

Katharudra Upanishad

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Om ! May He protect us both together; may He nourish us both together;

May we work conjointly with great energy,

May our study be vigorous and effective;

May we not mutually dispute (or may we not hate any).

Om ! Let there be Peace in me !

Let there be Peace in my environment !

Let there be Peace in the forces that act on me !

1. The Gods, it is said, requested of the venerable (Brahma): Venerable Sir, impart to us the spiritual knowledge. He, the creator (Prajapati), replied:

2. After removing the hair including the tuft and discarding it, and after removing the sacred thread, looking at one's son (the following shall be uttered): 'Thou art the scripture , thou the sacrifice, thou the Vasatkara, thou the syllable Om, thou art Svaha, thou Svadha, thou the doer and thou the creator'. Then the son shall say: 'I am the scripture , I am the sacrifice, I am the Vasatkara, I am the syllable Om, I am Svaha, I am Svadha, I am the doer and I am the creator, I am the divine architect (Tvastir), I am the base'. These are the words (to be uttered). While parting (from the son) he shall not shed tears. Should he shed tears, the line of progeny will be broken. Circumambulating clockwise (his village) and not looking at anything he shall depart. Such a one is fit for the world of Brahman.

3. After studying the Vedas as a celibate student and performing the duties prescribed in the scriptures, after marrying and begetting sons and providing them with suitable means, having performed sacrifices according to ability, he who has been permitted by elders and relatives shall take to renunciation. Reaching the forest he shall perform the Agnihotra sacrifice for twelve nights by pouring oblations of milk into the fire; for twelve nights he shall subsist on milk. At the end of twelve nights, the wooden vessels, being no more of use, shall be offered to the fire (with the mantra): 'This is the oblation of cooked rice to the Vaishvanara fire, to Prajapati, (this is) the oblation appointed in three potsherds to Vishnu and Agni'. The clay pots shall be consigned to the waters; the metal ones shall be given to the teacher, with the mantra: 'May you not desert me while parting from me, may I not desert you while I part from you'. He shall prostrate before the three fires – the household-fire,

the southern-fire and the fire in which the oblations are offered. Some say that he shall consume a handful of ashes from the place where the fire-kindling sticks stand. After removing the hair including the tuft and discarding it, he shall abandon the sacred thread in the waters with the mantra, 'Bhuh Svaha'. Therefore, he shall resort to starvation or drowning in water or entering fire, or betake himself to the battle field; or he shall journey forward until he falls and dies or he shall enter a hermitage of elderly ascetics. He shall consume milk as the repast (of the evening). That shall be his offering for the evening. That (milk which he takes) in the morning is his morning (offering); that of the new-moon-day, the new-moon-day sacrifice; that of the full-moon-day, the full-moon-day sacrifice. The shaving of the hair, beard, etc., and cutting of nails in the spring comprise his Agnishtoma sacrifice.

4. After renunciation he shall not resume the fire-rituals. He shall recite the spiritual mantra: 'For I have become Death and would enter that which is coming into being (i.e. Brahman-knowledge)', etc. Saying 'Welfare to all beings', and contemplating the Self and naught else, lifting up the arms, he shall be one who has abandoned the (usual) path; he shall move about without any (fixed) abode. He shall subsist on alms, and shall not give any (gift). He shall not wear even scant (apparel) save during the rainy season for the protection of the animal body. Here are the verses (to support this):

5-6. The water-pot, the ladle, the sling (to carry his effects), the staff, foot-wear, covering to protect from the cold, the loin-cloth, the garment (to cover the body), the ring of Kusa grass, the bath towel, as well as the upper cloth, the sacred thread and the scriptures – all these an ascetic shall renounce.

7. With purified water he shall bathe and wash and also drink of the same. He shall sleep on the sands of a river (bank) or in temples.

8. He shall not make the body endure the extremes of comfort or hardship. He shall not exult when praised, nor curse others when blamed.

9-11. The one who bears a staff (ascetic) shall be unfalteringly firm in celibacy. Looking at, touching, sporting, talking about, entering into secret dialogue, imagining, thinking about, or physical enjoyment (with women) – this is what the learned call the eightfold cohabitation. Brahmacharya [celibacy] is the contrary. It should be observed by those who seek Liberation.

11-12. The self-effulgent light which illumines the world ever shines. It is indeed the witness of the world, the Self of all, pure in form, the basis of all beings, whose nature is pure consciousness.

