

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 18

Greetings All,

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 11, Shloka # 1:

Having taught the Vedas the preceptor enjoins the pupils, “ Speak the truth, do your duty, never swerve from study of the Vedas, do not cut off the line of descendants in your family, after giving the preceptor the fee he desires. Never err from truth, never fall from duty, never overlook your own welfare, never neglect your prosperity and never neglect the study and the propagation of the Vedas.”

We are in Anuvaka # 11. It talks about Brahmacharya Ashrama. This ashrama has two steps in it.

First step: In Vedic times chanting of Vedas was not written down. It was handed from the mouth to the head in the Karna Parampara. In effect the mantras were chanted and committed to memory. This chanting is called Svadhyaya Yagna and this sadhana is used to purify the mind of the chanter as well as the people listening to the chant. In this process, even the society and nation also benefited. Veda Ghosha, Vedic chanting loudly by a big group, was also performed for benefit of others. This chant is supposed to purify even the environment. Even plants grow better after this chant. This process of Vedic chanting is also called Adhyayanam.

Second step: Study of Veda Mimasa consisting of understanding the meaning of Vedas in context of Karma Kanda. Here the purpose was not to understand Vedanta rather it was to understand Dharma Shastra also called Veda Poorva Mimasa. The Dharma shastra is condensed in Anuvakaha # 11.

(Note: The differences were that the Mimamsa school developed and emphasized *karmakaṇḍa*, or the study of ritual actions, using the four early Vedas, while the Vedanta schools

developed and emphasized *jnanakaṇḍa*, the study of knowledge and spirituality, using the later parts of Vedas like the Upanishads.)

The Anuvakaha # 11 consists of:

Satyam vada: In various religions God is considered divine while world is considered secular. Thus, there is a division. Vedas do not create division between God and the world. They say the universe has born out of the divine. So Vedas see everything as divine. There is no division between divine and secular. So, one has to cultivate the bhavana of seeing the divine in everything. This is a lifelong effort. This bhavana is called Satyam.

Dharmam chara:

Do not criticize rituals. They are important. Values are important as well. There should be a balance between rituals and ethics. Both are important.

Svadyaya: We listen to scriptures and then forget their teachings. Hence continuous learning of scriptures is important to be reminded of the teachings. Do not neglect scriptural studies.

Guru Dakshina: You have to give the guru his dakshina. A Guru, however, should not insist upon it. Even without asking the shishya should give dakshina. Teaching obtained without dakshina has negative consequences. It is called Adakshina. It is also called Runam (debt). A mind with Runam is considered an impure mind. So, give dakshina.

Be a part of an ashrama: After leaving the Gurulkula, a man still has to be a part of one of the four ashramas. Without an ashrama your duty cannot be identified. One can become a permanent Brahmachari so long as he is initiated as a Naishtika Brahmachari. Such a Brahmachari has to serve his teacher. One can also choose Grihasthashrama, Vanaprashtha or

Sanyasa. If he chooses Sanyasa he has to go back to ashrama and study Vedanta. Generally, most people opt for Grihastashrama. Only grihasthashrama has the infrastructure for Karma Yoga. Other three ashramas cannot have money. Only Grihastha has money. In Grihasthashrama one can perform the Pancha Maha Yagna as well as fulfill worldly desires, in a legitimate manner.

Do not neglect commitment to values. Satyam in Dharma shastra means speaking the truth. In Vedanta, satyam means the ultimate reality or truth.

Do not neglect religious way of life. Thus getting up early before sunrise to pray to the Sun god. The day starts with prayer. Applying religious marks on forehead is important. Namaskara with both hands is also important.

May you not neglect your own well being. Do not neglect your personal interests. Take care of the body. Make sure it is fed and rested. Serving society is part of your own growth. It is for Chitta Shuddhi. Only after moksha can one neglect the body. Being selfish in this context is not wrong. It is your duty.

Do not neglect acquisition of wealth. It is very important. Only through Laxmi can one reach Saraswathi. More earning is not enough. One should also give a proportionate share to the deserving. One should keep in mind that the other three ashramas depend on the Grihastha. The Ahavanti Homam is performed for acquisition of wealth. Money is meant for noble service through Pancha Maha Yagna. Through this one obtains Chitta Shuddhi that in turn leads to Gyanam and then Moksha. Bhutyaha in shloka means Prosperity.

Study of scriptures is very important. Anything that stagnates can be sickening. Even money, if it stagnates, can create problems. Scriptures encourage giving.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 11, Shloka # 2:

Never swerve from your duties towards gods and towards the departed "souls" (manes). May the mother be, to thee, a god. May the father be, to thee, a god. May the preceptor be to thee, a god. May the guest be, to thee, a god.

