

INVOCATION

sa ha nāv avatu, saha nau bhunaktu, saha vīryam karavāvahai: tejasvi nāv adhītam astu: mā vidviṣāvahai; aum śāntih, śāntih, śāntih.

May He protect us both; may He be pleased with us both; may we work together with vigour; may our study make us illumined; may there be no dislike between us. *Aum*, peace, peace, peace.

See also T.U. II and III. The teacher and the pupil pray for harmonious co-operation in keen and vigorous study.

CHAPTER I

Section I

NACIKETAS AND HIS FATHER

1. *uśan ha vai vājaśravasaḥ sarva-vedasam dadau: tasya ha naciketā nāma putra āsa.*

1. Desirous (of the fruit of the Viśvajit sacrifice) Vājaśravasa, they say, gave away all that he possessed. He had a son by name Naciketas.

uśan: desirous. Evidently, at the time of the Upaniṣad, the sacrificial religion of the *Brāhmanas* was popular. Desire for earthly and heavenly gain was the prominent motive. The Upaniṣad leads us to a higher goal. 'He who is free from desire beholds him.' II. 20.

uśan, is sometimes said to be the offspring of *Vājaśravasa*.¹ gave away all that he possessed. He is represented as making a voluntary surrender of all that he possessed, *saṁnyāsa*, in order to secure his spiritual interests.

Naciketas: one who does not know² and therefore seeks to know.

The author attempts to distinguish between Vājaśravasa, the protagonist of an external ceremonialism, and Naciketas, the seeker of spiritual wisdom. Vājaśravasa represents orthodox religion and is devoted to its outer forms. He performs the sacrifice and makes gifts which are unworthy. The formalism and the hypocrisy of the father hurt the son.

2. *taṁ ha kumāraṁ santam dakṣiṇāsu nīyamānāsu śraddhā-viveśa, so'manyata.*

2 As the gifts were being taken to the priests, faith entered him, although but a (mere) boy; he thought.

Prompted by the desire to do real good to his father, the boy felt worried about the nature of the presents.

śraddhā: faith. It is not blind belief but the faith which asks whether the outer performance without the living spirit is enough.

3. *pitodakā jagdha-tryā dugdha-dohā nirindriyāḥ anandā nāma te lokās tān sa gacchata tā dadat.*

3. Their water drunk, their grass eaten, their milk milked, their strength spent, joyless, verily, are those worlds, to which he, who presents such (cows) goes.

¹ *uśan nāma vājaśravaso'patyam*. Bhaṭṭabhāskara Miśra.

² Cp. R.V. 'No knowledge of the god have I, a mortal.' *nāham devasya martyas ciketa.*' X. 79. 5.

nirindriyāḥ: without the strength to breed, *a-prajanana-samarthāḥ*.
ananāḥ: *anānandāḥ*, *asukhāḥ*, joyless. Īśa 3; B.U. IV. 4. II. The cows which are presented are no longer able to drink, eat, give milk or calve.

Naciketas reveals here, with the enthusiasm of youth, the utter inadequacy of a formal soulless ritualism. The idea of complete surrender (*sarva-vedasam dadau*) in the first verse should be properly interpreted as utter dedication or complete self-giving.

True prayer and sacrifice are intended to bring the mind and will of the human being into harmony with the great universal purpose of God.

4. *sa hovāca pītarām, tāta kasmai mām dāsyasīti;
dvitīyam tṛtīyam; tam hovāca: mṛtyave tvā dadāmi.*

4. He said to his father, 'O Sire, to whom wilt thou give me?' For a second and a third time (he repeated) (when the father) said to him, 'Unto Death shall I give thee.'

Dr. Rawson suggests that a mere boy should be so impertinent as to interfere with his doings, the father in anger said, 'Go to hell.'

The boy earnestly wishes to make himself an offering and thus purify his father's sacrifice. He does not discard the old tradition but attempts to quicken it. There can be no quickening of the spirit until the body die.

Cp. St. Paul: 'Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.'

mṛtyave: unto Death. *Mṛtyu* or *Yama* is the lord of death. When *Vājaśravasa* gives away all his goods, *Naciketas* feels that this involves the giving away of the son also and so wishes to know about himself. When the father replies that he will give him to *Yama*, it may mean that, as a true *sannyāsīn*, personal relations and claims have henceforward no meaning for him. *Naciketas* takes his father's words literally. He in the course of his teaching points out that the psychophysical vehicles animated by the spirit are determined by the law of karma and subject to death. He who knows himself as the spirit, and not as the psychophysical vehicle is free and immortal.

5. *bahūnām emi prathamāḥ, bahūnām emi madhyamāḥ;
kim void yamasya kartavyam yan mayādya karisyāti.*

5. *Naciketas*, 'Of many (sons or disciples) I go as the first; of many, I go as the middling. What duty towards *Yama* that (my father has to accomplish) today, does he accomplish through me?'

emi: *gacchāmi*, I go.

madhyamāḥ: middling, *mṛtānām madhye*. Among many who are

dead I am in the middle. I am not the last. Many others will still follow me and there is no need for lamentation.

Naciketas in sadness reflects as to what help he has to render to *Yama*.

Anticipating the teacher's or the parents' wishes and carrying them out is the way of the best pupils or sons; promptly attending to what is ordered is the next best; neglecting the orders is the worst form of conduct of pupils or sons. *Naciketas* belonged to the first type; at worst to the second; he was never negligent of his duty to his father.

yathāvasaram jñātvā śuśrūṣaṇe pravṛtti-rūpā; ajñādivaśena śuśrūṣaṇe pravṛtti-rūpā; gurvādibhiḥ kopitassan śuśrūṣākarāṇe pravṛtti-rūpā.
Śaṅkarānanda and *A.*

6. *anupaśya yathā pūrve pratipaśya tathāpare,
sasyam iva martyaḥ pacyate sasyam iva jayāte punaḥ.*

6. 'Consider how it was with the forefathers; behold how it is with the later (men); a mortal ripens like corn, and like corn is born again.'

Ś makes out that *Naciketas*, startled by his father's words, reflected and told his father who was now in a repentant mood that he was much better than many sons, and there was nothing to be gained by going back on one's word. *Naciketas* reminds his father that neither his ancestors nor his contemporaries who are decent ever broke their word. After all, human life is at best transitory. Like a blade of grass man dies and is born again. Death is not all; rebirth is a law of nature. The life of vegetation on which all other life depends passes through the seasonal round of birth, growth, maturity, decay, death and rebirth. The unity of all life suggests the application of this course to human beings also. This perpetual rebirth is not an escape from the wheel of becoming into a deathless eternity. Even if we do not gain life eternal, survival is inescapable. So the son persuades his father to keep his word and send him to *Yama's* abode.

Possibly *Naciketas* wished to know what happened to his ancestors and what will happen to his contemporaries after death.

The doctrine of rebirth is assumed here.

NACIKETAS IN THE HOUSE OF DEATH

7. *vaiśvānaraḥ praviśaty atithir brāhmaṇo gṛhān:
tasyaitām śāntim kurvanti, hara vaivasvatodakam.*

7. As a very fire a *Brāhmaṇa* guest enters into houses and (the people) do him this peace-offering; bring water, O Son of the Sun!

In the *Brāhmaṇa* account, Naciketas goes to Yama's house, at the command of a divine voice. He waits for three nights before Death returns and shows him hospitality due to a guest.

Ś says: 'Thus addressed, the father sent his son to Yama, in order to keep his word. And going to Yama's abode, he waited for three nights as Yama had gone out. When he returned his attendants, or perhaps his wife said to him as follows informing him (of what had taken place in his absence).'

As fire is appeased by water, so is a guest to be entertained with hospitality. The word for fire used here is *Vaiśvānara*, the universal fire, which affirms the unity of all life. The guest comes as the embodiment of the fundamental oneness of all beings.

8. *āśā-pratīkṣe saṃgataṃ sūnytām ceṣṭāpūrte putra-paśūmś ca sarvān etad vṛṅkte puruṣasyālpamedhaso yasyānaśnan vasati brāhmaṇo grhe.*

8. Hope and expectation, friendship and joy, sacrifices and good works, sons, cattle and all are taken away from a person of little understanding in whose house a Brāhmaṇa remains unfed.

B.U. VI. 4. 12.

sūnyta: joy in *Vedic Sanskrit*, 'kindly speech' in *Jaina* and later *Brāhmanical* works.

īṣṭāpūrte: sacrifices and good works.

īṣṭam: fruit produced by sacrifice, *pūrtam*: fruit resulting from such works as planting gardens, etc. *īṣṭam yāgajam phalam*: *pūrtam*, *ārāmādi-kriyājām phalam*. Ś. Cp. R.V. X. 14.

saṃ gacchasva pūrbhiḥ, saṃ yamena īṣṭāpūrtena parama vyoman. 'Unite thou with the fathers and with Yama with the reward of thy sacrifices and good works in highest heaven.'

vāpi-kūpa-ṭaṭākādi-devatāyatanāni ca annapradānam ārāmaḥ pūrtam ity abhidhiyate.

YAMA'S ADDRESS TO NACIKETAS

9. *īisro rātrīr yād avatsīr grhe me'naśnan brahman atitthir namasyah. namaste'stu, brahman; svasti me'stu; tasmāt prati trīn varān vṛṅiṣva.'*

9. 'Since thou, a venerable guest, hast stayed in my house without food for three nights, I make obeisance to thee, O Brāhmaṇa. May it be well with me. Therefore, in return, choose thou three gifts.

'When the disciple is ready, the Master appears.' *tasmāt*: in order to remove the evil effects of that, *tasya pratīkārāya*.

NACIKETAS'S FIRST WISH

10. *sānta-saṃkalpaḥ sumanā yathā syād vīta-manyur gautamo mābhi mṛtyo, tvat-prasṛṣṭam mābhivadet pratīta, etat trayānām prathamam varam vṛṅe.*

10. That Gautama (my father) with allayed anxiety, with anger gone, may be gracious to me, O Death, and recognising me, greet me, when set free by you and this, I choose as the first gift of the three.

sumanāḥ: gracious. *prasanna-manāḥ*. Ś.

pratīta: recognising. It means 'recollected, recognising that this is my own son come back again.' *pratīto labdha-smṛtiḥ, sa eva ayam putro samāgataḥ ity evam pratyabhijānan ity arthah*. Ś.

II. *yathā purastād bhavitā pratīta auddālakir āruṇir mat-prasṛṣṭah sukham rātrīs śayitā vītamanyus tvām dadṛśivān mṛtyu-mukhāt pramuktam.*

II. (Yama said): 'As of old will he, recognising thee (thy father) Auddālaki, the son of Aruṇa, through my favour will he sleep peacefully through nights, his anger gone, seeing thee released from the jaws of death.'

auddālakir āruṇir: Uddālaka, the son of Aruṇa. The father of Śvetaketu is also called Aruṇi. C.U. VI. 1. 1.

mat-prasṛṣṭah: through my favour. *mayā anujñātaḥ*. Ś. *anujñātaḥ, anugraha-sampannaḥ*. Gopālayatindra. It may apply to the first or the second part.

In the previous verse *tvat-prasṛṣṭam* is taken to mean 'set free by you'; so in this verse *mat-prasṛṣṭah* should mean 'set free by me.' It is in the nominative case in apposition to *Auddālāki Aruṇi*, the subject which is incorrect. So Ś gives a different meaning, which is, however, not the obvious meaning of the phrase. If we alter it to *mat-prasṛṣṭam*, the rendering will be, 'As of old will he (thy father) Auddālāki Aruṇi, recognising thee, set free by me.'

Deussen retains the original reading but gives a different rendering: Auddālāki Aruṇi will be just as before. Happy will he be, released by me (from his words).

Charpentier identifies Naciketas with Auddālāki Aruṇi. He renders the verse thus:

'As of old he will be full of joy; since the son of Uddālāka Aruṇi

has (already) been let loose by me.' So too, Hillebrandt: 'Aruṇi, son of Uddālaka, is (herewith) released by me.' *Indian Antiquary*, (1928), pp. 205, 223.

NACIKETAS'S SECOND WISH

12. *svarge loke na bhayaṃ kim ca nāsti na tatra tvam na jarayā bibhēti.*

ubhe tīrtvā aśanāyā pīpāse śokātigo modate svarga-loke.

12. (Naciketas said): In the world of heaven there is no fear whatever; thou art not there, nor does one fear old age. Crossing over both hunger and thirst, leaving sorrow behind, one rejoices in the world of heaven.

See R.V. IX. 113; R says that *svarga* is *mokṣa*. *svarga-śabdo mokṣa-sihāna-parah.*
leaving sorrow behind: śokam alītya gacchati.

13. *sa tvam agniṃ svargyam adhyeṣi mṛtyo, prabrūhi taṃ śraddadānāya mahyam svarga-lokā amṛtatvam bhajanta, etad dvitīyena vṛṇe vareṇa.*

13. Thou knowest, O Death, that fire (sacrifice which is) the aid to heaven. Describe it to me, full of faith, how the dwellers in heaven gain immortality. This I choose, as my second boon.

svarga-lokāḥ: svargo loko yeṣāṃ te param-pada-prāptāḥ.
amṛtatvam: immortality. In svarga which is a part of the manifested universe, the immortality may be endlessness but not eternity. Whatever is manifest will sooner or later enter into that from which it emerged. Yet as the duration in svarga-loka is incalculable, the dwellers in it are said to be immortal. They may continue as long as the manifested world does.

14. *pra te bravīmi tad u me nibodha svargyam agniṃ naciketah prajānan anantalokāptim atho pratiṣṭhām viddhi, tvam etaṃ nihitam guhāyām.*

14. (Yama said): Knowing well as I do, that fire (which is) the aid to heaven, I shall describe it to thee—learn it of me, O Naciketas. Know that fire to be the means of attaining the boundless world, as the support (of the universe) and as abiding in the secret place (of the heart).

nihitam guhāyām: abiding in the secret place (of the heart). It means literally, hidden in the cave. The cave or the hiding-place is

said to be in the centre of the body. *guhā yām śarīrasya madhye: Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa I. 2. 1. 3. viduṣāṃ buddhau niviṣṭam. Ś.*

The central purpose of the passage is to indicate that the ultimate power of the universe is also the deepest part of our being. See also I. 2. 12. It is one of the assumptions of the Upaniṣad writers that deep below the plane of our empirical life of imagination, will and feeling is the ultimate being of man, his true centre which remains unmoved and unchanged, even when on the surface we have the fleeting play of thoughts and emotions, hopes and desires. When we withdraw from the play of outward faculties, pass the divisions of discursive thought, we retreat into the soul, the witness, spirit within.

