "He is the secret Self in all existences and does not manifest Himself to the vision: yet is He seen by the seers of the subtle by a subtle and perfect understanding.

yacched vānmanasī prājñas tad yacchej jñāna ātmani /
jñānam ātmani mahati niyacchet tad yacchec chānta ātmani 13

13. "Let the wise man restrain speech in his mind and mind in Self, and knowledge in the Great-Self, and that again let him restrain in the Self that is at peace.

uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata /
kṣurasya dhārā niṣitā duratyayā durgamaṃ pathas tat kavayo vadanti 14

14. "Arise, awake, find out the great ones and learn of them: for sharp as a razor's edge, hard to traverse, difficult of going is that path, say the sages.

aśabdam asparśam arūpam avyayaṃ tathārasaṃ nityam agandhavaś ca yat/
anādyanantaṃ mahataḥ paraṃ dhruvaṃ nicāyā tan mṛtyumukhāt
pramucyate 15

15. "That in which sound is not, nor touch, nor shape, nor diminution, nor taste, nor smell, that which is eternal, and It is without end or beginning, higher than the Great-Self, and Stable, that having seen, from the mouth of death there is deliverance."

nāciketam upākhyānaṃ mṛtyuproktaṃ sanātanam /
uktvā śrutvā ca medhāvī brahmaloke mahīyate 16

16. The man of intelligence having spoken or heard the eternal story of Nachiketas wherein Death was the speaker, grows great in the world of the Brahman.

ya imaṃ paramaṃ guhyaṃ śrāvayed brahmasaṃsadi /
prayataḥ śrāddhakāle vā tadānantyāya kalpate tadānantyāya kalpata iti 17

17. He who being pure recites this supreme secret at the time of the Shraddha in the assembly of the Brahmins, that turns for him to infinite existence.

Vocabulary:

prayata, mfn. *outstretched, far-extended* RV. AV.; *placed upon* (loc.) RV.; *offered, presented, given, granted, bestowed* RV. &c. &c.