Worship of God is important. Just as you nourish a tree by pouring water at its root, similarly the whole universe is a tree with many needy people. The reality is you cannot help every needy individual. Therefore, Vedas prescribe that one contributes to the root of the universe. This root is Ishwara. Therefore perform puja to God and ask his blessing for the welfare of all people. This blessing will go to all people including needy ones. Unfortunately we cannot see the blessing reaching the deserving. So, Deva Yagya helps many. It is also a two fold Karma as it benefits the deserving as well as it purifies your own mind.

Pitr Yagya: is worship of ancestors. This worship reaches even if they are re-born. My general offering goes to all ancestors, not just mine. This also purifies my mind. Keep in mind this offering is for my growth not God's. So, Pancha Maha Yagna is mentioned. Ethics via Satyam also has been mentioned. Now attitude is discussed.

Attitude towards one's mother: Treat your mother as goddess herself. While a mother is not a goddess, irrespective of the character of the mother, she deserves worship. Hence, namaskara is performed to her. The namaskara is to the Goddess within the mother.

Develop reverence towards father: Despite his limitations one should worship the father. Don't judge him. Often a father's problem is one of Parampara, that is habits transferred from his father to son. Never find fault with parents.

Consider the Acharya a God. In our early years our first contact is with mother and then with father. Then comes the teacher. The teacher contributes to the psychological growth

of the child. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says if mother, father and teacher are good the child will have a healthy attitude in life. In our society kula, gothra etc. are very important for a marriage. Katho Upanishad says a mature human being is one who has good relationship with all the three. So, look upon teacher as a God.

Atithi Devo Bhava: Look upon a visitor as a God. This was an important value in Vedic times. It is not important anymore. In Vedic society, when people travelled, they had to stay somewhere. In that society food was not sold. There were no restaurants. So one took shelter in some house in a village. That family usually gave food and shelter. Being a pilgrim he was not known to the family. He also arrived without prior notice. When things happen, unplanned, like arrival of such a pilgrim, it was considered God's will. So, God has sent the Athiti, so we have to feed him, was the thinking. He also did not stay more than a night. So, he was treated like a God. Nowadays with con artists and such, this approach is difficult to practice.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 17

Chapter 17

Lecture On Sept, 3. 2017

Swamiji observed that we completed 10 sections of Upanishad covering– Preparatory Disciplines to get Brahma Vidya– Also discussed, Karma Yoga , varieties of Upasanas, values (Deiviha Sampath) and two Japas (Gnana yogyadha Prapthi and Gnana Prapthi).

All previously discussed Sadhanas were reminded.

Now on to Auvaha 11.

Upanishad is condensing Dharma Sasthram – contained in Veda Purva Baha. It is nothing but a religious way of life and get purified mind and become Gnana Yogyaadha–and enter Veda Antha Baha. –Start with religion and transcend religion–

Sanyasa Asrama reflects this.

Dharma Sastra (Veda Purva) as elaborated by Jaimini Maharishi in Purva Mimamsa. It consists of:

1) Rituals

2) Attitude towards life (family, creation, health, wealth, strength etc)

3) Values–ethics and morals

the above three are condensed Dharma Sasthra. When you learn and practice then you are fit for Veda study.

Upanishad condenses Dharma Sasthra in Anuvaka 11. When should one begin to study? It should start at a very young age, in schools or colleges–during Brahmacharya Asrama–when there is no responsibilities–no relationship–and with a relaxed mind.

It starts with 1) Veda Adhyayana (learning to chant words without meaning)–young minds absorb very quickly and next step 2) Veda Mimamsa –learning the meaning of Vedas (only Veda Purva Mimamsa) and 3) study of Dharma sasthra

After entering Grihastha Asrama, one should practice Dharma

Sathra in day to day life (Anushta Prayanam). This leads to Sadhana Chathushtaya Sampathi—when you achieve this, Grihastha Asrama is not relevant and it is only an intermediate stage—relationships and associations come

and go—gradually withdraw from responsibilities and handover to the next generation— and take to Sanyasa Asram—with a relaxed mind you are fit to study Veda Antha under the guidance of a Guru.

Upanishad says Guru during Bramacharya Asram:

Teach to chant Veda—

Collects Sasthras and structure lessons for each student depending on profession they take up later

Teaches religion, ethics and attitudes

Persuade students to follow Sastras

Guru practices what is taught and is a role model.

Upanishad stresses salient features of Dharma Sasthra:

Satyam Vadha—Harmony between thoughts and word and integrated personality

Dharmam Chara—Implement all Karmas and Discipline commanded by scriptures—do not neglect scriptural study

For implementing Dharma Sastra, materials are required—Grihastha Asrama provides the infra-structure

After completing study, under Guru—your knowledge can be exhibited to to a King or rich persons—get rewarded —and handover the same to Guru as Dakshina—for propogating the Guru Sishya Parambara

Then become A grihastha—and maintain the Kula Parampara—teach your children a religious way of life and faith in Veda.