15. *lokādīm agniṃ tam uvāca tasmai, yā iṣṭakā, yāvātīr vā, yathā vā. sa cāpi tat pratyavadat yathoktam; athāsya mṛtyuḥ punar evāha tuṣṭah.*

15. (Yama) described to him that fire (sacrifice which is) the beginning of the world (as also) what kind of bricks (are to be used in building the sacrificial altar), how many and in what manner. And he (Naciketas) repeated all that just as it had been told; then, pleased with him, Death spoke again.

lokādi: the beginning of the world. In the R.V., Agni is identified with Prajā-pati, the Creator, and so may be regarded as the source or origin of the world. In II. 2. 9 we are told that the one Fire, having entered the universe, assumed all forms. B.U. I. 2. 7. makes out that 'this fire is the arka, the worlds are its embodiment.'

Ś, however, interprets *lokādi* as first of the worlds, as the first embodied existence. *prathama-śarīritvād.* Cp. C.U. where it is said that all other things evolved from fire (*tejas*) which was itself the first product of essential being (*sat*). VI. 8. 4.

16. *tam abravīṭ prīyamāno mahātmā varam tavehādya dadāmi bhūyah. tavaiva nāmnā bhavitāyam agniḥ, śṛṅkām cemām ane-ka-rūpām gṛhāṇa.*

16. The great soul (Yama) extremely delighted, said to him (Naciketas). I give thee here today another boon. By thine own name will this fire become (known). Take also this many-shaped chain.

śṛṅkā: chain. The word occurs again in I. 2. 3., where it means 'a road.' śṛṅkā vitta-mayī, the road that leads to wealth. Ś gives two meanings: ratna-mayim mālām, a necklace of precious stones; (ii) akūṣītām gatim karma-mayim, the straight way of works which is productive of many fruits. karma-vijñānam ane-ka-phala-hetuvāt.

aneka-rūpām: many-shaped. While the ignorant are limited to one form, the wise, who have attained unity with the higher self, can assume many forms.

17. *triṅācīketas tribhīr etya sandhim trikarma-kṛt taratī janma-mṛtyū brahmajajñānāṁ devam idyam viditvā nicāyye'mām śāntim atyantam eti.*

17. He who has lit the Nācīketa fire thrice, associating with the three, performs the three acts, crosses over birth and death. Knowing the son of Brahmā, the omniscient, resplendent and adorable and realising him, one obtains this everlasting peace.

tri-ācīketah: one who has lit the Nācīketa fire thrice. Ś suggests an alternative. One who knows about him, studies about him and practises what he has learnt. *tad-vijñānas tad-adhyayanas tad-anuṣ-ṭhānavān*.

tribhīr etya sandhim: associating with the three. Ś mentions 'father, mother and teacher,' or alternatively 'Veda, *smṛti* and good men.' *tri-karma*: three acts. Ś suggests 'sacrifice, study and alms-giving,' *ijya adhyayana dāna*.

brahmajajñā, the knower of the universe born of Brahmā, Agni, who is known as *jāta-vedas* or all-knower. Ś, however, takes it as referring to *Hiraṇya-garbha*. For Rāmānuja, the individual jiva is Brahma-born. He who knows him and rules his behaviour is *Īsvara*. Madhva says: *brahmano hiranya-garbhāj jātaḥ brahmajah, brahmajaś ca asau jñāś ca brahmajajñāh, sarvajñāh*.

nicāyya, realising in one's own personal experience. *taṁ viditvā śāstrataḥ, nicāyya dṛṣtvā cātmabhāvena*. Ś. *imām śāntim*: this peace. It is the peace which is felt in one's own experience. *sva-buddhi-pratyakṣām śāntim*. Ś.

Two tendencies which characterise the thought of the Upaniṣads appear here, loyalty to tradition and the spirit of reform. We must repeat the rites and formulas in the way in which they were originally instituted. These rules which derive their authority from their antiquity dominated men's minds. Innovations in the spirit are gradually introduced.

18. *triṅācīketas trayam etad viditvā ya evaṁ vidvānś cinute nācīketam, mṛtyu-pāśān purataḥ pranodya śokātigo modate svarga-loke.*

18. The wise man who has sacrificed thrice to Nacīketas and who knows this three, and so knowing, performs meditation on fire throwing off first the bonds of death and overcoming sorrow, rejoices in the world of heaven.

nācīketam: meditation on fire. *agni-śabdena tad-viśayaka-jñānam ucyate*. Gopālayatindra.

19. *eṣa te'gnir nacīketas svargyo yam avrñthāḥ dvitīyena vareṇa.*

*etam agnim tavaiva pravakṣyanti janāśas; tṛtīyam varam nacīketo vṛnīṣva.*¹

19. This is thy fire (sacrifice) O Nacīketas, which leading to heaven, which thou hast chosen for thy second boon. This fire (sacrifice) people will call by thy name only. Choose now, O Nacīketas, the third boon.

Whoever sacrifices to Nacīketas fire, knowing its nature as the fire born of Brahmā, becomes verily of that nature and is not born again.

NACIKETAS'S THIRD WISH

20. *yeyam prete vicikītsā manuṣye 'stūty eke nāyam astīti caike; etat vidyām anuśiṣṭas tvayāham, varānām eṣa varas tṛtīyah.*

20. There is this doubt in regard to a man who has departed, some (holding) that he is and some that he is not. I would be instructed by thee in this knowledge. Of the boons, this is the third boon.

prete: departed. Nacīketas has no doubt about survival. He has already said: 'A mortal ripens like corn and like corn is born again' I. 6. His problem is about the condition of the liberated soul, *muktātma-svarūpa*, Madhva says that *prete* means *mukte*.

nāsti: he is not. Doubts about the future of the liberated being are not peculiar to our age. In the B.U. Yājñavalkya says, the liberated soul, having passed beyond (*pretya*) has no more separate consciousness (*saṁjñā*). He is dissolved in the Absolute consciousness as a lump of salt is dissolved in water. He justifies the absence of separate consciousness to his bewildered wife Maitreyī. 'Where everything has become the one self, when and by what should we

¹ There is a verse on which Ś has not commented but Raṅgarāmanuja mentions it:

yo vāpyetām brahma-jajñātma-bhūtāncitīm viditvā cinute nācīketam, sa eva bhūtā brahma-jajñātma-bhūtaḥ karoti tad-yena punar na jāyate.

Whoever conceives the sacrificial structure of bricks as the body of the Fire born of Brahmā and kindles on it the sacrificial fire called Nācīketa, he becomes one with the Fire born of Brahmā and performs the sacrifice by which he is not born again.

see, hear or think?' He who is liberated from the limitations of name and form, who has become one with the all, cannot be said to exist in the ordinary sense. He is not limited to a particular consciousness; nor can he be said to be non-existent, for he has attained to real being (II. 4. 12-14). The question repeatedly put to the Buddha is, 'Does the *Tathāgata* survive after death or does he not survive?' The Buddha refused to answer this question, holding that to say that he continues to exist would give rise to one kind of misunderstanding while to deny it would lead to others.

21. *devair atrāpi vicikitsitam purā, na hi suvijñeyam, anur eṣa dharmah,
anyam varām naciketo vṛṇīṣva, mā moparotsir ati mā srjainam.*

21. (Yama said): Even the gods of old had doubt on this point. It is not, indeed, easy to understand; (so) subtle is this truth. Choose another boon, O Naciketas. Do not press me. Release me from this.

22. *devair atrāpi vicikitsitam kila, tvam ca mṛtyo yan na suvijñeyam ātma,
vaktā cāṣya tvādr̥g anyo na labhyaḥ; nānyo varas tulya etasya kaścit.*

22. (Naciketas said:) Even the gods had doubt, indeed, as to this, and thou, O Death, sayest that it is not easy to understand. (Instruct me) for another teacher of it, like thee, is not to be got. No other boon is comparable to this at all.

Gods cannot have any doubts about survival; it is about the exact nature of the state of liberation which transcends the empirical state that there is uncertainty.

23. *śatāyusaḥ putra-pautrān vṛṇīṣva, bahūn paśūn hasti-hiraṇ-
yam aśvān
bhūmer mahad-āyatanam vṛṇīṣva svayam ca jīva śarado
yāvad icchasi.*

23. (Yama said:) Choose sons and grandsons that shall live a hundred years, cattle in plenty, elephants, gold and horses. Choose vast expanses of land and life for thyself as many years as thou wilt.

mahad-āyatanam: vast expanses. Ś suggests sovereignty over vast domains of earth. *bhūmer pṛthivyā mahad vistṛṇam āyatanam āśrayam maṇḍalam rājyam.*

24. *etat tulyam yadi manyase, varām vṛṇīṣva, vittam cira-jīvi-
kām ca,
mahā-bhūmau naciketas tvam edhi, kāmānām tvā kama-
bhājam karomi.*

24. If thou deemest (any) boon like unto this, choose (that) as also wealth and long life. O Naciketas, prosper then on this vast earth. I will make thee the enjoyer of thy desires.

edhi: prosper. Be thou king. *rājā bhava*. Ś.

25. *ye ye kāmā durlabhā martya-loke sarvān kāmānś chandataḥ
prārthayasva.
imā rāmāḥ, sarathāḥ satūryāḥ, na hīdṛśā lambhanīyā
manusyaīḥ.
ābhīr mat-prattābhīḥ paricārayasva, naciketo, maranam
mānuḥprākṣiḥ.*

25. Whatever desires are hard to attain in this world of mortals, ask for all those desires at thy will. Here are noble maidens with chariots and musical instruments: the like of them cannot be won by men. Be served by these whom I give to thee. O Naciketas, (pray) ask not about death.

The story of the temptation by Mṛtyu occurs for the first time in the Upaniṣad and not in the account in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*. The temptation of Naciketas has points of similarity with that related of Gautama the Buddha.

Cp. also the temptation of Jesus.

Naciketas is unmoved by the promises of transient pleasures and obtains from the god of death the secret of the knowledge of *Brahman* which carries with it the blessing of life eternal. Gautama the Buddha also rejects the offers of Māra in order to obtain true wisdom. There is this difference, however, that while Yama, when once his reluctance is overcome, himself reveals the liberating truth to Naciketas, Māra is the evil one, the tempter.

26. *śvo-bhāvā martyasya yad. antakaitat sarvendriyāṇām jara-
yanti tejah
api sarvaṁ jīvitam alpam eva tavaiva vāhās tava nṛtya-gīte.*

26. (Naciketas said:) Transient (are these) and they wear out, O Yama, the vigour of all the senses of men. All life (a full life), moreover, is brief. Thine be the chariots, thine the dance and song.

śvobhāvāḥ: transient, existing till tomorrow, so things of a day, ephemeral. What profit has a man of these things which are evanescent?

antaka: Yama: who ends all. Even the Creator is not eternal. Ś says, sarvam yad brahmaṇo'pi jīvitam āyuh alpaṃ eva kim utāsmadādi dīrgha-jīvikā.

Naciketas portrays the human aspiration to reach the eternal as the goal of the truest safety from the ills and anxieties of finite experience.

The Buddhist view that everything that exists is fleeting and evanescent is suggested in this verse.

27. *na vittena tarpaṇīyo manuśyaḥ, lapśyāmahe vittam adrākṣ-
ma cet tvā.*

jīviṣyāmo yāvad iśīsyasi tvam varastu me varaṇīyaḥ sa eva.

27. Man is not to be contented with wealth. Shall we enjoy wealth when we have seen thee? Shall we live as long as thou art in power? That alone is (still) the boon chosen by me.

Man is not to be contented with wealth. The material guarantees of human security are fragile. It is an earth-bound philosophy that makes man the end and aim of life, that recognises no value of a transcendental character. What is the value of wealth or life, as they are impermanent? So long as death is in power we cannot enjoy wealth or life for the fear of death destroys the zest for living. So Naciketas asks for self-knowledge, *ātma-vijñānam*, which is beyond the power of death.

Naciketas says that 'We shall live, so long as Yama endures.' In other words, he is certain of our continuance in this cosmic cycle presided over by Yama.

permanence till the dissolution of the primal elements is called immortality: *ābhūtasamplavam sthānam amṛtatvam hi bhāṣyate*, quoted in Vācaspati's *Bhāmali* I. I. I.

What Naciketas is doubtful about, what Yama says, even the gods have doubts about, is in regard to the state of liberation.

28. *ajīryatām amṛtānām upetya jīryan marīyaḥ kvadhasthaḥ
prajānan*

abhidhyāyan varnaratipramodān, atidīrghhe jīvite ko rameta.

28. Having approached the undecaying immortality, what decaying mortal on this earth below who (now) knows (and meditates on) the pleasures of beauty and love, will delight in an over-long life?

Anyone who knows here below the joys of immortal life cannot be attracted by an earthly life of passion and speed. No one who has a foretaste of that which perishes not or changes would find pleasure in earthly delights.

29. *yasminn idam vicikitsanti mṛtyo yat sāmparāye mahati
brūhi nas tat,
yo'yaṃ varo gūḍham anupraviṣṭo nānyam tasmān naciketā
vrñite.*

29. Tell us that about which they doubt, O Death, what there is in the great passing-on. This boon which penetrates the mystery, no other than that does Naciketas choose.

sāmparāya: passing-on. What is the great beyond? What is there after liberation? These questions lead naturally to others. What is the nature of eternal reality? What is man's relation to it? How can he reach it?

Naciketas has already attained *svarga-loka* and is not raising the question of the post-mortal state. He is asking about the great departure, *mahān sāmparāya*, from which there is no return, which is *nirupādhiśeṣa* nirvāṇa according to *Itivuttaka* 44. *Majjhima Nikāya* II opposes *sāmparāyika attha* to the *ditṭha-dhammika attha*.

Knowledge of life after death is regarded as of the utmost importance. See C.U. V. 3, 1-4 where Śvetaketu is told that he is not well instructed as he does not know about where the creatures go to from this world.

Section 2

THE TWO WAYS

I. *anyac chreyo anyad utaiva preyas, te ubhe nānārthe puruṣam
sinītaḥ:*

*tayoh śreya ādadānasya sādhu bhavati, hīyate 'rthād ya u
preyo vrñite.*

I. (Yama said): Different is the good, and different, indeed, is the pleasant. These two, with different purposes, bind a man. Of these two, it is well for him who takes hold of the good; but he who chooses the pleasant, fails of his aim.

After testing Naciketas and knowing his fitness for receiving Brahma-knowledge, Yama explains the great secret to him.

śreyaḥ: the good, niḥśreyasam. Ś. The highest good of man is not pleasure but moral goodness.

Cp. *Samyutta Nikāya* I. 4. 2. 6. *tasmā satañ ca asatañ ca nānā hoti ito gati, asanto nirayam yanti santo saggaparāyaṇā.*

Therefore do the paths of the good and the evil of this world divide; the evil go to hell but the final destination of the good is heaven.

