

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 16

Greetings All,

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 9, Shloka # 1:

The practice of what is right and proper, as fixed by the scriptural texts, is to be done along with reading the texts oneself and propagating the truths of the same. "Truth", meaning practicing in life what is to be understood to be right and proper, is to be pursued along with regular studies and preaching. Penance, study, and preaching; control of the senses, study and preaching; tranquility, study and preaching; the "maintenance of fire", study and preaching; offering oblations in fire sacrifice, study and preaching of the Vedas; serving the guests, study and preaching; the performance of duties towards man, study and preaching; duties towards children, study and preaching of the Vedas; procreation, study and preaching; propagation of the race, study and preaching; all these are things to be practiced sincerely. Satyavaca, son of Rathitara, holds that truth alone is to be strictly practiced. Taponitya, a son of Purusista declares that penance alone is to be practiced. Naka, son of Modgala, holds the view that the study and preaching of the Vedas alone is to be practiced; that verily, is penance; aye that is penance.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, we are now in the last portion of Anuvakaha # 9. Here the teacher is emphasizing Karma Yoga and Values. Karma Yoga primarily consists of Pancha Maha Yagna. It includes Brahma Yagna, Pitr Yagna, Deva Yagna, Manusha Yagna and Bhuta Yagna. Of these five Bhuta Yagna has not been mentioned by the Upanishad, so we have to fill that gap ourselves. Values such as Ritum, Satyam, Tapas, Dama, Sama, Agni and Sacred fires are mentioned. Anuvakaha # 9 is concluding by emphasizing one specific Sadhana. All Sadhana's are important and required like nutrition for a body.

Similarly, all values are important for our spirit as well. Different people will require different Sadhanas. In scriptures, in a particular context, a particular value is highlighted. Sometimes some values are even criticized for glorifying a particular value. All values in fact are important. Mundako Upanishad emphasizes “Satyam Eva Jayate as follows:

satyameva jayate nāṅṛtaṁ
satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ
yenākramantyṛṣayo hyāptakāmā
yatra tat satyasya paramaṁ nidhānam^[4]

Here Satyam is considered a most important Value. In Chapter 3 of Taittiriya Upanishad Tapas is highlighted. It says Tapas is Brahman himself. Similarly Svadhyaya Pravachanam also has been highlighted in this Anuvakaha # 9 by its repeated mention. In the end of the shloka the Upanishad imagines three different Rishis and asks them for their important values. The Upanishad gives its verdict on the choice of the Rishi's as well. We will now hear from the Rishi's as well as hear the verdict of the Upanishads.

The first Rishi named Satyavacha specializes in the value of Satyam. He was son of Rathitara. Satyavacha meant one who speaks the truth. He says truthfulness is the highest value. The word Satyam has two meanings. One related to ethics and morality; and another related to philosophy.

Shikshavalli is a dharma and shastra related chapter as such Satyam here means the verbal discipline of truth. Satyam also occurs in the next chapter of this Upanishad known as Brahmananda-valli. In this chapter Satyam means “Reality is pure existence”. So the meaning of Satyam can vary depending upon context.

Then comes another Rishi who says Tapas is most important value. His name is Taponitya. He was son of Purushishta. He

led a life of austerity and self-denial. He felt penance was the highest Sadhana.

The third Rishi was Naka son of Mudgala. He said Svadhyaya i.e., the study and sharing of scriptures was the highest Sadhana.

The Upanishad giving its verdict says that Svadhyaya Pravachanam is the highest Sadhana. The first two instructions coming out of the Vedas are:

- Study the scriptures, then
- Through the knowledge of scriptures provide instructions to all. It can also be stated as use Vedas for Life instructions.

Even Patnaji's Ashtanga Yoga says, one should take up meditation only after a study of scriptures. Meditation is only prescribed in the seventh stage of Ashtanga Yoga. First three stages are Svadhyaya. Thus, Svadhyaya teaches us the theory before the practice.