Namasthe

Taitreya Upanishads, 10th Anuvaga Audio

This is an audio recording of Swamiji's chanting of 10th Anuvaga of Shikshavalli, Taitreya Upanishad.

Shishavalli 10th Anuvaga

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 Yaga 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 nānṛtaṁ
satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ
yenākramantyrṣayo 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 Patnajali'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 praptihi. 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 annum (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:

*satyameva jayate nānṛtaṁ
satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ
yenākramantyṛṣayo 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]

Tatireya Upanishad, Class 15

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, after talking about the five Upasanas, now in anuvakaha # 9 Karma yoga is being discussed. Karma Yoga is an integral part of spiritual sadhanas. One can drop Karma Yoga only at death or at time of Sanyasa. Until then, in all three ashramas, one has to perform Karma. In Brahmacharya and Vanaprastha there are fewer Karmas while Grihasthashrama is dominated by Karmas. A Grihastha can get away without performing any Upasanas but he cannot escape performing Karmas. Karmas, performed as a means of spiritual sadhana, are known as Karma Yoga. One of the important spiritual Karma's is Pancha Maha Yagna. Both Pancha maha yagna and Daivika Sampathi are Karma's that are required to be performed.

In Pancha Maha Yagna, in different contexts, different Yagnas are highlighted. Study and teaching of scriptures is highlighted. The word Pravachanam, in the shloka, has a second

meaning. It also means performing Brahma Yagna as a ritual. Brahma Yagna as a ritual used to be performed in the past. It is still performed as a part of Avani Avittam (upakarma) samskara. In this ceremony thanks are given to scriptures and their authors. Vyasa is honored as Krishna Dvaipanya as are the various authors' wives. This part of the Samskara takes about seven minutes of the overall ritual. As per the requirements of Brahma Yagna one has to study scriptures every day. Five items are mentioned in Brahma Yagna. They are:

1. Svasakha: The branch to which one belongs is to be worshipped.
2. Gita: Entire Gita is to be studied.
3. Vishnu Sahasranamam: Has to be chanted.
4. Rudrum: has to be chanted.
5. Purushasuktam: Has to be chanted.

Smaller versions of these mantras are also accepted. Thus, for Svasakha one can chant the Gayathri. All these five mantras are to be regularly chanted. This is considered ritualistic pravachanam.

A part of Brahma Yagna includes sharing the knowledge of scriptures with another person, everyday.

The ninth Anuvakaha highlights Brahma yagna as very important.

Ritum: is understanding the purpose of life according to the Vedas. Primary purpose of life is moksha. Dharma, artha, kama etc., are just stepping stones towards moksha.

Satyam: Knowing is not enough. One also has to practice the teachings daily with sincerity. An ounce of practice is worth a pound of theory. Practice of aacharas and anushtanas is satyam.

Tapaha: means practicing austerity or discipline of willful self-denial to master my sense organs i.e., the five gyanendriyas, the five karmendriyas and the pancha pranas. How

to know if I am in control of my sense organs? Once in a while say no to something you do every day. If by doing so your mind is disturbed, it means you are being enslaved by your senses. This willful self-denial is very important. Enforced discipline from outside is suppression. Self-denial is Tapas. All Vratams fall under Tapas. Upavasa and Maunam are two great examples of Tapas. Managing the tongue is very important. If tongue is mastered other Indriyas will also come under control. Many Upasanas are prescribed under Tapas and they include Krichram and Chandrayanam. Chadrayanam upavasa description includes: From Shukla paksha onwards take one handful of rice and increase it daily by one handful. Thus, on full moon day you are taking 15 handful of rice. On Krishna paksha day take 14 handful of rice reducing one handful everyday. On new moon day it is upavasam or no food day.

Damaha: Sensory discipline. We have discussed this topic in Tatva bodha. It is also called Indriya Nigraha. Suppression of senses is not recommended. If so, what directions should senses take? For example, what to see and what not to see? Scriptures say, anything that activates Asuri Sampathi should not be seen or performed. Anything that activates one's Daiviha Sampathi can be seen. Going down is easy and natural. Going up is difficult.

Kshama: Thought discipline. Watch your thought. They become actions. Thus: Thought>action>habit>character>destiny (destination).

God does not determine destiny. It is determined as seen from the flow shown above finally by thought. Your thoughts determine your destiny. Since nobody can see them, we take our thoughts for granted. It is like in a house one tends to keep the drawing room very neat and tidy while basement is left dirty. We do this as nobody comes to the basement. So, we should be more aware of our thoughts. So, thought discipline is important.