In *Samyutta Nikāya* V. 4. 5. 2 instead of *sagga-parāyaṇā*, we read *nibbāna-parāyaṇam*.

In N. P. Chakravarti's edition of *L'Udāna* (Sanskrit), Paris, 1930, p. 63, we read *asantaś caiva santaś ca nānā yānti tv itaś cyutāḥ, asanto narakam yānti, santaḥ svarga-parāyaṇāḥ*.

Cp. Plato: 'In every one of us there are two ruling and directing principles, whose guidance we follow wherever they may lead; the one being an innate device of pleasure, the other an acquired judgment which aspires after excellence. Now these two principles at one time maintain harmony, while at another they are at feud within us, and now one and now the other obtains mastery.'—*Phaedrus*.

2. *śreyaś ca preyaś ca manuṣyam etas tau samparītya vivinakti dhīrah.*

śreyo hi dhīro'bhīpreyaso vṛṇīte, preyo mando yoga-kṣemād vṛṇīte.

2. Both the good and the pleasant approach a man. The wise man, pondering over them, discriminates. The wise chooses the good in preference to the pleasant. The simple-minded, for the sake of worldly well-being, prefers the pleasant.

mandāḥ: the simple-minded. Cf. Heraclitus: 'Oxen are happy when they have peas to eat.' Fr. 4. 'For the best men choose one thing above all else; immortal glory above transient things.' Fr. 29.

yoga-kṣema: worldly well-being.¹ He adopts a materialist view of life. The indispensable condition of spiritual wisdom is a pure heart.

Ś distinguishes between the elimination of faults and the acquisition of virtues which are the results of Karma and the contemplation of the divine which is Jñāna. Cassian divides spiritual knowledge into practical and theoretic and argues that we cannot strive for the vision of God if we do not shun the stains of sin. Illumination and union follow purgation or the process of self-discipline.

3. *sa tvam priyān priyarūpāṃś ca kāmān abhidhyāyan naciketo, tyasrākṣīḥ;*

naitāṃ sṛṅkāṃ vittamayīm avāpto yasyām majjanti bahavo manuṣyāḥ.

¹ *śarīrādy-upacāya-rakṣana-nimittam* for the sake of bodily welfare; Ś Cf. B.G. IX. 22. Dr. A. Coomaraswamy makes out that the simple-minded prefers *kṣema* or well-being to *yoga* or contemplation, *yogāc ca kṣemāc ca*, taking his stand on *Sūta Nīpāta* 2. 20: 'Unlike and widely divergent are the habits of the wedded householder and the holy man without a sense of ego.' *asamā ubho dūra-vihāravuttino, giḥi dāraposī, amamā ca subbato*. He says that this verse means that the fool prefers the ease of the householder to the hard life of the Yogi. See *New Indian Antiquary*, Vol. I, pp. 85-86.

3. (But) thou, O Naciketas, hast rejected (after) examining, the desires that are pleasant and seem to be pleasing. Thou hast not taken to the way of wealth, where many mortals sink (to ruin).

sṛṅkā: see I. 16. If *sṛṅkā* means chain, then *majjanti* should read *sajjanti*. The meaning then is 'Thou hast not taken to the chain of wealth in which many mortals are entangled.' The Buddha refused the wheel-jewel, *cakka-ratanam*, the recognised symbol of temporal power. Naciketas, by refusing all these temptations, makes out that his kingdom is not of this world. He hungers and thirsts for the eternal, in which alone he can find real satisfaction.

4. *dūram ete viparīte viśūci, avidyā yā ca vidyēti jñātā: vidyābhīpsinām naciketasam manye, na tvā kāmā bahavo lolupantāḥ.*

4. Widely apart and leading to divergent ends are these, ignorance and what is known as wisdom. I know (thee) Naciketas, to be eager for wisdom for (even) many desires did not distract thee.

Ś suggests that *avidyā* or ignorance is concerned with the pleasant and *vidyā* or wisdom with the good: *avidyā preyo-viśayā, vidyā śreyo-viśayā*.

avidyā kāma-karmātmikā vidyā vairāgya-tattva-jñāna-mayī. R.

5. *avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ, svayam dhīrāḥ paṇḍitam manyamānāḥ. dāndramyamānāḥ pariyaṅti mūḍhāḥ, andhenaiva nīyamānā yathāndhāḥ.*

5. Abiding in the midst of ignorance, wise in their own esteem, thinking themselves to be learned, fools treading a tortuous path go about like blind men led by one who is himself blind.

See also M.U. I. 2-8; Māitṛī VII. 9.

Cp. Matthew: 'If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.' XV. 14.

dāndramyamānāḥ: v. *dāndramyamānāḥ, viśaya-kāmāgninā dṛta-cittāḥ*. R. *wise in their own esteem*. Their ignorance is serenely ignorant of itself and so assumes the appearance of wisdom.

6. *na sāmparāyaḥ pratibhāti bālam pramādyantam vitta-mohena mūḍham:*

ayaṃ loko nāsti para itī mānī, punaḥ punar vaśam āpadyate me.

6. What lies beyond shines not to the simple-minded, careless, (who is) deluded by the glamour of wealth. Thinking 'this world exists, there is no other,' he falls again and again into my power.

māni: thinking, *manana-śilo māni*. Ś.

He who is filled with selfish desires and attracted by worldly possessions becomes subject to the law of Karma which leads him from birth to birth and so he is under the control of Yama.

7. *śravanāyāpi bahubhir yo na labhyaḥ, śṛvanto'pi bahavo yam na vidyuh āścaryo vaktā kuśalo'sya labdhā, āścaryo jñātā kuśalānu-śiṣṭah.*

7. He who cannot even be heard of by many, whom many, even hearing, do not know, wondrous is he who can teach (Him) and skilful is he who finds (Him) and wondrous is he who knows, even when instructed by the wise.

See B.G. VII. 3.

instructed by the wise: nipuṇena ācāryeṇa anuśiṣṭah sah.

Naciketas is complimented by Yama as the seeker of final bliss is rare among men. The task is very difficult for subtle is the nature of the Self. The hidden depths of being are conceived as a great mystery. Not many have the earnest purpose: not many are able to find a proper teacher.

8. *na narenāvareṇa proktā eṣa suvijñeyo bahudhā cintyamānaḥ: ananya-prokte gatir atra nāsty añyān hy atarkyam anupra-mānāt.*

8. Taught by an inferior man He cannot be truly understood, as He is thought of in many ways. Unless taught by one who knows Him as himself, there is no going thither for it is inconceivable, being subtler than the subtle.

bahudhā cintyamānaḥ: thought of in many ways, or it may mean 'much meditated upon' or 'conceived of as a plurality' while the *ātman* is an absolute oneness.

ananya-prokte: taught by one who knows Him as himself. This is Ś's rendering. He must be taught by one who is non-different, *ananya*, i.e. who has realised his oneness with *Brahman*.¹ He alone can teach with the serene confidence of conviction. As a man with experience, he is lifted above sectarian disputes. It may also mean

¹ Cp. Eckhart: 'Some there are so simple as to think of God as if He dwelt there, and of themselves as being here. It is not so. God and I are one.' Pfeiffer's edition, p. 206.

'taught by one other than an inferior person,' i.e. a superior person who knows the truth or 'taught by another than oneself,' i.e. some teacher.

For Rāmānuja, the understanding, *avagatiḥ*, which a person gets about the self when taught by one who has realised Brahman is impossible of attainment when taught by a person of inferior capacity. Madhva means by it that it is inferior teaching when taught by a learned but unintelligent person for it has been variously understood and so is not easy of understanding. But when taught by one who sees no difference at all, there is no knowledge, not even of an inferior kind. It is subtler than an atom and so cannot be perceived. It is not to be understood by reasoning.

gatir atra nāsti: without access to a teacher there is no way to it. 'There is no going thither' may mean either there is nothing beyond the knowledge of *Brahman* or there is no way back from *samsāra* or worldly becoming, *samsāra-gatiḥ*.

atarkeyam: inconceivable, unreachable by argument. The Supreme Self is unknowable by argument, as It is subtle, beyond the reach of the senses and the understanding based on sense data. It can be immediately apprehended by intuition.

9. *naiṣā tarkeṇa matir āpaneyā, proktānyenaiva sujñānāya preṣṭha:*

yam tvam āpas satyadhritir batāsi; tvādrñ no bhūyān naciketah praśṭā.

9. Not by reasoning is this apprehension attainable, but dearest, taught by another, is it well understood. Thou hast obtained it, holding fast to truth. May we find, Naciketas, an inquirer like thee.

Mere reason unassisted by faith cannot lead to illumination.

May we find an inquirer like thee. It is not only the pupil who is in search of the teacher, but the teacher is also in search of the pupil.

THE SUPERIORITY OF WISDOM TO WEALTH, EARTHLY AS WELL AS HEAVENLY

10. *jānāmy aham śevadhir ity anityam, na hy adhrvaih prāpyate hi dhruvam tat tato mayā naciketas cito'gnir anityair dravyaiḥ prāptavān asmi nityam.*

10. I know that wealth is impermanent. Not through the transient things is that abiding (one) reached; yet by me is laid the Nāciketa fire and by impermanent means have I reached the everlasting.

By burning in the sacrifice all transient things is the eternal attained.

Some translators (e.g. Max Müller and Hume) attribute this verse to Naciketas. But surely Naciketas has not yet performed the sacrifice called by his name. Ś attributes these words to Yama, who makes out that through the sacrificial fire, he has obtained the enduring sovereignty of heaven. But this sovereignty is only relatively permanent. Through the ephemeral means of Karma including sacrifices, nothing truly permanent can be achieved. The performer of the Naciketa fire will endure as long as the cosmos lasts but such endurance is not eternity, since the cosmos with all that it contains will be absorbed into the eternal at the end of the cosmic day.

By 'impermanent means have I reached the everlasting.' What Yama has attained is thus stated by Gopāla-yatindra: *adhikārāpanno, dharmādharma-phalayoh, pradānena jantūnām niyantrivam āpannah*. If by the symbolic worship of so unstable a thing as fire we can attain an enduring state, then the view reminds us of a verse in Blake's *Auguries of Innocence*.¹

We have to use the means of the empirical world to cross it and attain to the trans-empirical. . . . *brahma-prāpti-sādhana-jñānoddēśena anityair iṣṭakādi-dravyair nāciketogñis citah, tasmādd hetor nitya-phala-sāadhanam jñānam prāptavān asmi*. R.

11. *kāmasyāptim jagatah pratiṣṭhām kratōr ānantyam abhaya-sya pāram
stoma-mahad urugāyam pratiṣṭhām dṛṣṭvā dhṛtyā dhīro
naciketo'tyasrākṣiḥ*.

11. (Having seen) the fulfilment of (all) desire, the support of the world, the endless fruit of rites, the other shore where there is no fear, the greatness of fame, the far-stretching, the foundation, O wise Naciketas, thou hast steadfastly let (them) go.

Before his eyes were spread out all the allurements of the world, including the position of *Hiranya-garbhā* the highest state in the phenomenal world, obtained by those who worship the Supreme by sacrifice and meditation, according to Ś, and he has rejected them all. Here perhaps is suggested the contrast between the Vedic ideal of heaven and the Upaniṣad ideal of life eternal. The world to which the righteous go is the *Brahmā* world. In *svarga-loka* or heaven there

¹ To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower;
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.

is no fear. See Kāṭha I. 12. When we pass beyond fear we pass beyond duality. B.U. I. 4-2.

The fulfilment of all desire can apply to the immortal *Brahman*. It is the support of the world, the ultimate. M.U. III. 2. 1. If this is the way we take these words, then the reference cannot be to the Vedic heaven but to eternal life or mokṣa.

atyasrākṣiḥ: this refers not to the rejection of eternal life but to the rejection of a false view of the objects described in this verse.

kratu: rite or worship.

upāsānāyāḥ phalam ānantyam. Ś.

APPREHENSION OF THE SUPREME THROUGH ADHYĀTMA-YOGA

12. *taṁ durdarśam gūḍham anupraviṣṭam guhāhitam gahva-
reṣṭham purāṇam
adhyātma-yogādhighamena devam matvā dhīro harṣa-śokau
jahāti*.

12. Realising through self-contemplation that primal God, difficult to be seen, deeply hidden, set in the cave (of the heart), dwelling in the deep, the wise man leaves behind both joy and sorrow.

gūḍham: deeply hidden. It is hidden because we have to get behind the senses, mind and understanding. It is the very ground of the soul. The Buddhists look upon every creature as an embryo of the *tathāgata*, *tathāgata-garbhā*. Every creature has the possibility of becoming a Buddha. When we get into the inner being of the spirit, we are in immediate relationship with the Eternal. This basic principle which we recognise by immediate experience or continued contemplation is the basis of human freedom. It is the principle of indeterminacy, the possibilities of determinations which are not yet. If we identify ourselves with what is determinate, we are subject to the law of determinism. 'If ye are led by the spirit, ye are not under the law.'

adhyātma-yoga: self-contemplation. *viśayebhyaḥ pratisamhṛtya ceta-sātmāni samādhānam*. Ś. *adhyātma* means pertaining to the self as distinct from *adhibhūta*, pertaining to the material elements and *adhidaiva*, pertaining to the deities. *Adhyātma-yoga* is yoking with one's essential self. It is the practice of meditation, a quiet, solitary sustained effort to apprehend truth which is different from the ordinary process of cerebration.

Yama answers Naciketas's question raised in I. 29, about the mysterious divine being hidden behind the phenomenal world, in the depths of one's own being, which is difficult of access by ordinary

means and yet is open to spiritual contemplation. Yama, in different ways and phrases, brings out the impenetrable mystery of the inmost reality which is the object of search. If the Brahmā world is the fulfilment of all desires, this eternal bliss is obtained by the renunciation of all desires; while *brahma-loka* is the highest place of the manifested cosmos, its farthest limit, there is the eternal beyond it.

devam: God. See Ś.U. I. 3; Maitri VI. 23.

13. *etac chrutvā samparigrhya martyaḥ pravṛhya dharmyam
anum etam āpya
sa modate modanīyam hi labdhvā vivṛtam sadma nacike-
tasam manye*

13. Hearing this and comprehending (it), a mortal, extracting the essence and reaching the subtle, rejoices, having attained the source of joy. I know that such an abode is wide open unto Naciketas.

dharmyam: the essence. We must extract its essential nature, discern its real character.

anum: subtle. *sūkṣmam*. Ś.

modanīyam: the source of joy. The deepest being is the highest value. To attain Him is to gain supreme, abiding bliss. It is not merging in a characterless absolute, where all feeling fades out.

vivṛtam sadma: the abode is wide open.

Naciketas can get released from his house of life, body and mind. Cp. the words of the Buddha: 'Never again shalt thou, O builder of houses, make a house for me; broken are all thy beams, thy ridge-pole shattered.'