13. Not by action, not by (begetting) children, not by anything else, only by knowing Brahman, man attains Brahman.

14-15. That Brahman, which is without a second, and which is Truth, Knowledge and Happiness, is the object of (real) knowing. The best of the twice-born, who know Brahman residing in the cave which is called the highest heaven, during his transmigratory existence known as 'illusion', 'ignorance', etc., attain all desired things instantaneously.

16. He who realizes his own Self, which is the witness of the power called ignorance and illusion, knowing 'I am Brahman alone' becomes Brahman Itself.

17. From this Self which is one with Brahman and which is possessed of power (i.e. maya) arose the unmanifest ether (Akasa) like a rope-serpent.

18. Then from the ether emerged the unmanifest touch which is named 'air' (Vayu). Then from air emerged fire; from fire, water; and from water, the earth.

19. Then after dividing and compounding all those subtle (elements) into five, from them alone the auspicious Lord created the cosmic egg.

20. Enfolded in the cosmic egg are gods, anti-gods, Yakshas, Kinnaras, human beings, animals, birds, etc., in accordance with (the result of) their own actions.

21. The bodies of beings which appear in the form of (a framework of) bones, sinews, etc., is the self of the nature of food for the all-pervading Self.

22. Then, further within, is the self of Prana [vital energy] split (into five). Still further within is the self of the nature of mind which is different (from the others).

23. Next, even further within and different is the self of the nature of knowledge. Then, in the interior, distinct, is the self of the nature of bliss.

24. That (self) of the nature of food is pervaded by (the self) of the nature of vital energy; similarly (the self of) vital energy is by the nature (pervaded) by (the self) of the nature of mind.

25. The mind-self is pervaded by the self of knowledge. The ever-happy self of the nature of knowledge is always pervaded by bliss.

26. In the same way, the self of bliss is pervaded by Brahman, the witness, the innermost of all. Brahman is not (pervaded) by anything else.

27-28. By realizing directly this Brahman, which is named the Support (the Tail puccha), which is of the nature of truth, knowledge and non-duality, the essence, the joy, the eternal, the dweller in the body becomes happy everywhere. Wherefrom otherwise can there be happiness ?

28-29. If this supreme bliss which is the very Self of all beings were not existent, which human being can be alive ? Who can ever be active ?

29-30. Therefore it is this Being, shining fully in the consciousness, that ever makes happy the individual self, which is otherwise full of sorrow.

30-32. Only when the great ascetic realizes his complete unity without any difference from this, which is described as unseen, etc., he attains total fearlessness. This is the ultimate Good, supreme Immortality, absolute Existence, transcendent Brahman, beyond the three divisions (of time).

32-33. When an individual experiences even a slight difference in this (identity) he will have fear; there is no doubt.

33-34. Because of this sheath of bliss, from (God) Vishnu to a pillar – all always realize happiness though in different degrees.

34-35. For him who is versed in the scriptures, disinterested in attaining any position, and happy, the bliss which is his very nature shines forth by itself.

35-36. It is well known that word functions dependent upon a base (like jati, dravya, kriya, guna). Because of the absence of any (such) base, words recoil (from Brahman). For how can the word function in respect of the absolute bliss devoid of any base ?

37-38. This subtle mind which makes all things its object turns back from That, from which retreat also (the senses), hearing, touch, sight, etc., as well as the organs of actions; they are not capable of reaching the Supreme.

38-39. Realizing that Brahman which is Bliss, without a second, devoid of attributes, the solidarity of truth and consciousness, as one's own Self, one fears nought.

39-40. He who knows thus from the teaching of his Guru, who becomes master of himself, never suffers from the impact of good or bad actions.

40-41. The whole world which appeared formerly as the inflictor and the inflicted now shines as one's own Self, owing to the knowledge arising from the Vedantic teaching.

41-42. The pure (Brahman), God, the individual self, the knower, the means of knowledge, the object of knowledge and the result – thus, for empirical purposes, is the sevenfold distinction made.

43-44. (The Consciousness) devoid of the condition of Maya [cosmic nescience] is termed 'pure' (Brahman). When related to the cosmic nescience, it is God. Under

the influence of the individual nescience (Avidya) it is the individual self. When related to the internal organ it is called the knower. In relationship with the modifications of the internal organ, it is called the means of knowledge.

45-46. The Consciousness which is not known is termed 'object'; and the consciousness which is known is called 'result'. The intelligent man should meditate upon his own Self as devoid of all conditioning.

46. He who knows this in reality becomes Brahman itself.

47. Now I speak of the true essence of the teaching of all Vedanta: dying oneself, becoming oneself, one yet remains oneself. Thus (ends) the Upanishad.

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Here ends the Katharudropanishad belonging to the Krishna-Yajur-Veda.