Suryanamaskara mantra has thought discipline in it. If one does not have this discipline one tends to blurt out without awareness. Every word should be uttered thoughtfully. Seeing even one termite means a great portion of your house has been already been infested. Be aware of your thoughts.

Agnyaha: means fires. It symbolizes fire ritual or Deva Yagna. Why are rituals called Agni? Before starting a ritual the householder has to kindle the fire ritualistically. This fire is called Garbhapathya Agni. The Grihasta is required to maintain this fire at all times including for its use in cremation.

Ahavani Agni and Dakshina Agni's are kindled out of Garbhapthya Agni and used for other rituals and later placed back at their place of origin. For a Grihasta, 26 rituals are mentioned such as seven homa yagnas, seven havir yagnas, seven soma yagnas and pancha maha yagnas. Agnihotram is a fundamental Vedic ritual.

Atithya: means entertaining guests, housing them and feeding them. It is also called anna danam yagna. It is all part of manusha Yagna.

Manusham: means to fulfill societal obligations. One gets many benefits by being a part of society such as the gas, phone, bank etc. Relatives and friends come to your assistance during times of trouble. So, one has to contribute back to society. In Sanyasa ashrama all such social obligations end. Manusham is also a Manushya yagna.

Praja, Prajna, and Prajati: All three are part of Pitr Yagna. It is a duty to our forefathers. It is our duty to perpetuate including marrying and having children.

Praja: means beget children. Why is it a duty? Why are scriptures interested in children? Our scriptures consider even natural activities are to be converted to worship. Citing two examples: 1) Breathing is a natural and essential

phenomenon. Vedas point out breathing can be pranayama sadhana. Gita, chapter 14, discusses this sadhana in detail. Pranayama is to be performed with a proper attitude, at a particular time, place and duration.

2) Feeding: Baby goes to mother for food. For feeding the sadhana is Prana-agnihotra sadhana. Hunger is Pranagni. Eating is an offering to God. The time, place, amount and attitude towards eating are important.

Begetting children also is a Yagna. Marriage is a ritual. The rituals' purpose is to increase dharma. Garbadhana samskara is an important ritual. Naming a child is also a ritual. Thus, many natural processes are converted to samskaras by the Vedas. Vivaha and Garbadhana rituals are related to marriage.

Prajati: means getting grand children. This, in turn, means your children have to be married. Let children know marriage is for spiritual growth, while material growth may be its byproduct. Even in marriage Dharma predominates. Spouse is chosen with this in mind. So, one has to make sure children have a proper attitude towards marriage.

If a child does not want to get married, it should have a higher purpose in life. Thus, one can be a Grihasta or a Sanyasi.

Bhuta Yagna has not been mentioned but should be performed.

It is the worship of plants and animals. Let all your actions be environmentally friendly. Respect ecological harmony. Even an earthworm is a very important creation of God.

So, follow Pancha maha Yagna.

Last section of anuvakaha # 9 emphasizes study and propagation of Vedas as important part of Brahma Yagna.

Take Away:

1. Karmas, performed as a means of spiritual sadhana, are known as Karma Yoga.
2. Pancha Maha Yagna should be performed by all of us every day.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishads, Class14

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 8, Shloka # 1:

The sacred sound Om is Brahman. All this is the syllable OM.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 8, Shloka # 2:

It is widely known that Om is uttered to indicate consent. The priest officiating at the sacrifice encourages his assistants with the words "O Sravya". With the chanting of Om they start singing the Sama verses; and with "Om Som" they recite the shastras; Adhvaryu answers with the syllable "Om".

With Om the chief priest, Brahma expresses his assent. One permits the offering of oblation to the fire with "OM". May I obtain with Brahman; with this determination, the Brahmana says" Om" before he begins to recite the Veda; and he does obtain the Brahman.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said this shloka is a glorification of Omkara. It is a mantra used in Gyana Kandam, as analysis of Omkara, in Upasana Kandam where Omkara is used as a symbol for saguna

Brahma Upasana and in Karma Kanda where it is used in rituals. Priests of Rg, Yajur, and Sama Vedas also use Omkara extensively. Even a beginning Brahmachari starts his chanting or Veda Adhyayana through Omkara chanting. In Veda Adhyayanam one only learns how to chant, as such it is Shabda Pradhana. Later the Brahmachari moves on to Veda-mimamsa where he learns the meaning of the chant. Typically, he learns his branch of Veda that is Rg, Yajur or Sama. Some may also learn more than one Veda. In our tradition memorizing and chanting alone existed in the past and not reading and chanting.