Yama says that Naciketas is fit for salvation, *mokṣārham*. Ś.

It is suggested that the three steps of *śravaṇa* (*śrūtva*), *manana* (*samparigrhya*) and *nidīdhyāsana* (*pravṛhya*) are mentioned in this verse and these lead to *ātma-darśana* or *ātma-sākṣāt-kāra* (*āpya*).

14. *anyatra dharmād anyatrādharmād anyatrāsmāt kṛtākṛtāt.
anyatra bhūtāc ca bhavyāc ca yat tat paśyasi tad vada.*

14. (Naciketas asks:) Tell me that which thou seest beyond right and wrong, beyond what is done or not done, beyond past and future.

what is done or not done:

Ś says effect and cause. *kṛtam kāryam, akṛtam kāraṇam*.

Cp. T.U. where it is said that the knower is not vexed with the thought 'why have I not done the good? why have I done the evil?' (II. 9).

beyond past and future: the eternal is a 'now' without duration.

Naciketas asks for an account of that deepest reality rid of all extraneous externalities, the real which is deeper than all the happenings of time. *yad idṛṣam vastu sarva-vyavahāra-gocarāṅgam paśyasi jānāsi tad vada mahyam*. Ś.

THE MYSTIC WORD AUM

15. *sarve vedā yat padam āmananti, tapāmsi sarvāṇi ca yad
vadanti,
yad icchanto brahmacaryam caranti, tat te padam saṅgra-
heṇa bravīmi: aum ity etat.*

15. (Yama says:) That word which all the Vedas declare, which all the austerities proclaim, desiring which (people) live the life of a religious student, that word, to thee, I shall tell in brief. That is *Aum*.

See S.U. IV. 9; B.G. VIII. 11.

pada: word. Ś means by it goal. *padanīyam, gamanīyam*. The Supreme is the goal of all revelation, of all religious practices and austerities. *āmananti: avibhāgena pratipādayanti*.

brahmacarya: the life of a religious student. It is referred to in R.V. X. 109 and described in *Atharva Veda* XI. 5. It lasts for twelve years but may be longer. Śvetaketu was a *brahmacārin* from 12 to 24. The student is expected to live in the house of his teacher, wait on him, tend his house and cattle, beg for his own and his master's food, look after the sacrificial fires and study the Veda. Detailed rules for *brahmacarya* are given in the *Gṛhya Sūtra*.

Āśvalāyana says that a *brahmacārin* is required to be chaste, obedient, to drink only water and not sleep in the daytime. I. 22, 1. 2. *Brahmacarya* has come to mean continence and self-restraint. *Aum* is the *prāṇava*, which, by the time of the Upaniṣads, is charged with the significance of the entire universe. Deussen is certainly incorrect when he observes: 'Essentially it was the unknowableness of the first principle of the universe, the *Brahman*, and the impossibility of expressing it by word or illustration, which compelled the choice of something so entirely meaningless as the symbol *Aum* as a symbol of *Brahman*.' The word first occurs in the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* of the *Black Yajur Veda*, III. 2. 9. 6, where it is called the *prāṇava* and indicates, according to Keith, the prolongation of the last syllable of the offering verse uttered by the *hotṛ*. In the *Brāhmaṇas*, it occurs more frequently as a response by the *adhvaryu* to each *Rg Vedic* verse uttered by the *hotṛ*, meaning, 'yes,' so be it, answering to the Christian 'Amen.'

In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* V. 32, *aum* is treated as a mystic syllable representing the essence of the Vedas and the universe.

It is the symbol of the manifested *Brahman* (waking, dream and dreamless sleep) as well as the unmanifested beyond. See Mā.U. IV. 32.

16. *etadd hy evākṣaram brahma, etadd hy evākṣaram param.
etadd hy evākṣaram jñātvā, yo yad icchati tasya tat*

16. This syllable is, verily, the everlasting spirit. This syllable, indeed, is the highest end; knowing this very syllable, whatever anyone desires will, indeed, be his.

Ś makes out that *Brahmā* is the lower *Brahman* and *param*, the higher. Whatever one may desire, the lower or the higher *Brahman*, his desire will be fulfilled.

17. *etad ālambanam śreṣṭham etad ālambanam param
etad ālambanam jñātvā brahma-loke mahīyate.*

17. This support is the best (of all). This support is the highest; knowing this support, one becomes great in the world of *Brahmā*.

He attains *Brahman*, the higher, *brahma eva lokah*, or the world of *Brahman*, the lower, *brahmaṇah lokah*.

THE ETERNAL SELF

18. *na jāyate mriyate vā vipāścīn nāyam kutaścīn na babhūva
kaścit:
ajo nityah saśvato'yam purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne
śarīre.*

18. The knowing self is never born; nor does he die at any time. He sprang from nothing and nothing sprang from him. He is unborn, eternal, abiding and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.

See B.G. II. 20.

The *Kaṭha vipāścī* becomes in the *Gītā*, *kaścī medhāvīn*. Śayaṇa R.V. IX. 86. 44.

The self constitutes the inner reality of each individual. It is without a cause and is changeless. When it knows itself as the spirit and ceases to know of itself as bound up with any name or form (*nāma-rūpa*) it realises its true nature.

purāṇah: primeval, new even in old times, *purā api navah*, or devoid of growth, *vrāddhi-vivarjitah*.

19. *hantā cen manyate hantum hataś cen manyate hatam,
ubhau tau na vijānīto nāyam hanti na hanyate.*

19. If the slayer thinks that he slays or if the slain think that he is slain, both of them do not understand. He neither slays nor is he slain.

See B.G. II. 19.

Here is the answer to the question of Naciketas about the mystery of death. The self is eternal and death does not refer to it.

20. *aṇor aṇīyān mahato mahīyān, ātmāsya jaṇtor nihito
guhāyām:
tam akraṭuh paśyati vīta-śoko dhātu-prasādān mahimānam
ātmanah.*

20. Smaller than the small, greater than the great, the self is set in the heart of every creature. The unstriving man beholds Him, freed from sorrow. Through tranquillity of the mind and the senses (he sees) the greatness of the self.

aṇor aṇīyān: smaller than the small, smaller than the minute atom. When the self is thought of as a psychological principle, its smallness is emphasised. See also II. 2. 3. where it is said to be 'the dwarf' and II. 1. 12 where it is described as 'thumb-sized.' In these cases, the old animistic language is used. When it is thought of as cosmic, its vastness is emphasised.¹

a-kraṭuh: unstriving man. He who is free from desire for external objects, earthly or heavenly, which distract the soul and distort its vision. Ś adopts this view. He will, however, have the desire for salvation, *mumukṣutva*. The Upaniṣad insists on the absence of strife or anxiety and refers to the man whose will is at peace.²
dhātu-prasādāt: through the tranquillity of the mind and the senses.

¹ Cp. C.U. (III. 14. 3) where it is said to be greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than all these worlds. Cp. Dionysius, *De Div nom*. IX. 2. 3. 'Now God is called great in his peculiar Greatness which giveth of itself to all things that are great and is poured upon all magnitude from outside and stretches far beyond it. This Greatness is infinite, without quantity and without number.'

... And Smallness or Rarity is attributed to God's nature because He is outside all solidity and distance and penetrates all things without let or hindrance. . . . This smallness is without quantity or quality, it is irrepressible, infinite, unlimited, and while comprehending all things, is itself incomprehensible.' Quoted by Ananda Coomaraswamy in *New Indian Antiquary*, Vol. I, p. 97.

² Cp. Rawson: 'Christian *ataraxia*, the untroubled peace of true faith, of trust which leads to vision is taught very emphatically by Jesus in the passage in John XIV beginning "Let not your hearts be troubled," and in the sermon on the Mount with its repeated warning against anxious striving as a hindrance in the way of entrance into the kingdom of Heaven.' *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1934), p. 107.

V. *dhātuh prasādāt*, through the grace of the Creator. The vision comes through the tranquillity of the senses and the mind according to the reading adopted by Ś. According to the other reading, the vision is reached by the grace or self-revelation of the Creator God. If the second reading is adopted it will be a clear statement of the doctrine of Divine grace, which was developed in the Ś.U. III. 20. There the reading is

'tam akratum paśyati vīśoko dhātuh prasādān mahimānam īśam:

(*dhātuh prasādāt. jagato vidhātā paramēśvaraḥ tasya prasādo 'nugrahaḥ. Vidyāranya.*)

It does not, however, seem to be the intention of the writer here.

vīta-śokaḥ: He who is freed from sorrow. *vigata-śokaḥ . . . anyathā durvijñeyo'yam ātmā kāmibhiḥ prakṛtaiḥ puruṣaiḥ. Ś.*

akratum: saṃkalpa-rahitam.

See also *Mahānārāyaṇa U. VIII. 3.*

THE OPPOSITE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUPREME

21. *āsīno dūram vrajati, śayāno yāti sarvataḥ: kastam madāmadam devam mad anyo jñātum arhati.*

21. Sitting, he moves far; lying he goes everywhere. Who, save myself, is fit to know that god who rejoices and rejoices not?

See *Īśa 4 and 5.*

By these contradictory predicates, the impossibility of conceiving *Brahman* through empirical determinations is brought out. *viruddha-dharmavān. Ś. Brahman* has both the sides of peaceful stability and active energising. In the former aspect He is *Brahman*; in the latter *Īśvara*. The latter is an active manifestation of the absolute *Brahman*, and not an illusory one as some later Advaita Vedāntins suggest.

22. *āsarīram śarīreṣu, anavasīreṣu avasthitam, mahāntam vibhum ātmānam matvā dhīro na śocati.*

22. Knowing the self who is the bodiless among bodies, the stable among the unstable, the great, the all-pervading, the wise man does not grieve.

The wise man who knows that his self, though now embodied and subject to change, is one with the imperishable omnipresent Self, has no cause for grief. He goes beyond all fear and sorrow.

THE MORAL PREPARATION FOR BRAHMA-KNOWLEDGE

23. *nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā, na bahunā śrutena:*

yamevaiṣa vṛṇute, tena labhyas tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūm svām.

23. This self cannot be attained by instruction, nor by intellectual power, nor even through much hearing. He is to be attained only by the one whom the (self) chooses. To such a one the self reveals his own nature.

See M.U. III. 2. 3.

pravacanena: aneka-veda-svīkaraṇena or vyākhyānena.

medhayā: granthārtha-dhāraṇa-śaktyā or svakīya-prajñā-balena.

While the Supreme Self is difficult to know and is unknowable by unaided intellect, He is knowable through His own self-revelation to the man whom He chooses. This view looks upon the Supreme Self as personal God and teaches a doctrine of divine grace.

When we contemplate God in a passive condition without any images or concepts derived from authority or instruction, a supernatural light darts into the soul and draws it towards itself. We can acquire the fruits of the more elementary contemplation by self-discipline and prayer, by practice in recollection, introversion. When we rise in contemplation, when there is the vision of the Supreme which is entirely beyond the power of the soul to prepare for or bring about, we feel that it is wholly the operation of God working on the soul by extraordinary grace. In a sense all life is from God, all prayer is made by the help of God's grace but the heights of contemplation which are scaled by few are attributed in a special degree to divine grace. If the indwelling of God in the souls is a reality, this very indwelling takes us to the supernatural. If man becomes aware of God's presence in the soul, it is due to God's own working in the soul. It is beyond the power of unassisted nature. Those who are familiar with the Pelagian controversy will know that this consciousness of divine grace is a fact of religious experience. Human nature feels so weakened that it is helpless of itself to help itself. If a man is to escape from himself as he actually is and reach the perfection for which he is made, he needs a transforming force within. The seeker feels that this force issues not out of his own natural self but enters into him from beyond.

Here the natural is equated with the creaturely but the fulness of human nature includes the divine working in it.

Cp. 'Thy counsel who hath known, except thou give wisdom and send thy Holy Spirit from above.' Wisdom of Solomon IX. 17.

Cp. St. Paul: 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.' Epistle to the Philippians 2. 12-13. Cp. 'If thou askest how may these things be, interrogate grace and not doctrine, desire and not knowledge, the groaning of prayer rather than study, the spouse rather than the teacher, God and not man, mist rather than clarity, not light but fire all aflame and bearing on to God by devotion and glowing affection.' St. Bonaventura: *Itinerary of the Mind*, quoted from H. O. Taylor's *Mediaeval Mind*, 3rd ed., Vol. II, pp. 448.

Ś, however, gives a different interpretation by an ingenious exegesis. 'Him alone whom he chooses by that same self is his own self obtainable.' The self reveals its true character to one that seeks it exclusively.

yam eva svātmānam eva sādḥako vṛṇute prārthayate tenaivātmanā varitrā svayam ātmā labhyaḥ jñāyate evam ity etal niṣkāmas cātmānam eva prārthayate, ātmanaiwa ātmā labhyate ity arthah.

24. *nāvīrato duṣcaritān nāsānto nāsamāhitah
nāsānta-mānaso vāpi prajñānenainam āpnuyāt.*

24. Not he who has not desisted from evil ways, not he who is not tranquil, not he who has not a concentrated mind, not even he whose mind is not composed can reach this (self) through right knowledge.

Saving wisdom cannot be obtained without the moral qualifications here mentioned. No one can realise the truth without illumination, and no one can have illumination without a thorough cleansing of one's moral being. See also M.U. III. 1. 5, III. 1. 8; Cp. B.U. IV. 4. 23. So long as we are indulgent to our vices, so long as we pine away with hatred and ill-will to others, we cannot get at true knowledge. The classical division of spiritual life into purgation, illumination and union gives the first place to ethical preparation, which is essential for the higher degrees of spiritual life. Moral disorder prevents us from fixing our gaze on the Supreme. Until our mind and heart are effectively purged, we can have no clear vision of God. It follows that man's effort is essential to grasp grace and profit by it. Grace is not irresistible. It is open to us to accept or reject it. Election by God referred to in the previous verse is not to be interpreted as fostering fatalism or predestination, though the religious seer feels that even in the first movement of the soul towards wisdom, the effort at purgation, the prime mover is God.

This verse gives the lie direct to the suggestion sometimes made that the spiritual and the ethical are not organically connected. If we wish to attain the spiritual, we cannot bypass the ethical.

25. *yasya brahma ca kṣatram ca ubhe bhavata odanaḥ
mrtyur yasyopasecanam ka itihā veda yatra sah.*

25. He for whom priesthood and nobility both are as food and death is as a sauce, who really knows where he is?

Cp. R.V. XI. 129. Who knows for certain? Who shall here declare it? Whence it was born and whence come this creation?

Anyone lacking the qualifications mentioned in the previous verse cannot understand the nature of the Supreme which contains the whole world. Death leads to the reabsorption into the Supreme of the entire world in which the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas hold the highest place.

odanaḥ: food for the body.

