

Subala Upanishad

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Om ! That (Brahman) is infinite, and this (universe) is infinite.

The infinite proceeds from the infinite.

(Then) taking the infinitude of the infinite (universe),

It remains as the infinite (Brahman) alone.

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 !

LESSON ONE: THE SUBSISTENCE AND DISSOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSE

1-3. The Unqualified Brahman: They say – ‘What existed ?’ He replied ‘Neither the existent nor the non-existent. From that Tamas was born; from Tamas was born Bhitadi (Prakriti – Matter), from it space, from space air, from air fire, from fire water and from water earth.

This became the Egg; which existing for just a year became two-fold – earth below and sky above. Between was Divine Man with a thousand heads, eyes, feet and arms (Virat-purusha).

4-6. He at first created the death of all creatures, having three eyes, heads and feet, armed with an axe. Brahma was afraid – he entered Brahma himself, he created seven mental sons – they created seven Virats, the pro-creators.

His face was Brahmana, arms were made into Kshatriya, thighs became the Vaishya, Sudra was born from the feet, air and vital air (Prana) from his ear, all this is from his heart.

Thus the First Section

1. From the Apana were created Nisadas, Yakshas etc., from the bones mountains, from the hair plants and trees, from the forehead Rudra (of anger).

2. The breath of this great being became Rik and other Vedas, phonetics, kalpa (the manual of ritual), grammar, etymology, metre, logic, astronomy, exegetic, law,

comments, glosses etc.

3. The golden light in which dwell the self, all worlds made itself into two – woman and man. Becoming Deva created Devas, becoming Rishi created Rishis, also Yakshas etc., as well as wild as wild and domestic animals, bull and cow, horse and mare,

male and female donkey, earth and the boar.

4. At the end, becoming Vaisvanara (fire), he burned (destroyed) all creatures – earth was absorbed in water, water in fire, fire in air, air in ether, ether in sense organs, they in subtle elements, they in Prakriti, Prakriti in Mahat, Mahat in Avyakta, Avyakta in

Akshara, Akshara in Tamas, it in God. Then there is neither existent nor non-existent. This is the doctrine of dissolution (as given in) Vedas.

Thus the Second Section

LESSON TWO: THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE

1. In the beginning, this was non-existent. The man of wisdom does grow, meditating upon the Atman which has no birth, no rising, nor setting, unestablished, having no sound, touch, form, taste, smell, decay nor any thing bigger.

2. Without vital breath, face, ears, speech, mind, radiance, eyes, name, lineage, head, hands or feet, smoothness, blood, measurability, neither long, short nor gross, nor atomic, shoreless, beyond description, not open, nor illuminable, nor closed, without inside or outside; it neither eats nor is eaten.

3. One can achieve (realize) this only by means of truth, charity, undying austerity, celibacy, detachment with six parts. He shall observe the three, self control, munificence and compassion. His vital airs do not depart but merge here in Brahman.

Thus the Third Section

1. In the midst of the heart, is a mass of red flesh in which is the Dahara of Lotus (in shape), blossoming in many ways like lily – there are ten holes in the heart where the vital airs are established.

2. When the (Jiva) is connected with Prana, then he sees rivers and cities of many kinds; when with Vyana, he sees Devas and Rishis; with Apana, Yakshas etc.; with Udana, the celestial worlds, gods, Skanda and Jayanta; with Samana, wealth also; with Vairambha (Prana) sees what is seen, heard, eaten and not eaten, visible and invisible.

3. Then these Nadis become hundred; from these, branch out seventy two thousand Nadis, in which the self sleeps and makes noises, in the second sheath he sleeps and sees this world and the other, hears all sounds – this they call clarity. Prana defends the body. The Nadis are filled with green, blue, yellow, red and white blood.

4. This Dahara lotus is blooming in many ways like a lily and like hair, so also the Nadis are placed in the heart. The divine self sleeps in the great sheath when there are no desires, no sleep even, there are no Devas or their worlds, Yagas, Mother, Father, kinsmen, no thieves or Brahmana-killer. All this is water – Again by the same path, he returns to wakefulness, this Samraj.

Thus the Fourth Section

1. The supreme being assigns places to their owners – the Nadi is their link. The eye is the owner in the body amidst the elements – what is seen in the divinity – the artery is the link. He that is in the eye, in the sun, artery, vital air, knowledge, bliss, heart's sky – he that moves inside all these is the self. Meditate on that self that is ageless, deathless, fearless, endless.

2. The ear is the owner in the body amidst the elements, (the guardians of) the quarters the deity, the artery is the link. He that is in the ear, audible objects, in the quarters etc., -- he that moves inside all this is the self. Meditate on that self who is ageless, deathless, fearless, painless, endless.

3. The nose is the owner in the body, the smellable is the elemental. The earth is the deity, the artery is the link. He that is in the nose etc., -- meditate on him.

4. The tongue is the owner of the body, the savourable is the elemental. Varuna is the deity; the artery is the link. He that is in the tongue etc., -- meditate on him.