In this Shloka Brahma means Yoga. Thus the Brahmachari starts his chanting with Om. Uttering Om is mangalam. As a result of this prayer he certainly completes Veda Adhyayanam.

Some clarifications were provided on Omkara.

How should one utter or pronounce the word Om?

In English Om is often written as AUM, however the pronunciation is not Aum. In Sanskrit A +U= O, due to a sandhi. Thus, in English, AUM should change to OM. OM is the correct pronunciation.

How long does one chant Om?

In the beginning of a Vedic chanting O must be three matras long or as O3M. At end of a Vedic chanting O should be four matras long or as O4M.

Omkara Japa is prescribed only for Sanyasis. People in other ashramas such as Brahmacharya and Grihastha are not allowed to chant Omkara alone as a kevala mantra. For a Sanyasi it is a compulsory mantra. Sanyasi chants Omkara instead of Gayathri. A Sanyasi can prolong the Om mantra chant as much as he wants such as OOOM.

Dayananda Saraswathi used to say that the mere Omkara chanting creates Tivra Vairagyaha (extreme sense of detachment) and

because of it a Grihasta may wish to take up Sanyasa after such a chanting. This, of course, can create problems in society. Therefore Omkara is always mixed with other mantras for Grihasta's. Now, concluding the anuvakaha #8 with shloka # 1, it says, May the seeker practice Omkara.

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.

With previous shloka the five Upasanas of Samshito Upasana, Vyahriti Upasana, Hiranyagarbha Upasana, Pankta Upasana and Omkara Upasana have all been completed. These Upasanas are meant to purify, concentrate and expand one's mind. These Upasanas will make the mind ready for Gyanam. We should keep in mind that these Upasanas will not give us Moksha. For that one has to go through Gyana yoga of sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam of Vedanta scriptures under a qualified Guru.

There are many types of Upasanas. Chandogyo Upanishad has

countless Upasanas. Puranas and Itihasas also have many Upasanas. Bhagawatham also has many Upasanas. It is not compulsory to practice a Vedic Upasana. Nowadays, Vedic Upasanas are not preached or practiced anymore. Rather, Ganesha, Rama, Krishna and other such Upasanas are more common and as good for purification of the mind. In today's context Vedic Upasanas are only of academic interest.

Now, the Upanishad talks about karma as well. Karmas can be Kayika or Vachika karmas. Thus, in the beginning stages, Brahmacharya stage, one starts with Karma yoga. Later, Karma decreases and Upasana increases during Vanaprastha stage. So, one should not neglect Karma. Karma Yoga has been discussed extensively in the Gita. Karma Yoga involves actions that contribute to the spiritual growth. Thus we have:

Para Upakara Karmani: This involves work that helps more people as such leads to spiritual growth.

Para Udasana Karmani: Here my work helps me. I don't care about others. He does not do any good or harm to others. In this state one is in a stage of spiritual stagnation.

Para Apakara Karmani: These are actions harmful to others. It brings one down spiritually.

Swami Chinmayananda used to say:

Godman: Para Upakara

Man man: Para Udasana

Animal man: Para Apakara

So, one should strive to increase Para Upakara or Satvika Karmani. One should bring Tamasika Karmani to a minimum. The word Suna means "necessary evil". If one performs Suna, one should also perform prayaschita. Vedas have Prayaschita built into it so that any errors are corrected immediately. Sandhya Vandanam has Prayschita mantras built into it.

All prayers and Pancha Maha Yagna, all contribute to spiritual growth. Pancha Maha Yagna is a Prayaschita as well as a Shodhaka karmani.

Refreshing our memories on Pancha Maha Yagna, they are:

1. Deva Yagna: Puja or Sandhya vandana are examples
2. Pitr Yagna: Prayers and puja to ancestors. One should not forget one's living parents as well.
3. Rishi or Brahma Yagna: Study of scriptures and teaching others about our scriptures.
4. Manushya Yagna: Social Service
5. Bhuta Yagna: Service to lower beings such as animals and plants. Daily placing of Kolam (rangoli) using rice powder, Tulasi puja are all examples of this.

The Upanishad says, of the five-maha yagna's, while all are important, Brahma Yagna foremost. People are naturally more rituals oriented. However, Taittiriya Upanishad recommends a systematic study of scriptures. Many people consider such a study as of academic interest only. However, recognizing that knowledge is power and that spiritual knowledge is very powerful, study of scriptures should not be just for academic interest. Furthermore, spiritual knowledge helps with our Prarabhdha Karmas as well. It is a Kavacha against Prarabhdha karmas.

This Upanishad also emphasizes values or Daiviha Sampati. Daiviha Sampati means discovering God in my heart. To obtain this sampati one has to acquire Godly character. Therefore values are important.