Even Death is absorbed in the Eternal. B.U. I 2. 1.

upasecanam: sauce.

We cannot know where the Omnipresent Spirit is any more than we can know where the liberated individual is, for they are not in any one place.

Section 3

TWO SELVES

1. *ītam pibantau sukṛtasya loke guhām praviṣṭau paramē
parārdhe,
chāyā-tapau brahma-vido vadanti, pañcāgnayo ye ca tri-nāci-
ketāḥ.*

1. There are two selves that drink the fruit of Karma in the world of good deeds. Both are lodged in the secret place (of the heart), the chief seat of the Supreme. The knowers of *Brahman* speak of them as shade and light as also (the householders) who maintain the five sacrificial fires and those too who perform the triple Nāciketas fire.

It has been said already that the Eternal Reality which is greater than anything this world or the celestial offers can be reached by meditation on one's own inner self and not by ordinary empirical knowledge. This section continues the account of the way in which the Supreme Self may be known. This verse makes out that meditation on the inner self leads to the knowledge of the Supreme because the latter dwells in close fellowship with the individual self in the cave of the human intelligence. R. 'There are two drinking,' etc. shows that, 'as the object of devout meditation and the devotee abide together, meditation is easily performed.' R.B. I. 4. 6.

ṛtam: Karma. *Ṛta* signifies the divinely established order of the universe, both natural and moral. It here refers to the divine order connecting deeds with their results. Ś means by it 'the truth because it is the inescapable fruit of action.' *ṛtam satyam avāśyam bhāvītvāt karma phalam*. Ś.

sukṛtasya, of good deeds: of their own deeds. *sva-kṛtasya*.

The two referred to here are the individual soul and the Supreme self. Cp. M.U. III. 1. 10, Ś.U. IV. 6 and 7, which go back to R.V. I. 164. 20. Śaṅkara, commenting on this verse, says that the reference is to the two forms of the ātman, the individual soul (*jīvātman*) and the universal (*paramātman*). But how can the self which is represented as looking on without eating, be treated as experiencing the rewards of deeds? Ś. R., and Śrinivāsa in his commentary on Nimbārka argue that it is loose usage of *chāttri-nyāya*. When two men walk under an umbrella, we say there go the umbrella-bearers. Madhva is more to the point when he quotes *Bṛhat Saṁhitā* and says, 'The Lord Hari dwells in the heart of beings and accepts the pure pleasure arising from their good works.' The Supreme in its cosmic aspect is subject to the chances and changes of time. *Īśvara* as distinct from *Brahman* participates in the processes of the world.

Madhva finds support in this verse for his doctrine of the entire disparateness of the individual and the universal souls.

parame parārdhe: the chief seat of the Supreme. The Kingdom of Heaven is within us. It is in the deepest reaches of the soul that the human soul holds fellowship with God.

chāyā-tapan: shade and light, shadow and glowing or light.

pañcāgnayah: those who maintain the five sacrificial fires.

All this indicates that while meditation is the way to saving knowledge, due performance of the ordained sacrifices gives us a measure of spiritual understanding.

2. *yas setur ījānānām akṣaram brahma yat param, abhayam titīrṣatām pāram nāciketam śakemahi.*

2. That bridge for those who sacrifice, and which is the highest imperishable *Brahman* for those who wish to cross over to the farther fearless shore, that Nāciketa fire, may we master.

setu: bridge. Cp. C.U. VIII. 4. 4. B.U. IV. 4. 22. *aja ātmā. eṣa setuḥ*. M.U. II. 2. 5. It is that by which we pass from time to eternity. In the beginning, it is said that the sky and earth were one. They became separated by an intervening river or sea of time and space, *saṁsāra-sāgara*. Each one of us, here on earth, wishes to find his way to the farther shore by a ladder or a bridge. If we think of a ladder, the way (*panthā*) is upward (*ūrdhvam*); if we think of a bridge, the way is across. That which takes us across to the other shore is the immanent spiritual self which is at once the way and the goal. The bridge holds

the worlds apart and also unites them. See B.U. IV. 4. 22, VIII. 4. 1.

In Buddhist texts, the way from the vortex of existence, *saṁsāra* to the extinction of life's fires, *nirvāna* is the eightfold path. 'I am the way,' John XIV. 6. He who calls himself the way appeared to St. Catherine of Siena 'in the form of a bridge extending from Heaven to Earth over which all mankind had to pass.' See Dona Luisa Coomaraswamy: *The Perilous Bridge*. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, August 1944.

Two ways of crossing the river of *saṁsāra* are indicated, the performance of the Vedic sacrifices, which leads to the heaven of the gods and the knowledge of *Brahman*. The first prepares the way for the second, on the path of gradual liberation of *krama-mukti*. B.U. IV. 4. 22.

THE PARABLE OF THE CHARIOT

3. *ātmanam rathinam viddhi, sarīram ratham eva tu, buddhim tu sāradhim viddhi, manah pragraham eva ca.*

3. Know the Self as the lord of the chariot and the body as, verily, the chariot, know the intellect as the charioteer and the mind as, verily, the reins.

The idea of the self riding in the chariot which is the psycho-physical vehicle is a familiar one. See also *Jātaka* VI. 242. The chariot with its sensitive steeds represents the psycho-physical vehicle in which the self rides. In *Maitrī* IV. 4, the embodied self is spoken of as *rathita* or 'carted' and thus subjected to the conditions of mortality. Mind holds the reins. It may either control or be dragged by the team of the senses. Rūmī in his *Mathnawī* says: 'The heart has pulled the reins of the five senses' (I. 3275). The conception of Yoga derived from the root *yuj* to yoke, to harness, to join is connected with the symbolism of the chariot and the team. Yoga is the complete control of the different elements of our nature, psychical and physical and harnessing them to the highest end. See Plato: *Phaedo* 24-28, *Phaedrus* 246f. In spite of difference in details, the *Kāṭha Up.* and Plato agree in looking upon intelligence as the ruling power of the soul (called *buddhi* or *vijñāna* by the Upaniṣad and *nous* by Plato) and aiming at the integration of the different elements of human nature. Cp. *Republic* (IV. 433): 'The just man sets in order his own inner life, and is his own master and at peace with himself; and when he has bound together the three principles within him (i.e. reason, emotion and the sensual appetites) and is no longer many but has become one entirely temperate and perfectly adjusted nature, then he will proceed to act, if he has to act, whether in state affairs or in private business of his own.'

4. *indriyāṇi hayān āhur viśayāms teṣu gocarān, ātmendriya-mano-yuktam bhoktety āhur maṇiṣiṇaḥ.*

4. The senses, they say, are the horses; the objects of sense the paths (they range over); (the self) associated with the body, the senses and the mind—wise men declare—is the enjoyer.

The ātman (self) is compared to the owner of a chariot (*rathin*), the body being the chariot (*ratha*), *buddhi* or intellect is the driver (*sāraṭhī*), the horses are said to be the senses (*indriyāṇi*), *manas* is the rein (*pragraha*) by which the intellect controls the senses.

5. *yas tv avijñānavān bhavaty ayuktena manasā sadā, tasyendriyāṇy avāśyāni duṣṭāśvā iva sārathēḥ.*

5. He who has no understanding, whose mind is always unrestrained, his senses are out of control, as wicked horses are for a charioteer.

6. *yas tu vijñānavān bhavati, yuktena manasā sadā, tasyendriyāṇi vaśyāni sadaśvā iva sārathēḥ.*

6. He, however, who has understanding, whose mind is always restrained, his senses are under control, as good horses are for a charioteer.

sad: good, well-trained.

7. *yas tv avijñānavān bhavaty amanaskas sadā śucih na sa tat padam āpnoti saṁsāraṁ cādhiḡacchati.*

7. He, however, who has no understanding, who has no control over his mind (and is) ever impure, reaches not that goal but comes back into mundane life.

saṁsāraṁ: mundane life, the world of becoming characterised by life and death. *janma-marāṇa-lakṣaṇam*. Ś.

8. *yas tu vijñānavān bhavati samanaskas sadā śucih sa tu tat padam āpnoti yasmāt bhūyo na jāyate.*

8. He, however, who has understanding, who has control over his mind and (is) ever pure, reaches that goal from which he is not born again.

9. *vijñānasārathir yastu maṇaḥ pragrahavān naraḥ, so'dhvanāḥ param āpnoti tad viṣṇoḥ paramam padam.*

9. He who has the understanding for the driver of the chariot and controls the rein of his mind, he reaches the end of the journey, that supreme abode of the all-pervading.

viṣṇu: all-pervading. *tad viṣṇoḥ vyāpana-sīlasya brahmaṇaḥ paramātmano vāsudevākhyasya*. Ś. The name is used for the Supreme Self. The development of this idea is taken up in the B.G. and the later Bhāgavata religion. See R.V. I. 154, 5; I. 22. 20, where Viṣṇu, a deity of the solar group, is conceived as the giver of light and life.

THE ORDER OF PROGRESSION TO THE SUPREME

10. *indriyebhyaḥ parā hy arthā, arthebhyaś ca param maṇaḥ, manasaś ca parā buddhir buddher ātmā mahān paraḥ.*

10. Beyond the senses are the objects (of the senses) and beyond the objects is the mind; beyond the mind is the understanding and beyond the understanding is the great self.

ātmā mahān: the great self.

Ś means by it the great soul of the universe said to be the first-born of *avyakta*, the unmanifest. According to the R.V. (X. 121) in the beginning was the chaos of waters, floating on which appeared *Hiraṇya-garbha*, the golden germ, the first born of creation and the creator of all other human beings. *Hiraṇya-garbha* is the soul of the universe. R.V. X. 129. 2.

When the golden light of *puruṣa* is cast on all the rich content of *prakṛti*, we have the manifestations from crude matter to the divinities in paradise.¹

For R, *mahān ātmā* is the individual self *kartṛ*, which is indwelt by the highest self. R.B. I. 4. 1.

II. *mahataḥ param avyaktam, avyaktāt puruṣaḥ paraḥ puruṣān na param kiñcīt: sā kāśṭhā, sā parā galih.*

II. Beyond the great self is the unmanifest; beyond the unmanifest is the spirit. Beyond the spirit there is nothing. That is the end (of the journey); that is the final goal.

avyakta: unmanifest. It is beyond *mahat*, it is *prakṛti*, the universal mother from out of which by the influence of the light of *puruṣa*, all form and all content emerge into manifestation.

Ś calls *avyakta*, *māyā*, *avidyā*. While *puruṣa*, subject, and *prakṛti*, object, are co-ordinate principles at the stage of cosmic creation,

¹ Cp. Deussen: 'We know that the entire objective universe is possible only insofar as it is sustained by a knowing subject. This subject as the sustainer of the objective universe is manifested in all individual subjects but is by no means identical with them. For the individual subjects pass away, but the objective universe continues to exist without them; there exists therefore the eternal knowing subject (*Hiraṇya-garbha*) also by whom it is sustained.' *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, p. 201.

while their inter-action is essential for all manifestation, *puruṣa* is considered to be higher as he is the source of light and his unity appears nearer to the ultimate one than the multiplicity of *prakṛti*; strictly speaking, however, the Pure Self is beyond the descriptions of unity, duality and multiplicity.

For Rāmānuja, *avyakta* is the body or the chariot. It is called *avyakta* because the subtle body and not the gross body is referred to. While there is agreement between Ś and Rāmānuja, on the point, Ś proceeds to say that the subtle body has *avidyā* or ignorance for its cause and therefore belongs to the world of *māyā*. 'Māyā is properly called undeveloped or non-manifested since it cannot be defined as that which is or that which is not.' S.B. I. 4. 3. By *avyakta*, Ś means not the *prakṛti* of the *Sāṃkhya* but the *māyā-śakti* which is responsible for the whole world including the personal God. For Rāmānuja, *avyakta* denotes *Brahman* in its causal phase, when names and forms are not yet distinguished. It is a real mode, *prakāra* or development, *pariṇāma* of *Brahman* through which the universe is evolved. R.B. I. 4. 23-27.

Madhva observes that 'the word *avyakta* which primarily denotes the Supreme Lord alone also denotes the other (matter), for it is dependent on Him and like unto a body of the Lord.' *Sūtra Bhāṣya* I. 4. 1.

puruṣān na param kiñcit: beyond the Spirit there is nothing.

The term *puruṣa* goes back to the *Puruṣa Sūkta* (R.V. X. 90) and is distinctly personal in significance.

Puruṣa is the subject side of that within which are both subject and object, the light of unity and the darkness of multiplicity. We do not reach it, until the end of the cosmic day. So we can say that there is nothing beyond the *puruṣa*.

In these two verses we find a hierarchy of principles or beings which have later acquired highly technical significations. We are asked to pass from outward nature to the one world-ground, *avyakta*, and from it to the spirit behind. Between the two, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, a certain priority is given to *puruṣa*, for it is the light of *puruṣa*'s consciousness that is reflected on all objects of the manifested universe high or low, gross or subtle. From the sense world where the senses reveal their objects, we pass to the dream world where *manas* or mind operates independent of the senses. From this latter we pass to the world of dreamless sleep where the unmanifest *prakṛti* becomes the divine mother. Those who are absorbed in *prakṛti*, those who have attained to the state of *prakṛti-laya* have the bliss and freedom of dreamless sleep, but it is not the illuminated freedom that we seek. For that we must get to the *puruṣa*, who is the source of all.

Cp. Pseudo Dionysius: 'Do thou, in the intent practice of mystic contemplation, leave behind the senses and the operations of the

intellect, and all things that the senses or the intellect can perceive, and all things which are not and things which are, and strain upwards in unknowing as far as may be towards the union with Him who is above all being and knowledge. For by unceasing and absolute withdrawal from thyself and all things in purity, abandoning all and set free from all, thou wilt be borne up to the ray of the Divine Darkness that surpasseth all being.' *Mystical Theology*, I.

Mahat, *avyakta* and *puruṣa* are terms used by the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. *Avyakta* is the *prakṛti* or *pradhāna*. When its equilibrium is disturbed by the influence of *puruṣa*, the evolution or *srṣṭi* or the manifest world starts, and this evolution consists of twenty-three principles. *Mahat*, the great principle, *buddhi* or intelligence, *ahamkāra* self-sense, principle of individuation from which issue *manas*, the central, co-ordinatory sense-organ, 5-9, five *buddhindriyas* or sense organs, 10-14, five *karmendriyas* or organs of action, 15-19, five *tanmātras*, or subtle elements, 20-24, five *śhūla-bhūtas* or gross elements. *Puruṣa*, the twenty-fifth, is totally distinct in nature from all others, neither producing nor produced, though by its influence on *prakṛti*, it causes the evolution of the manifest world.