With this Anuvakaha # 9 is over.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 10, Shloka # 1:

I am the stimulator in the tree of universe. My fame (glory) is high as the peaks of the mountains. High and pure am I like the essence in the sun; I am the power and wealth, effulgent with intuition. Intelligent, imperishable and undecaying am I, this is the scared recitation of Trishanku after he realized the Truth.

This is a small Anuvakaha. In previous Anuvakaha the Upanishad talked about Karma and Upasana. Karma deals with body's actions and Upasana deals with mental actions. All Karmas and Upasanas have two fold benefits. They are:

They are often practiced for material prosperity in Ihaloka as well as Paraloka. Thus, Sakama Karmas are performed to obtain

these material blessings. Karmas practiced for spiritual punyam is another category. These help one with becoming Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampana. One can also ask for Guru prapthihi. A Guru is required to obtain the knowledge for Gyanam. One can also ask for the blessing of Sravanam of scriptures.

Suppose a man is interested in moksha alone, what does he do? For a mumukshu the Upanishad gives us a special shloka for Gyana Prapthihi. It is a Japaha meant for atmagyanartham. Previous shlokas were all for Gyana Yogyata prapthihi. Trishanku Rishi gave this mantra. He gave this shloka after gaining Atma Gyanam. In this shloka the word Veda means Atma Gyanam.

What is Trishanku's declaration? He says, whatever be the glory of Brahman they are all my glories alone. He says, "Aham Brahma Asmi". I am Satyam jnanam anantam brahma. I am jagat karanam. In Gita, chapter # 10, it says, all glories belong to Ishwara. Here, Trishanku says, all glories belong to me. By repeating the Rishi's declaration I am practicing this statement, as I still do not have the Gyanam.

How long do you want to be in bondage, asks Trishanku? Slavery or bondage is Samsara. From Ishwara Dasa one has to become Ishwara Aikyam. This is the conversion from Dvaitam to Advaitam. Aham Brahma Asmi is the ultimate truth.

Trishnaku says:

Aham Reriva: I am the activator, life giver of the Samsara tree.

Brahman is the nourishing root of universe. Without my support the world cannot exist. Dream cannot exist without the Waker. I support the universe, as the universe does not have an existence of its own. Dream world exists due to the witness consciousness. I lend Sat and Chit to the Universe. Consciousness of body is reflected consciousness (RC). I am OC

(original consciousness) lending RC to the body. I am Vishwadharam. My glory (of god) is glory of creation. It is as high as the peak of a mountain (Prashtam Gireriva).

I am purest of pure. I am absolutely pure. Explaining purity, through Prayaschita karma one gets relative purity. Gyanam, however, makes me absolutely pure. By relative purity, it means I can become impure again. Gyanam gives me a purity that is permanent. The word Urddhvam means absolute.

Thus, I am also immortal or eternal, like the light of the Sun, which is also eternal. The word Vaaji means the Sun. He, the sun, nourishes annam (rice). How did I get all this name and fame?

I have the greatest wealth called brilliant Atma Gyanam. Why is Atma Gyanam brilliant? It is brilliant because it removes darkness. Atma Gyanam is a wealth that cannot be destroyed by giving it to others as such I have real wealth. Sumedha means I have the best knowledge that " I am Brahman." It illumines everything. Minds are many but "I" the consciousness is one and it illumines all of them. I am eternal and immortal. I am free from decay (Akshaya). The word " I am " has another meaning. It also means I am soaked in syrup of immortal wisdom. So, the essence of this shloka is " Aham Brahma Asmi". Trishanku declared this.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Footnote on Satyam Eva Jayate:

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satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ
yenākramantyrṣayo hyāptakāmā
yatra tat satyasya paramaṁ nidhānam^[4]*

In English

Truth alone triumphs; not falsehood.

Through truth the divine path is spread out

by which the sages whose desires have been completely fulfilled,

reach to where is that supreme treasure of Truth.^[5]