Discussing the shloka, following words were explained:

Svadyaya: Study of scriptures. In Brahmacharya ashrama Dharma shastra is studied in addition to learning professional skills such as warfare, business etc. Dharma shastra, in poorva bhaga, was a common subject for all students. Thus, in Brahmacharya ashrama one studies Dharma while in Grihastha and

Vanaprasta ashramas one lives the Dharma, hence the saying Dharmam Chara. The idea was to learn Dharma in Brahmacharya, then follow Dharma in practice and then learn about Brahman or go to Gyana Yoga.

Pravachanam: Means sharing knowledge. Only a competent Guru can teach you the Vedas. Self-study can be dangerous. This also gives me the responsibility of teaching future generations as well as a part of the Anadi Guru Shishya Parampara.

In the Vedic society everyone had to share by talking and living the teachings of the Vedas. Vedas also ask a segment of society to make the study and spread of scriptural knowledge their only profession. This segment of society is known as Karma Brahmana. Their livelihood is teaching and sharing information and for this they accept as dakshina whatever is given voluntarily. Thus, they had to lead a simple life. Since they were not rich, they were also not burdened with problems and this allowed them more time to study scriptures. Their only job was to learn and share. This is known as Pravachanam. One segment of society was dedicated for this.

Ritum: It means knowledge about life in line with scriptures. Life beyond Pratyaksha Gyanam was also to be studied. Thus, one was required to learn about Aupursheya Gyanam as well. Generally, materialistic (Artha kama pradhana) societies' goals are entertainment and enjoyment. Here, however, a Dharma Moksha Pradhana life (a spiritual life) is important and it is known as Ritum.

Satyam: It means to live life according to scriptures. One should not be a hypocrite. What I know and what I do must have minimum gap. Leading a Vaidica life or a life of Anushtana's (religious life) is Satyam.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Omkara Upasana

In the 13th Class of Taitreya Upanishad, Swamiji discusses Omkara Upasana. This upasana is presented in the form of a chart. Please click on the link for a chart form of this Upasana.

omkara upasana

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 13

Greetings All,

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 8, Shloka # 1:

The sacred sound Om is Brahman. All this is the syllable OM.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 8, Shloka # 2:

It is widely known that Om is uttered to indicate consent. The priest officiating at the sacrifice encourages his assistants with the words "O Sravya". With the chanting of Om they start singing the Sama verses; and with "Om Som" they recite the shastras; Adhvaryu answers with the syllable "Om".

With Om the chief priest, Brahma expresses his assent. One permits the offering of oblation to the fire with "OM". May I obtain with Brahman; with this determination, the Brahmana says "Om" before he begins to recite the Veda; and he does

obtain the Brahman.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said we have completed the first four upasanas of chapter # 1. They are Samshito Upasana, Vyahriti Upasana, Hiranyagrabha upasana and Pankta Upasana. Now in anuvaka # 8, the fifth and final upasana of this chapter known as Omkara upasana is introduced.

In this upasana the word OM is introduced as a symbol or Alambanam and upon it Ishwara is invoked. Omkara can represent Virat (Samashti Prapancha), Hiranyagarbha (Sukshma prapancha) and Ishwara (Karana Prapancha). Omkara can thus represent the macro or Samashti. “ May you practice upasana of Brahman on Omkara” It is a Saguna Brahman. Nirguna Brahman cannot be an object of Upasana. If it is an object it cannot be nirguna. Thus, if an object is meditated upon such an object cannot be nirguna. In such an instance the meditator alone is the Nirguna Brahman.

Therefore, Brahma upasana connotes Saguna Brahman. It can represent the Virat (Samashti Guna), Hiranyagarbha (Sukshma guna) and Ishwara (Karana Guna).

When there are so many scared words in Scriptures why choose Omkara? Omkara is a most sacred and unique mantra. We have seen before in Shikshavalli's anuvaka # 5 that Brahmaji extracted Omkara from Vedas. Therefore, Omkara chanting is equal to chanting all Vedic mantras. Thus, we get the Omkara mahima. Any word in scripture can refer to a particular object. Thus, when we say chair it means only “chair” and not a table. So it is also with the name Rama or Krishna. Thus, words have limitations. They don't represent the totality of Brahman. To describe God, a word describing all objects in cosmos should be used. One word should represent all objects of creation. OM is such a word. Om encompasses all objects of creation Thus:

A: All Sthula objects

U: All Sukshma objects.

M: All Karana objects.

A is the beginning of sound. Last sound produced is M. U represents all intermediate alphabets. Thus, AUM represents all characters. They also represent all words of the language. Thus: OM represents alphabets. Alphabets represent words or padam. Padam represents objects. Therefore, OM represents all objects of the world. All objects put together represent the Lord. Hence Om is his best description. Lord is one and OM is also one. Therefore, Om is Pranavaha or the ideal name for God. Hence it is used in the upasana.