The account in the *Kaṭha Up.* is different from the classical *Sāṃkhya* in many respects; there is no mention of *ahamkāra* or self-sense, though it is true that the distinction between *buddhi* and *ahamkāra*, intellect and individuation is not a material one.

While the *Sāṃkhya* identifies *buddhi* and *mahat*, the Upaniṣad distinguishes them.

The *puruṣa* of the dualistic *Sāṃkhya* is not beyond the *avyakta* or *prakṛti* but is a co-ordinate principle.

It is doubtful whether *avyakta* refers to the *prakṛti* of the *Sāṃkhya*. See S.B. I. 4. 1. The Upaniṣad account gives certain *Sāṃkhya* ideas in a theistic setting.

THE METHOD OF YOGA

12. *eṣa sarveṣu bhūteṣu gūḍho'tmā na prakāśate,*
drśyate tvagryayā buddhyā sūkṣmayā sūkṣma-darśibhih.

12. The Self, though hidden in all beings, does not shine forth but can be seen by those subtle seers, through their sharp and subtle intelligence.

We must direct a serene and straight look at the Divine object. It is *samyag-darśana* which is quite different from occult visions or physical ecstasies.

13. *yacched vān manasī prājñas tad yacchej jñāna-ātmani*
jñānam ātmani mahati niyacchet, tad yacchec chānta-ātmani.

13. The wise man should restrain speech in mind; the latter

he should restrain in the understanding self. The understanding he should restrain in the great self. That he should restrain in the tranquil self.

jñānātman is the *buddhi* of I. 3. II.

Puruṣa answers to the *Sāntātman*. The soul must go beyond all images in the mind, all workings of the intellect, and by this process of abstraction, the soul is rapt above itself and flows into God in whom are peace and fulness. The process of recollection and introversion is stated here. By shutting out all external things and emptying it of all distracting thoughts, the mind is enabled to concentrate on its own highest or deepest part. Cp. Bishop Ullathorne: 'Let it be plainly understood that we cannot return to God unless we enter first into ourselves. God is everywhere but not everywhere to us. There is but one point in the universe where God communicates with us, and that is the centre of our own soul. There He waits for us. There He meets us; there He speaks to us. To seek Him therefore we must enter into our own interior.'¹

The wise disciple should discriminate the unchanging light, the *ātman*, from the changing objects of sense and mind which it illumines, *an-ātman*. The technique for attaining the spiritual consciousness requires the soul to stand clear of all concepts and enter into its own depth.

14. *uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata:
kṣurasya dhārā niṣitā duratyayā; durgam pathas tat kavayo
vadanti.*

14. Arise, awake, having attained thy boons, understand (them). Sharp as the edge of a razor and hard to cross, difficult to tread is that path (so) sages declare.

prāpya varān: having attained the boons. *Ś* means by it 'approaching the best of teachers.' *prāpya upagamyā, varān prakṛṣṭān ācāryān*.

Cp. *Hilopadeśa*: Idleness is the great enemy of man, *ālasyam hi manuṣyānām śarīrastho mahā-rīpuḥ*.

sharp as the edge of a razor: The way of religion is never easy. It is steep and hard. There can be no progress in religious life without self-control. Only the clean in heart shall see God. Self-discipline is the first step in spiritual training.

Cp. Jesus: 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for narrow is the gate and straitened the way that leads to life, and few be they that find it.' Matthew VII. 14.

15. *aśabdān aspṛṣam arūpam avyayam tathā arasam nityam
agandhavaś ca yat*

¹ *Groundwork of Christian Virtues*, p. 74.

*anādy anantam mahataḥ param dhruvam nicāyā tam
mṛtyu-mukhāt pramucyate.*

15. (The self) without sound, without touch and without form, undecaying, is likewise, without taste, eternal, without smell, without beginning, without end, beyond the great, abiding, by discerning that, one is freed from the face of death.

The *ātman* is not an object of any sort but is the eternal subject. We hear, touch, see, feel and think by the *ātman*. By withdrawing from all outward things, by retreating into the ground of our own soul, in the remotest depth of the soul, we find the Infinite. There the Self is raised above all empirical concepts of sound, touch, form, etc.

16. *nācīketam upākhyanam mṛtyu-proktam sanātanam
uktvā śrutvā ca medhāvī brahma-loke mahīyate.*

16. This ancient story of Naciketas, told by Death, telling and hearing (it), a wise man grows great in the world of Brahmā.

17. *ya imam paramam guhyam śrāvayed brahma-saṁsadi
prayataś śrāddha-kāle vā tad ānantiyāya kalpate, tad ānan-
tyāya kalpate.*

17. Whoso shall cause to be recited this supreme secret before an assembly of Brāhmaṇas or devoutly at the time of the ceremonies for the dead, this will prepare (for him) everlasting life, this will prepare everlasting life.

This seems to be the appropriate ending of the Upaniṣad and the second chapter with the three sections, is, perhaps, a later addition.

CHAPTER II

Section I

THE SELF IS NOT TO BE SOUGHT THROUGH THE SENSES

1. *parāñci khāni vyatṛṇat svayambhūḥ tasmāt parāñ paśyati nāntarātman:*
kaś cid dhīrah pratyag-ātmānam aikṣad āvṛtta-caḥṣur amṛtat-
vam icchan.

1. The Self is not to be sought through the senses. The Self-caused pierced the openings (of the senses) outward; therefore one looks outward and not within oneself. Some wise man, however, seeking life eternal, with his eyes turned inward, saw the self.

vyatṛṇat: pierced. The Self-caused has so set the openings of the soul that they open outwards and men look outward into the appearances of things but the rare soul ripe for spiritual wisdom withdraws his attention from the world, turns his eye inward, sees the Self and attains immortality. Ś makes out that he cursed or injured them by turning them outward, *himsitavān hananam kṛtavān*. Such observations which are disparaging to the legitimate use of the senses give the impression of the unworldly character of much of our best effort. Ś's opinion is opposed to the view set forth in the previous section that senses are like horses, which will take us to our goal, if properly guided. The Upaniṣad calls for the control and not the suppression of the senses. Spiritual search has an inward movement leading to the revelation of the Divine in the inmost soul. It is this aspect which is stressed in this verse.¹ We generally lead outward lives; to have a vision of truth we must turn our gaze inward. See S.U. III. 18, we must bring about an inversion of the natural orientation of our consciousness.

svayambhūḥ: self-caused. Cp. *causa sui* of Neoplatonism. That which causes itself or produces itself is different from the unproduced, the uncaused. It is the Creator God and not the uncaused Brahman. See *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* I. 9. 3. 10; *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* III. 12. 3. 1. B.U. II. 6. 3; IV. 6. 3; VI. 5. 4.

āvṛtta-caḥṣuḥ: eyes turned inward. We close our eyes to the phenomenal variety and turn them inward to the noumenal reality.

¹ It were a vain endeavour

Though I should gaze for ever

On that green light which lingers in the west;

I may not hope from outward forms to win

The passion and the life whose fountains are within.

Coleridge.

The soul is like an eye. When the eye rests on the perishing things of the world, it does not know the truth of things. When it turns inward and rests on truth and being, it perceives truth.

Plato speaks of the object of education as a 'turning around of the soul.' In the famous simile of the cave Plato compares those who are destitute of philosophic wisdom to prisoners in a cave who are able only to look in one direction. They are bound and have a fire behind them and a wall in front. They see shadows of themselves and of objects behind them cast on the wall by the light of the fire. They regard these shadows as real and have no notion of the objects to which they are due. At last some wise man succeeds in escaping from the cave to the light of the sun. He sees real things and becomes aware that he had hitherto been deceived by shadows.

Cp. *Phaedo*: 'The soul, when using the body as an instrument of perception, that is to say, when using the sense of sight or hearing or some other sense . . . is then dragged by the body into the region of the changeable and wanders and is confused. But when returning into herself she reflects, then she passes into the other world, the region of purity and eternity and immortality, and unchangeableness which are her kindred and with them she ever lives, when she is by herself and is not let or hindered; then she ceases from her erring ways and being in communion with the unchanging is unchanging. And this state of the soul is called wisdom.'

Descartes points to the necessity of turning away from external appearances and rising to the spiritual realities which self-knowledge reveals. Only while the author of the Upaniṣad requires us to rise above intellection into insight when we will be imbued with the truth already present in the soul, Descartes asks us to strive to know the truth through reason.

The Upaniṣad points out that God is more manifest in the soul of man than in the world outside. It, therefore, demands a conversion of the spirit on itself.

2. *parācaḥ kāmān anuyanti bālās te mṛtyor yanti vitatasya pūṣam,*
atha dhīrā amṛtatvaṁ viditvā dhruvam adhruveṣu iha na prārthayante.

2. The small-minded go after outward pleasures. They walk into the snare of widespread death. The wise, however, recognising life eternal do not seek the stable among things which are unstable here.¹

¹ Cp. the Christian hymn:

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day:

Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;

Change and decay in all around I see;

O Thou Who changest not, abide with me.

3. *yena rūpam rasam gandham śabdān sparśāmś ca maithunān, etenaiva vijānāti, kim atra pariśiṣyate: etad vai tat.*

3. That by which (one perceives) form, taste, smell, sounds and touches of love, by that alone one perceives. What is there that remains (unknown to it)? This, verily, is that.

Everything is known by the Self and there is nothing which is unknowable to it. *sarvam evatvātmanā vijñeyam, yasyātmano' vijñeyam na kiñcīt pariśiṣyate, sa ātmā sarvajñah.* Ś. Though the Self is not manifest as an object, it is ever present in all experience as the subject. It is the ground of every possibility of thought, of every act of knowledge. As Ś says, it is self-proven, *svasiddha*; for even he who denies it presupposes it.

4. *svapnāntam jāgaritāntam cobhau yenānupaśyati, mahāntam vibhum ātmānam matvā dhīro na śocati.*

4. That by which one perceives both dream states and waking states, having known (that as) the great, omnipresent Self, the wise man does not grieve.

svapnāntam: dream states. Literally dream-end. It is sometimes suggested that at the end of a dream, before it is waking or sleeping we catch the self which is the pure subject. It is the state when we dream that we dream.

THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL, ETC., ARE ONE WITH THE UNIVERSAL

5. *ya imam madhvadam veda ātmānam jīvam antikāt, īśānam bhūta-bhavyasya, na tato vijugupsate: etad vai tat.*

5. He who knows this Self, the experiencer as the living spirit close at hand as the lord of the past and the future—one does not shrink away from Him. This, verily, is that.

madhv-ada: experiencer. Literally, honey-eater, 'the enjoyer of the fruit of action.' *karma-phala-bhujam.* Ś.

6. *yah pūrvam tapaso jātam adbhyah pūrvam ajāyata, guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantam yo bhūtebhir vyapaśyata: etad vai tat.*

6. He who was born of old from austerity, was born of old from the waters, who stands, having entered the secret place (of the heart) and looked forth through beings. This, verily, is that.

The text refers to *Hiranya-garbha*, who is mentioned in several

Upaniṣads. There is no suggestion here of the unreality of the cosmic evolution.

adbhyaḥ: the waters which refer to the *mūla-prakṛti*, the aspect of the Supreme Spirit which remains when the light of *puruṣa* is withdrawn into itself. Cp. C.U. VII. 10. 1; B.U. V. 5; A.U. I. 1-3; K.U. I. 7.

7. *yā prāṇena sambhavaty aditir devatāmāyī, guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantī, yā bhūtebhir vyajāyata: etad vai tat.*

7. She who arises with life, *Aditi*, the soul of the gods, who stands, having entered the secret place (of the heart), who was born with the beings. This, verily, is that.

Aditi (*a-diti*, not bound, boundless) is said to be the mother of the gods; *sarva-devatā-māyī sarva-devatmikā.* Ś. The term is used here in the sense of mother-nature,¹ *prakṛti*, the source of all objectivity. Ś derives it from root *ad* 'to eat' and makes *aditi* the eater or experimenter of all objects. 'Born from the highest *Brahman* as *prāṇa*, i.e. in the form of *Hiranya-garbha*.' *hiranya-garbhasya eva viśeṣaṅ-āntaram āha.* Ā.

8. *aranyor nihito jāta-vedā garbha iva subhṛto garbhinībhiḥ, dive diva idyo jāgrvadbhir haviṣmadbhir manusyebhir agniḥ: etad vai tat.*

8. Agni, the all-knower, hidden in the fire-sticks, like the embryo well borne by pregnant women, should be daily adored by the watchful men with oblations. This, verily, is that.

This verse is quoted from *Sāma Veda* I. 1. 8. 7; see also R.V. III. 29. 2.

Both *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, the subject and the object are identified with the Supreme Reality as they are two movements of His being. *aranyoḥ*: between the upper and the lower fire-sticks: *uttarādhar-āraṇyoḥ*, Madhva.

nihitah: hidden, *niṭarām sthitah*.

9. *yataś codeti śuryo astam yatra ca gacchati, tam devās sarve'rpitās tadu nātyeti kaś cana: etad vai tat.*

9. Whence the sun rises and where it goes to rest; in it are all gods founded and no one ever goes beyond that. This verily, is that.

See *Atharva Veda* X. 18. 16; B.U. I. 5. 23.

The ancient Vedic gods are recognised by the Upaniṣads but

¹ R.V. (I. 89. 10). 'Aditi is the sky, Aditi the air, Aditi is mother, father and son, Aditi is all the gods and the five tribes, Aditi is whatever has been and will be born.'

they are all said to derive their being from the One Supreme Reality. In verses 5-7, the living soul, the soul of the universe, infinite nature, are identified with *Brahman*; in verses 8 and 9, Fire and Sun are said to have their reality in *Brahman*: *devās sarve ātmani pratīṣṭhitā iti*. R.

FAILURE TO COMPREHEND THE ESSENTIAL UNITY OF BEING IS THE CAUSE OF RE-BIRTH

10. *yad eveha tad amutra, yad amutra tad anvaha, mṛtyos sa mṛtyum āpnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati.*

10. Whatever is here, that (is) there. Whatever is there, that, too, is here. Whoever perceives anything like manyness here goes from death to death.

11. *manasaivedam āptavyam neha nānāsti kiñ cana: mṛtyos sa mṛtyum gacchati ya iha nāneva paśyati.*

11. By mind alone is this to be obtained. There is nothing of variety here. Whoever perceives anything like variety here, goes from death to death.

In these two verses, the Supreme is declared to be devoid of any difference. The multiplicity of the world does not touch the unity of the Supreme.

THE ETERNAL LORD ABIDES IN ONE'S SELF

12. *aṅguṣṭha-mātrah puruṣo madhya ātmani tiṣṭhati: iśāno bhūta-bhavyasya na tato vijigṛpsate: etad vai tat.*

12. The person of the size of a thumb resides in the middle of the body. After knowing him who is the lord of the past and the future, one does not shrink (from Him). This, verily, is that.

aṅguṣṭha-mātra-puruṣa: the person of the size of a thumb. *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* X. 38. 1; Ś.U. III. 13; V. 8; Maitrī VI. 38.