5. The skin is the owner of the body, the touchable is the elemental, Vayu is the deity, the artery is the link. He that is in the skin etc., -- meditate on him.

6. The mind is the owner, the thinkable things are the elemental, the moon is the deity, the artery is the link. He that is in the mind etc., -- meditate on him.

7. Intellect is the owner, the cognizable is the elemental. Brahma the deity etc. He that is in the intellect etc., -- meditate on him.

8. Ego is the owner – object of the 'I' concept is the elemental, Rudra the deity – He that is the ego – meditate on him.

9. Speech the owner, utterable the elemental, fire the deity – He that is – meditate on him.

10. The mind stuff is the owner, the apprehensible is the elemental, the Jiva is the deity – meditate on him.

11. The hands are the owners, what is grasped is the elemental, Indra the deity – He that is in the hands etc., -- meditate on him.

12. The feet are the owners, the destination is the elemental, Vishnu the deity – He that is in the feet etc., -- meditate on him.

13. The male organ is the owner, the delectable is the elemental, Prajapati is the deity – He that is in the male organ etc., -- meditate on him.

14. He is the omniscient, almighty, inner ruler, source of all, waited on by all bliss but does not wait on bliss; waited on by Vedas and Shastras, but not waiting on them; whose food all this is but who is never food; agent and governor of all leadings, made of food-soul of elements, made of Prana – soul of sense-organs, made of mind; soul of thought, made of knowledge – soul of time, made of bliss – soul of dissolution.

15. There is oneness – how can there be duality – No mortality – how immortality ? Not cognisant inwardly or outwardly, or both ways – not a mass of knowledge, neither knowing nor not knowing.

Thus the Fifth Section

LESSON THREE

1. In The beginning there was nothing here – These creatures are born sans root and support.

2-3. Narayana is the eye as well as the visible, ear as well as the audible, nose and the scentable, tongue and the tastable, skin and the tactile, mind and the thinkable, intellect and its contents, ego and its field, speech and its contents, hands, feet, their fields, anus and genital – all are Narayana. Supporter, ordainer, transformer – all is He.

4. Adityas, Rudras, Maruts, Vasus, Asvins, Rik, Yajus, Sama, Mantras, Agni, oblation – all are Narayana, so also mothers, fathers etc.

5. Viraja, Sudarsana, Jita, Saumya, Amogha, Kumara, Amrita, Satya, Madhyama, Nasira, Sisura, Asura, Surya, Bhasvati are the names.

6. Roars, sings, blows, rains – Varuna, Aryama, Chandra, kala, kavi, Dhata, Brahma, Indra, Days and Half-days, moments as well as ages – all are He.

7. All this is Purusha only – the past and the future – that high place of Vishnu – the Suris (sages) look upon this always like the eye spread in the sky. The sages without mental conflict enhance its glory.

This is the doctrine of liberation according to the Vedas.

Thus the Sixth Section

LESSON FOUR: THE NATURE OF THE INNER CONTROLLER

1. The unborn, sole, immortal being inside the body, whose body is the Earth and who moves inside the body unknown to the Earth, who moves inside water, as the body unknown to it, who moves inside fire unknown to it, who moves inside air unknown to it, so also inside Mind, Intellect, Ego, Chitta (mind-stuff), Avyakta (unmanifest), Akshara (imperishable), Death – He is the inner, sinless, self, divine Narayana.

2. This he (Adibrahma) imported to Apantaratamas (Vishnu), Vishnu to Brahma, he to Ghorangiras who gave it to Raikva who gave it to Rama. He gave it to all living beings. Such is the doctrine of Nirvana according to Vedas.

Thus the Seventh Section

LESSON FIVE: THE SELF IN THE BODY

In this body of fat, flesh, moisture is placed this pure self of all, within the cave. The wise behold the immortal, luminous bliss, bodiless and imponderable, enshrined in this cave, the master of all, formless, massed splendour, pure, detached, divinely shining, the self that exceeds and whose form is imponderable. They behold it by sublation in this body that is as fickle as bubbles in water, empty like the plantain pith, a city in the sky, a painted wall, very much conditioned.

Thus the Eighth Section

1-14. Then Raikva asked, ‘Sir, into what do all things set ?’ He answered ‘The visible disappears in the eye, it is resolved (in the self) in the eye. The visible disappears in the sun, it is resolved in the sun. What disappears in the Virat (cosmic Man) is resolved in the self in the Virat. What disappears in the Prana is resolved in the Prana. What disappears in Vijnana (cognition) is resolved (in the self) in the Vijnana. What disappears in Ananda is resolved in Ananda (Bliss). What disappears in the Turiya is resolved in Turiya. That self is immortal, fearless, painless, infinite seedless. (All things are) resolved in that self’ – so said he.

15. He who knows this seedless (Brahman) himself becomes seedless. He does not

get birth and death, is not deluded, nor pierced or burned; does not tremble or get angry – they say he is the self – the burner of all.