Omkara is very important in upasana. It is also very important in meditation. Omkara is also very important in Karma Kanda. Everywhere Om is important.

How is it important in rituals?

Omkara is a versatile mantra. Thus, Omkara is used as:

Anukriti or acceptance. Omkara conveys acceptance. Hasma-vai-
api means well known. In olden times different priests were involved in rituals. There are special invitation mantras for specific devatas. The concerned priest had to be ready with oblations. Then the main priest asks his assistants to invoke the God.

O Sravya, he says to his assistants. Then, the assistant starts the Vedas with Omkara.

OM iti samani gayanti. Each priest of the ritual handles one mantra. Thus Rg, Yajus and Sama are chanted.

The Rg Veda priest is called Hota. His assistants are called Hotraganaha. Usually there is a main priest with three assistants or a total of four.

The Yajur Veda head priest is called Adhvaryuhu. His assistants are called Adhvarganaha. Here also there is a head priest with three assistants.

The Sama Veda priest is called Udgata and his assistants are called Udgataganaha. They also total four.

The Atharavana Veda has no direct application in Vedic rituals. The priest does not play a direct role. Therefore, he becomes the supervisor of the entire ritual. He is called Brahma. He too has three assistants known as Brahmaganaha.

Thus, a total of 16 priests are involved including the husband and wife (Yajamana and Yajamani). They all add up to 18 people for a yagna.

The Brahma (atharvanavedi) supervises to ensure all priests are performing their rituals properly. If mistakes happen there are built in prayaschittas in every ritual. The prayaschita can vary depending upon the mistake made in the ritual. Thus, prayaschita can include from donating one's property to chanting gayathri japa. Thus, a Brahma must be very knowledgeable and must be very alert. He has to be a Chaturvedi, one who knows all four Vedas. All four ganas use Omkara in rituals. Thus, OM iti Samani gayanti.

Rg veda mantras are called Shastrani and they can be chanted with or without swaras. They also start the mantras with Om.

Swamji said nowadays there are not many Chaturvedi's available for such Yagnas. Therefore, a seat is assigned for one in a yaga, although it is empty. It is assumed a Brahma is sitting there.

Adhvaryuhu, the Yajur Veda priest, gives permission using OM. Agni Hotra is a basic Srouta karma performed twice every day. It is a fire ritual. Aupasana is also a fire ritual performed every day after one's marriage.

In these daily pujas OM is the beginning of all mantras. For spiritual cleansing of house too water is sanctified in front of God and then used with chanting of OM and sprinkling in many parts of a house.

A Brahmachari starting to learn Vedic chanting also begins his chant with Om. Through the chanting he grasps the Vedas.

A Sanyasi does not have gayathri mantra. They only have Omkara mantra to chant.

Since a Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, all chant Omkara mantra, it is a very important mantra for all castes as well.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Tatireya Upanishads, Class 12

Greetings All,

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.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami

Paramarthananda said we are concluding this anuvaka six. In this anuvaka we were getting the details of the Hiranyagarbha Upasana. Hiranyagarbha represents Samashti Sukshma Sharira Chaitanyam. Hiranayagarbha has two main organs and they are Prana and Mind. Very often Hiranyagarbha is represented as the Total Mind or Total Prana. It is then called Ahamgraha.

In this upasana god is visualized on myself. The Upanishad says this upasana bestows two phalams. They are:

- If performed as nishkama karma then spiritual growth occurs. Through this upasana purity, focus and expansion of mind occurs.
- If performed as sakama karma one obtains Brahma Loka. This, however, occurs only after death.

How is Brahma Loka reached? Jiva at death withdraws into Hridayam. From there, via Shukla Gathi (Indra Yoni), a bright path, Jiva travels through Sushumna Nadi and then through the head (Brahma Randhra). It continues through the solar disc to Brahma Loka.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 6, Shloka # 2:

With the word Bhuvaha, he stands in fire; in the air in the shape of Bhuvaha; as Suvaha in the sun; in the Brahman as Mahaha. He obtains self-effulgence. He obtains Lordship over minds. He becomes the Lord of speech, lord of the eyes, lord of the ears and lord of knowledge. Then he becomes this Brahman whose body is space, whose nature is truth, who sports in dynamic life Prana, whose mind is bliss, who is full of peace, who is immortal. Thus, Oh descendant of the ancient yoga culture, meditate.