In the story of *Sāvitrī*, it is said that Yama, with his grim force extracted out of the body of *Satyavān* a person of the size of a thumb, bound in his snare and brought in his control.¹ See B.U. I. 5. 23; Revelation I. 8.

¹ *tataḥ satyavataḥ kāyāt pāsabaddham vaśam gatam aṅguṣṭha-mātram puruṣam niścakārṣa yamo balāt.*

13. *aṅguṣṭha-mātrah puruṣo jyotir ivādhūmakah:*

iśāno bhūta-bhavyasya sa evādyā sa u svah: etad vai tat.

13. The person of the size of a thumb resides in the middle of the body, like a flame without smoke. He is the lord of the past and the future. He is the same today and the same tomorrow. This, verily is that.

The lord of the past and the future is not a timeless Absolute but the ruler of the time order.

Ś discusses this passage in his *Sūtra Bhāṣya* (I. 3. 24 and 25) and argues that the soul which is said to be of the size of a thumb is in reality *Brahman*. Rāmānuja and Nimbārka agree and hold that the highest self is called 'thumb-sized' since it dwells in the heart of the worshipper. In B.U. the self is said to be 'as small as a grain of rice or barley and yet it is the ruler of all and lord of all,' V. 5. 1. In C.U., it is said to be of the measure of a span, *pradeśa-mātra*, V. 18. 1. Maitrī states all the views of the size of the soul. It tells us that a man 'reaches the supreme state by meditating on the soul, which is smaller than an atom or else of the size of the thumb, or of a span, or of the whole body.' VI. 38.

THE RESULTS OF SEEING VARIETY AND UNITY

14. *yathodakam durge vṛṣṭam parvateṣu vidhāvati, evam dharmān pṛthak paśyams tān evānuvidhāvati.*

14. As water rained upon a height flows down in various ways among the hills; so he who views things as varied runs after them (distractedly).

He who perceives differentiation of *dharmas* is condemned to the restless flowing he perceives.

15. *yathodakam śuddhe śuddham āsiktam tādṛg eva bhavati, evam muner vijānata ātmā bhavati gautama.*

15. As pure water poured forth into pure becomes the very same, so the self, O Gautama, of the seer who has understanding becomes (one with the Supreme).

tādṛg eva: the very same. Literally just such. Ś affirms metaphysical identity between the individual soul and the Supreme Self. Rāmānuja and Nimbārka hold that the individual soul is non-different, i.e. not separate from the Supreme Self. It attains equality with the Supreme. See M.U. III. 2. 8. *manana-śilasya ātmāpi param-ātma-jñānena viśuddhas san viśuddhena param-ātmanā samāno bhavati*. R.

Cp. the observations of the Christian mystics. Bernard of Clair-

vaux says: 'As a drop of water poured into wine loses itself and takes the colour and savour of wine, so in the saints all human affections melt away, by some unspeakable transmutation into the will of God. For how could God be all in all if anything merely human remained in man? The substance will endure, but in another beauty, a higher power, a greater glory.' St. Theresa says: 'Spiritual marriage is like rain falling from the sky into a river, becoming one and the same liquid, so that the river water and the rain cannot be divided; or it resembles a streamlet flowing into the ocean which cannot afterward be dis severed from it.'

Section 2

THE INDIVIDUAL SELF

1. *puram ekādāśa-dvāram ajasyāvakra-cetasah, anuṣṭhāya na śocati vimuktasca vimucyate: etad vai tat.*

1. (There is) a city of eleven gates (belonging to) the unborn, uncrooked intelligence. By ruling it one does not grieve and being freed is freed indeed. This, verily is that.

ekādāśa-dvāram: eleven-gated. B.G. (V. 13) mentions nine gates¹ which are the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, anus and generating organ.¹ Here two others are mentioned to make up eleven and they are the navel and the saggital suture, the opening at the top of the skull (A.U. III. 12), through which the liberated soul is said to escape at death.

a-vakra-cetasah: whose thoughts are not crooked. *avakram*: *akuṣīlam*. *anuṣṭhāya*: ruling (the city). Ś takes it to mean 'contemplating,' *dhyātvā*. When the soul controls the gates and lives in peace it is free from sorrow. It is freedom which begins here (*jīvan-mukti*) and leads after death to complete release (*videha-mukti*).

2. *hamsaś śuciṣat, vasur antarikṣasat hotā vediṣat, atithir duroṇasat, nṛṣat, varasat, ṛtasat, vyomasat, abjā, gojā, ṛtajā, adriajā, ṛtam brhat.*

2. He is the swan (sun) in the sky, the pervader in the space (between earth and heaven), the priest at the altar, the guest in the sacrificial jar (house). He dwells in men, in gods, in the right and in the sky. He is (all that is) born of water, sprung

¹ Bunyan in his *Holy War* describes the human soul as living in a city with five gates which are the five senses.

from the earth, born of right, born of mountain. He is the true and the great.

This *hamsavati* mantra whose seer is Vāma-deva is a prayer to the sun who illumines the world and dispels the darkness of men.

See R.V. IV. 40. 5; *Vājasaneyi Samhitā* X. 24; XII. 14; *Taittirīya Samhitā* III. 2. 10. 1; *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* VI. 7. 3. 11.

vasu: the pervading: *vāsayati sarvān*. Ś.

hotā: priest. 'Fire' according to Ś. *hotāgnih, agnir vai hotā ity śruteḥ*.

In the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the triune Agni is identified with the sun in heaven, the air in the space between earth and heaven and with the priest or the guest on earth. Here, Agni, the Supreme energy is identified with *Brahman* or the *Ātman*. The verse affirms that the whole universe is non-different from the Supreme *Brahman*. *etad sarvam aparicchinna-satya-rūpa-brahmātmakam*. R.

3. *ūrdhvam prāṇam unnayaty apānam pratyag asyati, madhye vāmanam āsīnam viśve devā upāsate.*

3. He leads the out-breath upward, he casts inwards the in-breath, the dwarf who is seated in the middle, all the gods adore.

Originally *prāṇa* meant breath and was used for the Supreme Being. In the early Upaniṣads, all the vital powers (i.e. speech, breath, eye, ear and manas) are called *prāṇāḥ*. B.U. I. 5. 3; T.U. I. 7. These are looked upon as varieties of breath or as powers presiding over different parts of the body. *Prāṇa* and *apāna* stand for breaths in expiration and inspiration respectively.

vāmanam: the dwarf (another name for the thumb-sized person, *angusṭha-mātra puruṣa*).

'Worthy to be served,' *vananīyam sam-bhajanīyam*. Ś.

viśve devāḥ: all the gods. Ś interprets as 'the senses and the vital powers' which are subject to the person within, who is their Lord whom they worship by their uninterrupted activity.

4. *asya visraṁsamānasya śarīrasthasya dehinaḥ, dehād vimucyamānasya kim atra pariśiṣyate: etad vai tat.*

4. When the embodied self that dwells within the body slips off and is released from the body, what is there that remains? This, verily, is that.

What remains is the Universal Soul.

5. *na prānena nāpānena martyo jīvati kaś cana itareṇa tu jīvanli, yasminn etāv upāśritau.*

5. Not by any outbreath or inbreath does any mortal what-

ever live. But by another do they live on which these (life-breaths) both depend.

This verse repudiates the materialist doctrine that the soul is just an assemblage of parts. It makes out that as the house and the dweller are separate, the destruction of the house does not mean the destruction of the dweller. The loss of the body does not mean the dissolution of the soul, while desertion of the body by the soul would mean the disintegration of the body.

REBIRTH

6. *hanta ta idaṃ pravakṣyāmi guhyam brahma sanātanam:
yathā ca maraṇam prāpya ātmā bhavati gautama.*

6. Look (here). I shall explain to you the mystery of *Brahman*, the eternal, and also how the soul fares, after reaching death, O Gautama.

7. *yonim anye prapadyante śarīratvāya dehinaḥ,
sthānum anye'nusamyanti, yathā karma, yathā śrutam.*

7. Some souls enter into a womb for embodiment; others enter stationary objects according to their deeds and according to their thoughts.

While the Upaniṣads insist on the independent reality of the Supreme Self they also affirm the reality of the individual soul.

Here the law of Karma that we are born according to our deeds is assumed. *yathā śrutam yādṛśam ca vijñānam upārjītam tad anurūpam eva śarīram pratipadyanta iti. Ś.*

8. *ya eṣa supteṣu jāgarti kāmam kāmam puruṣo nirmimāṇaḥ
tad eva śukram tad brahma tad evāṃṣtam ucyate.
tasmin lokāḥ śritāḥ sarve, tad u nātyeti kaś cana: etad vai tat.*

8. That person who is awake in those that sleep, shaping desire after desire, that, indeed, is the pure. That is *Brahman*, that, indeed, is called the immortal. In it all the worlds rest and no one ever goes beyond it. This, verily, is that.

kāmam kāmam: desire after desire, really objects of desire. Even dream objects like objects of waking consciousness are due to the Supreme Person. Even dream consciousness is a proof of the existence of the self. See B.U. IV. 3.

No one ever goes beyond it: cp. Eckhart: 'On reaching God all progress ends.'

† Quoted in *New Indian Antiquary*, Vol. I, p. 205.

THE INNER SELF IS BOTH IMMANENT AND TRANSCENDENT

9. *agnir yathaiako bhuvanam praviṣṭo rūpam rūpam prati-rūpo
babhūva,
ekas tathā sarva-bhūtāntar-ātmā rūpam rūpam prati-rūpo
bahiś ca.*

9. As fire which is one, entering this world becomes varied in shape according to the object (it burns), so also the one Self within all beings becomes varied according to whatever (it enters) and also exists outside (them all).

Cp. R.V. where Indra, in his conflict with the demons, is said to have assumed many forms through his magic powers, becoming the counterform of every form.

rūpam rūpam prati-rūpo babhūva

indro māyābhiḥ pururūpa iyate. VI. 47. 18.

bahiś: outside. While the Self assumes many forms, it is yet outside the manifested world in its own unmodified nature. *svena avikṛteṇa rūpeṇa ākāśavat. Ś.* This verse teaches the immanence as well as the transcendence of the Supreme Self. Cp. R.V. X. 90, where all beings are said to be a quarter of the *puruṣa* while three-quarters are immortal in heaven, *tripād asyāṃṣtam divi. R.V. X. 90. 3; S.U. III. 9 and 10.*

10. *vāyur yathaiako bhuvanam praviṣṭo rūpam rūpam prati-rūpo
babhūva,
ekas tathā sarva-bhūtāntar-ātmā rūpam rūpam prati-rūpo
bahiś ca.*

10. As air which is one, entering this world becomes varied in shape according to the object (it enters), so also the one Self within all beings becomes varied according to whatever (it enters) and also exists outside (them all).

11. *sūryo yathā sarva-lokasya cakṣur na lipyate cakṣusair
bāhya-doṣaih
ekas tathā sarva-bhūtāntar-ātmā na lipyate loka-duḥkena
bāhyah.*

11. Just as the sun, the eye of the whole world, is not defiled by the external faults seen by the eye, even so, the One within all beings is not tainted by the sorrow of the world, as He is outside (the world).

The verse admits the reality of the pain of the world but denies that it touches the Supreme Self which is our inner being. The forms

which the Supreme assumes are not its modifications but are the manifestations of its possibilities. The Supreme Self is unaffected by the pain of the individual selves because the pain of the individual self is due to its identifying itself with its psycho-physical vehicle. The individual ego makes a confusion between the self and what is not the self. The Supreme, on the other hand, does not suffer because it is not subject to ignorance (*avidyā*) and it does not identify itself with any of the accidents to which its various psycho-physical vehicles are subject.

12. *eko vaśī sarva-bhūtāntar-ātmā ekam bijam bahudhā yah karoti,
tam ātmastham ye'nupaśyanti dhīrās teṣām sukham śāsva-
tam netareṣām.*

12. The one, controller (of all), the inner self of all things, who makes his one form manifold, to the wise who perceive him as abiding in the soul, to them is eternal bliss—to no others.

vaśī: controller. See B.U. IV. 4. 22; Ś.U. VI. 12.

ātmastham: abiding in the soul. The Supreme dwells in the inmost part of our being

sva-śarīra-hṛdayākāśe buddhau caitanyākāreṇābhiviyaktam. Ś. Cp. I John IV. 13. 'Hereby know we that we abide in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His spirit.'

who makes his one form manifold. It is one in the unmanifested condition. It becomes manifold in the manifested condition. *ekī-bhū-
tāvibhāgāvasthamtamo-lakṣaṇambijam mahadādi bahu-vidha-prapañca-
rūpeṇa yah karoti tam.* R.

13. *nityo'nityānām cetanaś cetanānām eko bahūnām yo vidad-
hāti kāmān,
tam ātmastham yenupaśyanti dhīrāḥ; teṣām śāntiś śāsvatī,
netareṣām.*

13. The one eternal amid the transient, the conscious amid the conscious, the one amid many, who grants their desires, to the wise who perceive Him as abiding in the soul, to them is eternal peace and to no others.

See S.U. VI. 13.

nityo'nityānām, sometimes *nityo nityānām* the one eternal among the eternal.

The Supreme grants the desires of many. We may see here the doctrine of Divine providence.

14. *tad etad iti manyante' nirdeśyam paramam sukham,
kalham nu tad vijānīyam kimu bhāti vibhāti vā.*

14. This is that and thus they recognise, the ineffable Supreme bliss. How then may I come to know this? Does it shine (of itself) or does it shine (in reflection)?

Does the Supreme shine in Himself (see III. 1. 3. 12) or does He shine in His expression?

15. *na tatra sūryo bhāti, na candra-tārakam, nemā vidyuto
bhānti, kuto'yam agniḥ;
tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam tasya bhāsā sarvam idam
vibhāti.*

15. The sun shines not there, nor the moon and the stars, these lightnings shine not, where then could this fire be? Everything shines only after that shining light. His shining illumines all this world.

The Supreme who is the source of all light, 'the master light of all our seeing'¹ cannot be known by any earthly light. Our knowledge cannot find him out.

See M.U. II. 2. 10; S.U. VI. 14; B.G. XV. 12. The symbol of light is the most natural and universal. Plato in his Seventh letter compares the sudden inspiration of the mystic to a 'leaping spark.' In the myth of the cave, the real world is a realm of light outside the cave. The Old Testament and the Zoroastrian religion speak of the antagonism between darkness and light. In the First Epistle of John, we read, 'God is light and in him is no darkness at all.'