16. This self is not got by hundreds of expositions, not by great learning, nor by reliance on intellectual knowledge, nor through power of memory, Vedas, sacrifices, austerities, Sankhya or Yoga, Ashramas, elucidation, laudation and exercises. The Vedic scholars achieve it, having become calm, restrained, withdrawn, tolerant and concentrating.

Thus the Ninth Section

Then Raikva asked, 'Sir, in what are all these established, He replied 'In the Rasatalas'. He asked 'In what are the Rasatalas woven, warp and woof ?' 'In the Bhū regions'.

'In what are Bhū woven ?' 'In Suvar'.

'In what are Suvar woven ?' 'In Mahar'.

'In what are Mahar woven ?' 'In Janas'.

'In what are Janas woven ?' 'In Tapas'.

'In what are Tapas woven ?' 'In Prajapati's region'.

'In what are these woven ?' 'In Brahma's region'.

All the worlds are extended, warp and woof, in the Brahman, like gems in a string – Thus he spoke.

Whoever knows these worlds as extended in the self, indeed, becomes the self. This is the doctrine of Nirvana of the Vedas.

Thus the Tenth Section

LESSON SIX: THE UPWARD PATH

Then Raikva asked him, 'Sir, this mass of knowledge moving upwards, what place does he leave when departing upwards ?' He replied 'In the centre of the heart is a red mass of flesh – in it a small white lotus, blooming like a lily in many ways. In its centre is a sea with a shining space in the middle. Four arteries are these – Rama, Arama, Iccha, Apunarbhava (pleasing, not pleasing, desire and not born again). Of these Rama leads to the world of merit through merit, Arama to the world of demerit through demerit. By Iccha, one reaches what one thinks of. By Apunarbhava he breaks through the sheath (Kosa) then the cranium, earth, water, fire, air, ether,

mind, elements, Mahat, Avyakta, akshara, Mrityu. This Mrityu becomes one with the supreme deity. Beyond that there is neither being nor non-being, nor their combination. This is the doctrine of Nirvana of the Vedas.

Thus the Eleventh Section

LESSON SEVEN: SAMADHI

From Narayana, arose raw food (Ignorance of Atman) (at the beginning of Brahma's day); at the end of the day (the deluges) is cooked in Aditya. Flesh etc., are again cooked in the gastric fire. Eat only what is fresh, not meant for another – do not beg for it.

Thus the Twelfth Section

1. The sage should desire to be with child-like nature, which is unattached, faultless. Through silence, learning, free from obligation is got aloneness. Prajapati said, 'Knowing the great place, one should live at the base of a tree, ill-clad, friendless, alone in Samadhi desiring the self alone, having won all desired objects, desireless, desires eroded. He is not afraid of elephants, lions, flies, mongoose, snakes etc., knowing as forms of death. One should remain like a tree; he shall not become angry even when cut down, or tremble, like stone, like sky, he shall remain with truth.

2. The heart of all smells is Earth, of tastes water, of forms fire, of touchless air, of sounds ether. Avyakta is the heart of all movements, Mrityu of all Sattvas (living beings). Death indeed becomes one with the supreme Deity. Beyond it there is neither being nor non-being nor their combination – this is the doctrine of Nirvana of the Vedas.

Thus the Thirteenth Section

LESSON EIGHT

The earth is indeed the food, water is the eater; water is the food, fire the eater; fire is the food, air is the eater; air is the food, ether the eater; mind the food, intellect the eater; intellect the food, Avyakta the eater; Avyakta the food, Akshara (imperishable) is the eater, Akshara the food, Death is the eater – it becomes one in the supreme deity beyond which there is neither existence nor non-existence – this is the Vedic doctrines of liberation.

Thus the Fourteenth Section

LESSON NINE: BURNING THE PRINCIPLES (BASES)

The Raikva asked, 'Sir, this mass of knowledge, the spirit – when he departs, which does he burn ?' The reply, 'He burns Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana, Samana, Vairambha, Mukhya, Antaryama, Prabhanja, Kumara, Syena, Sveta, Krishna, Naga, also Prithvi etc., from Jagarita upto Turiya; Lokaloka, dharma and adharm; regions without the sun, without limits and light – Mrityu becomes one with the supreme deity – this is the Vedic lecture of liberation'.

Thus the Fifteenth Section

LESSON TEN: IMPARTING BRAHMAVIDYA

The secret doctrine of Subala, should not be taught to one who is not tranquil, one who is not son or disciple, one who stays for less than a year, whose family and character are unknown.

To one supremely devoted to god and so to the preceptor, these ideas reveal themselves, to the great soul !

This is the doctrine of liberation according to Vedas.

Thus the Sixteenth Section

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The infinite proceeds from the infinite.

(Then) taking the infinitude of the infinite (universe),

It remains as the infinite (Brahman) alone.

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 !

Here ends the Subalopnishad belonging to the Sukla-Yajur-Veda.