This shloka tells us what happens to a Hiranyagarbha Upasaka after death. The Upasaka has practiced Hiranyagarbha upasana with Vyahrithi upasana. Both are performed together. Thus, the upasaka has performed Hiranyagarbha upasana as well as upasana of other Devatas. All devatas (anga's) are a part of

Hiranyagarbha, the total, also known as Angi. He will become one with all devatas as well. In this process at the merger first occurs with anga devatas and later with angi devata as well.

Thus, first merger is of the seeker as Bhu with Agni, then of seeker as Bhuvah with Vayu, then of seeker as Suvaha with Surya, then of seeker as Mahaha with Hiranyagarbha. Brahman in the shloka means Saguna Hiranyagarbha.

After merger, the sadhaka attains sovereignty over 14 Lokas, as Brahma Loka is the highest Loka. He is now lord of all individual minds. He is also lord of speech and karmendriyas (speech, eyes, ears, tongue and knowledge). Varuna Devata presides over speech. Additionally, Hiranyagarbha has akasha; as such he has lordship over space as well. Since Hiranyagarbha is shown as saguna Brahman, his body consists of both visible and invisible bodies (sthula and sukshma shariras).

In shloka Sat means visible universe. Prana-ramam means Total Prana. Hiranyagarbha also controls Total Prana. Thus, Sadhaka enjoys the ananda through every mind. Why does he not get dukha is a question that can come up. Hiranyagarbha is total punyam hence he gets only sukham. Hiranayagarbha is also total peace and prosperity. Such a Hiranyagarbha the Sadhaka obtains through this upsana.

In Shloka, the words Prachin Prayoga means: O student you who are eligible to receive this ancient wisdom.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 7, Shloka # 1:

The earth, the sky, the interspace (antariksham), the heaven, the main quarters, the intermediate quarters; the fire, the air, the sun, the moon and the stars; the waters, the herbs, the forest trees, the space and Atman, so far regarding all living creatures and then come regarding the Soul (adhyatmam) ,the prana, the vyana, the apana, the udana and the samana;

the eyes, the ears, the mind, the speech and the touch; the skin, the flesh, the muscles, the bones and the marrow. After analyzing and determining these, the seer said, "All this is panktam or five fold or pentadic. The one set of five fold grouping sustains the other pentadic grouping."

With previous shloka anuvakaha 6 is complete. With this, the three upasanas of Samshito, Vyahrithi and Hiranyagarbha are all complete. This section deals with a fourth upasana called Pankta Brahma Upasana. Here too the upasana is taking us to Jivatma paramatma aikyam. Here again we are practicing the visualization of macrocosm in the microcosm.

This creation (macro) is divided into three groups. Each is called Panktam or Pankta-trayam. Why call it panktam? Panktam means group of five numbers. Thus, here we have 3 groups with five members in each adding up a total of 15 members. These 15 members constitute the creation.

Individual creation (micro) is also divided into three groups. Here too each group has five members and thus total of 15 members are present at the micro level as well.

In this upasana, Samashti Pankta-Trayam (macro) are visualized on Vyashti Pankta Trayam (micro).

This is the reason it is called Pankta Brahma Upasana.

The members of each group are now listed.

At macro or samashti level:

1. Loka Panktam consisting of: Earth, interspace, heaven, four directions (NSEW) and four intermediary directions (such as NE, SW etc)
2. Dev Panktam consisting of: Fire, Air, Sun, Moon and Stars.
3. Bhuta Panktam consisting of: Water, Herbs (small plants), Trees, Space and Virat. In the shloka atma

means everything else mentioned in creation or Virat.

At the micro or Vyashti level:

1. Vayu panktam consisting of: Prana, Vyana, Apana, Udhana and Samana.
2. Indriya Panktam consisting of: Eyes, Ears, Mind, speech and organ of touch.
3. Dhatu Panktam consisting of: Skin, flesh, muscle, bone and marrow.

Thus, we have total six panktams.

A Vedic rishi prescribed these six panktams. The whole creation is nothing other than these panktams. So visualize Samashti panktam via Vyashti Panktams. Through this visualization of totality, one gets strengthened. Just as an individual gets courage through family, or a family gets courage from their tribe, you too strengthen your self by invoking God in You.

This upasana is called pankta upasana. It can also be performed either as Nishkama karma or Sakama karma. When performed as nishkama upasana one gets chitta shuddhi. When performed as sakama karma upasana one gets Brahma loka.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Upasanas in Shikshavalli

Shishavalli of Taitreya Upanishad enumerates the following vedic upasanas:

- Samhitha Upasana
- Vyahirithi Upasana
- Hiranya Garbha Upasana
- Panktha Brahma Upasana

Please click on the link below for a chart reproduced from Swami Paramarthananda's book with minor additions based on Swamiji's classes.

Upasanas in Sikshavallie