Section 3

THE WORLD-TREE ROOTED IN BRAHMAN

1. *śrāhva-mūlo'vāk-śākha eṣo'śvatthas sanātanaḥ,
tad eva śukram tad brahma, tad evāmytam ucyate.
tasmin lokāḥ śrīlāḥ sarve tad u nātyeti kaś cana: etad vai tat.*

1. With the root above and the branches below (stands) this ancient fig tree. That (indeed) is the pure; that is *Brahman*. That, indeed, is called immortal. In it all the worlds rest and no one ever goes beyond it. This, verily, is that.

tad eva: that indeed, i.e. the root of this tree. The description here has its analogue in the description of the tree Igdrasil in Scandinavian mythology.

¹ Revelation XX. 1. 23.

The tree of life has its unseen roots in *Brahman*. The tree, roots and branches represent *Brahman* in its manifested form. While the tree of life is said to be imperishable *Brahman*, B.G., which uses this illustration, asks us to cut off the tree of existence by the potent weapon of non-attachment. XV. 1. 3. The tree grows upside down. It has its roots above and branches below. See S.U. III. 9; Maitrī VI. 4. The branches below are for Madhva the lower gods: *avāṁcaḥ adhamāḥ devāḥ śākhāḥ yasya asau*.

THE GREAT FEAR

2. *yad idam kiñ ca jagat sarvam prāṇa ejati niḥśrtam mahad bhayaṁ vajram udyatam, ya etad vidur amṛtās te bhavanti.*

2. The whole world, whatever here exists, springs from and moves in life. (It is) the great fear (like) the upraised thunder-bolt. They that know that become immortal.

The whole world trembles in *Brahman*. *parasmin brahmaṇi saty ejati kampate. Ś.*

3. *bhayād asyāgnis tapati, bhayāt tapati sūryaḥ; bhayād indraś ca vāyus ca, mṛtyur dhāvati pañcamah.*

3. Through fear of him, fire burns; through fear (of him) the sun gives heat; through fear both Indra (the lord of the gods) and wind and Death, the fifth, speed on their way.

See T.U. II. 8. 1.

The source and sustaining power of the universe is *Brahman*. Evolution is not a mechanical process. It is controlled by *Brahman*, who is here represented as *prāṇa*, the life-giving power: *jagato mūlam prāṇa-pada-lakṣyam prāṇa-pravṛttir api hetuvāt. Ā.*

PERCEPTION OF THE SELF

4. *iha ced aśakad boddhum prāk śarīrasya visrasaḥ, tataḥ sargeṣu lokeṣu śarīratvāya kalpate.*

4. If one is able to perceive (Him) before the body falls away (one would be freed from misery); (if not) he becomes fit for embodiment in the created worlds.

aśakat: able. It is sometimes split up into *na śakat*, unable, i.e. if one fails to know it. The simplest meaning would be 'If one is not able to know (the Supreme) before the body falls away, one becomes fit for embodiment in the created worlds.' Ś interprets the verse

thus: 'If here, in this life, a man is able to know the awe-inspiring *Brahman* before the falling of the body, he is freed from the bond of *saṁsāra*; if he is not able to know, then for lack of knowledge, he takes embodiment in earth and other created worlds.' *sargeṣu lokeṣu*: created worlds. *V. sarveṣu kāleṣu*, at all times.

The verse teaches that it is possible for us to attain the saving wisdom here and now.

5. *yathādarse tathātmani, yathā svapne tathā pīty-loke, yathāpsu pariva dadṛṣe, tathā gandharva-loke chāyā-taṭayor iva brahma-loke.*

5. As in a mirror, so (is it seen) in the soul, as in a dream, so in the world of the manes, as (an object) is seen in water, so in the world of the *gandharvas*; as shade and light in the world of *Brahmā*.

He can be seen in this life as in a glass, if his mind is pure and clear. In the region of the departed, he can be seen only as a reminiscence, a remembrance of dreams. In the world of the *gandharvas*, he can be seen as a reflection in trembling waters. In the world of *Brahmā* he can be seen clearly as shade and light.

gandharvas: angels who live in the fathomless spaces of air. R.V. VIII. 65. 5; see also B.U. IV. 3. 33.

6. *indriyāṇām pṛthag-bhāvam udayāstamayau ca yat, pṛthag utpadyamānānam matvā dhīro na śocati.*

6. Knowing the separate nature of the senses, which spring separately (from the various subtle elements) and (knowing also) that their rising and setting (are separate), the wise man does not grieve.

The discrimination of the Self from the sense organism is here insisted on. When the wise man knows, that the material senses do not come from the Self, that their rise and fall belong to their own nature, he grieves no more.

7. *indriyebhyaḥ param mano manasas sattvam uttamam, sattvād adhi mahān ātmā, mahato vyaktam uttamam.*

7. Beyond the senses is the mind; above the mind is its essence (intelligence); beyond the intelligence is the great self; beyond the great (self) is the unmanifest.

sattva: essence. Intelligence constitutes the essence of the mind. See notes on I. 3. 10 and 11.

8. *avyaktāt tu paraḥ puruso vyāpako'liṅga eva ca, yaṁ jñātvā mucyate jantur amṛtatvam ca gacchati.*

8. Beyond the unmanifest is the person, all-pervading and without any mark whatever. By knowing whom, a man is liberated and goes to life eternal.

alīṅga: without any mark. See M.U. III. 2. 4; Maitrī V. 31, 35; VII. 2. 'Without any empirical attributes.' *sarva-samīkṣā-dharma-varjitah*. Ś. *Līṅga* is a distinctive mark or sign. In logic, it is an invariable sign which constitutes the basis of inference. *Līṅga* refers to *līṅga-sama sūkṣmā-śarīra*, the entity consisting of *buddhi*, *ahamkāra*, *manas*, *indriyāni*, *tanmātrāṇi*. S.U. VI. 9; Maitrī VI. 10. 19. If *līṅga* is taken in this sense, it means that the Supreme needs no subtle body as it is not subject to death and re-birth.

9. *na samāṛṣe tiṣṭhati rūpam asya, na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanainam:
hrdā maṅiṣā manasābhikṣpto ya etad vidur amṛtās te bhavanti.*

9. Not within the field of vision stands this form. No one soever sees Him with the eye. By heart, by thought, by mind apprehended, they who know Him become immortal.

The first half points out that we cannot form a visual image of the Supreme Person and the second half urges that we can still apprehend Him by heart, by thought and by mind. The Supreme Reality is to be apprehended through the concentrated direction of all mental powers.

maṅiṣā (reflective) thought. *vikalpa-varjita buddhi*.

manas: mind, true insight in the form of meditation. *manana-rūpeṇa samyag-darśana*. Ś. When the mind becomes clear and the heart pure, God-vision arises. Cp. R.V. I. 61. 2. *hrdā manasā maṅiṣā* We must seek God in our hearts and our souls. The process is called introversion, the solitary communing of the soul with God, the thought of the alone to the Alone, as Plotinus described it. Cp. Cassian: 'The mind will come to that incorruptible prayer which is not engaged in looking on any image, and is not articulate by the utterance of any voice or words; but with the intentness of the mind aglow, it is produced by an ineffable transport of the heart, by some insatiable keenness of spirit; and the mind being placed beyond all senses and visible matter, pours it forth to God with groanings and sighs that cannot be uttered.'¹

abhikṣpta: apprehended. As the concept of God is formed by our mental nature, it cannot be identical for all. This attitude develops charity, open-mindedness, disinclination to force one's views on other people's attention. If the Hindu does not feel that he belongs to the

¹ Collation X. 11. quoted in Dom Cuthbert Butler: *Benedictine Monachism*, 2nd Ed. (1924), p. 79.

chosen race, if he is relatively free from a provincial self-righteousness, it is to no small extent due to the recognition that the concepts of God are relative to our traditions and training.

10. *yadā pañcāvatiṣṭhante jñānāni manasā saha,
buddhiś ca na viceṣṭati, tām āhuḥ paramām gatim.*

10. When the five (senses) knowledges together with the mind cease (from their normal activities) and the intellect itself does not stir, that, they say, is the highest state.

Cp. Boehme: 'When thou standest still from the thinking of self and the willing of self; when both thy intellect and will are quiet and passive to the expressions of the eternal world and spirit, and when thy soul is winged up and above that which is temporal, the outward senses and the imagination being locked up by holy abstraction, then the Eternal Hearing, Seeing and Speaking will be revealed in thee, and so God heareth and seeth through thee, being the organ of this spirit and so God appeareth in thee and whispereth to thy spirit. Blessed art thou, therefore, if thou canst stand still from thy self-thinking and self-willing and canst stop the wheel of thy imagination and senses.'

11. *tām yogam iti manyante sthirām indriya-dhāraṇām
apramattas tadā bhavati, yogo hi prabhavāpyayau.*

11. This, they consider to be Yoga, the steady control of the senses. Then one becomes undistracted for Yoga comes and goes.

apramattah: undistracted. *pramāda-varjitah samādhānam prati-nityam prayatnavān*. Ś. See also C.U. I. 3. 12 and II. 22. 2; M.U. II. 2. 4. In Buddhism all virtues are said to be centred in *apramāda* (Pāli *appamādo*). Keeness is the way of eternal life and slackness the way of death. *appamādo amatapadam, pamādo maccuno padam*. *Dhammapāda* 21.

prabhavāpyayau: comes and goes.

Vigilant keenness is necessary in Yoga, as it comes and goes. *jananāpāya-dharmakāḥ*. Ś. *pratikṣanāpāyaśālitayā avadhānam apekṣitam*. R. If we are careful we will acquire it; if we are careless we will lose it. Mind is liable to fluctuation and therefore we should be extremely careful.

It is sometimes interpreted as 'beginning and end.' 'The world sinks down in Yoga and again is created afresh,' says Deussen. This is later Pātāñjala Yoga.

THE SELF AS EXISTENT

12. *naiva vācā na manasā prāptum śakyo na cakṣuṣā,
astīti bruvato'nyatra katham tad upalabhyate.*

12. Not by speech, not by mind, not by sight can he be apprehended. How can he be comprehended except by him who says, 'He is'?

He can be comprehended only by those who affirm that 'He is.'

The self as the knowing subject can never become an object. It can be realised through Yoga. While He transcends the ordinary means of apprehension, He can be immediately experienced through Yoga, and for such apprehension faith in His existence is an indispensable condition. The conviction of the reality of that which is sought is the prerequisite.

Commenting on this verse, Ś argues that the Supreme *Brahman* who is conceived as the source of the universe must be regarded as existent. We cannot conceive of the world as produced from nothing. The world effect must have an existent cause.

We can at least reasonably say of God that He is. Cp. Epistle to the Hebrews: 'He that cometh to God must believe that He is.' Cp. St. Bernard: 'Who is God? I can think of no better answer than, He who is. Nothing is more appropriate to the eternity which God is. If you call God good, or great or blessed, or wise or anything else of this sort, it is included in these words, namely, He is.'

13. *astīty evopalabdḥavyas tattva-bhāvena cobhayoh,
astīty evopalabdḥasya tattva-bhāvaḥ prasīdati.*

13. He should be apprehended only as existent and then in his real nature—in both ways. When He is apprehended as existent, his real nature becomes clear (later on).

The primary assertion that can be made of the Self is the declaration of existence, pure and simple.

ubhayoh: in both ways. In the conditioned and the unconditioned ways: *sopādḥika-nirupādḥikayoh.* Ś.

Rational faith in the existence of *Brahman* leads on to spiritual experience in which His nature is revealed to and understood by the believer.

In this section, the author speaks to us of the discipline of Yoga by which man's whole being is unified and concentrated on the realization of the highest Being who is also the inner and real self.

14. *yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye'sya hr̥dī śrītāḥ,
atha martyo'mṛto bhavaty atra brahma samaśnute.*

14. When all desires that dwell within the human heart are

cast away, then a mortal becomes immortal and (even) here he attaineth to *Brahman*.

When self-seeking desire, ignorance and doubt disappear, the vision of God is attained. The Upaniṣad treats fellowship with God as the consummation of spiritual experience.

15. *yadā sarve prabhidante hṛdayasyeha granthayah,
atha martyo'mṛto bhavaty etāvad anuśāsanam.*

15. When all the knots that fetter here the heart are cut asunder, then a mortal becomes immortal. Thus far is the teaching.

etāvad anuśāsanam: thus far is the teaching. The original Upaniṣad, it was felt, ended with I. 3. 17. These words seem to mark the end of the enlarged Upaniṣad. The remaining verses seem to be a still later addition.

16. *śataṁ caikā ca hṛdayasya nādyas tāsām mūrdhānam
abhiniṣṛtaikā:
tayordhvam āyann amṛtatvam eti, viṣvaṁ anyā utkramaṇe
bhavanti.*

16. A hundred and one are the arteries of the heart; one of them leads up to the crown of the head. Going upward through that, one becomes immortal; the others serve for going in various other directions.

See C.U. VIII. 6. 6, where it is said, that if a man has lived the disciplined life of a student and so 'found the self,' then at the time of death, his soul, dwelling in the heart, will pass upward by an artery known as *suṣumnā* (Maitrī VI. 21), to an aperture in the crown of the skull known as the *brahma-randhra* or *vidyā*, by which at the beginning of life it first entered. For there the soul rises by the sun's rays to the sun which is a door-way to the Brahmā world to those who know and a stopping-place for those who do not know. The other ways lead the unliberated to re-embodiment.

17. *aṅguṣṭhamātrah puruṣo'nlarātmā sadā janānām hṛdaye
sanniviṣṭah
taṁ svāc charīrāt pravṛthen muñjād iveśikām dhairyena:
taṁ vidyāc chukram amṛtam taṁ vidyāc chukram amṛtam
iti.*

17. The person of the size of a thumb, the inner self, abides always in the hearts of men. Him one should draw out with firmness, from the body, as (one may do) the wind from the

reed. Him one should know as the pure, the immortal, yea, Him one should know as the pure, the immortal.

dhairyeṇa: with firmness, *apramādeṇa*. Ś. with courage, with intellectual strength. *jñāna-kaūśaleṇa*. R.

18. *mṛtyu-proktāṃ naciketo'tha labdhvā vidyām etām yoga-vidhiṃ ca kṛtsnam, brahma-prāpto virajo 'bhūd vimṛtyur anyopy evam yo vid adhyātmam eva.*

18. Then Naciketas, having gained this knowledge declared by Death and the whole rule of Yoga, attained *Brahman* and became freed from passion and from death. And so may any other who knows this in regard to the self.

PRASNA UPANIṢAD

The *Prasna Upaniṣad* belongs to the *Atharva Veda* and has six sections dealing with six questions put to a sage by his disciples who were intent on knowing the nature of the ultimate cause, the power of *aum*, the relation of the Supreme to the constituents of the world. The Upaniṣad is so called as it deals with *praśna* or question.