

LESSON TWO GANAPATI UPANISHAD

Section Six

Translation

Recite the syllable Ga first. Follow this with the first of the alphabets ie. A. Then pronounce the anusvara. Adorn it with the crescent. Prefix that with the taara. This is the form that is final. GA is anterior A is middle. **M is at the end. The dot is above. The crescent is below that. The nasalic is the connection.

This is Ganesha vidya. Ganak is the seer. The metre is nischid gayatree. The presiding deity is Ganesh. Om ga**m I bow to ganapathi.

Notes

**M – The end of the mantra letter should sound like a very mild M

Most of the upanishads were composed long before writing became common as a method of transmitting knowledge. The above section deals with the detailed pronunciation of the beeja or seed mantra of ganesh “GA**M”. To the Sanskrit letter ga (the first of the guttural section) is added the crescent and dot on top. This then becomes the beeja or seed mantra for Ganapathi. This is preceded by Om.

Next portion is the prelude to the mantra Om GA**M GANA PATAYE NAMAH. The rishi who conceived this mantra and is its guardian is Ganak. The metre to recite is nischid gayatree. The mantra devatha or the presiding deity particular to this mantra is Ganesh. The two factors that is to be considered when studying mantra devatha are **shabda** or sound and **artha** or the product of sound. Thus when any mantra is properly recited, in due course of time the sound vibrations will reveal the product in the form of unmistakable and specific experiences. This reveals the subtle form of the particular devatha. The time taken and final quality of the product is determined by the devotee’s mental framework, sincerity of intent, effort and previous karma-s.

Section Seven

Translation

Desiring to know of ekandantha, I contemplate on vakrathunda. May danthi propel me. Oh, one with the single tusk, with four hands, holding the noose and the hook. Holding the gesture of protection and that of blessing. Decorated with the flag bearing the mouse insignia. Red, with protruding belly, with winnow-like ears, dressed in red clothing. Smearred with red chandan and worshipped with red flowers. The deity who is merciful to his devotees, the untainted cause of this phenomenal world. Existing prior to creation, available again and again. Beyond manifestation and awareness. He who contemplates thus daily, he is a yogi, the best of yogis.

I bow to the lord of illuminators. I bow to the lord of calculations. I bow to the one with the protruding belly, to the one with the single tusk and to the destroyer of obstacles. To the son of shiva and to the auspicious and beneficent deity I bow.

Notes

The terms ekandantha, vakrathunda and lambodara will be taken up in PART TWO of this course. Danthi means the one with the tooth or tusk.

This line is formulated in the gayathri style. Gayathris are there for almost all deities.

Preceding any puja the gayathri pertaining to that deity is invoked. During the sacred thread

ceremony the initiate is taught the gayathri to Savita, the Solar Deity. The followers of Arya Samaj have all members regularly using this gayathri for fire offerings. Here we are given the Ganesh gayathri. Gayathri is perhaps the best way to specify the objective, the means and the subject of worship prior to the act.

The noose of love draws the devotee towards the deity in love. The hook of fury pulls the devotee forcibly away from negative forces.

The mouse vehicle will be taken up in PART TWO OF this course.

Red is the colour of love. Here Shri Ganesh is full of love for his devotee. We shall approach him too with love therefore our choice of the red flowers for offering.

Winnow baskets are used in sifting grain. They remove the husk and grit. In man this represents viveka buddhi, the power of discriminating good from bad, the useful from the wasteful and the purposeful from the meaningless.

The rest of his appearance will be taken up in PART TWO

The phenomenal world with all its changes and limiting conditions although created by Ganesh does not affect him.

Though he is anterior to time he is still available to us who are seemingly caught in the network of time.

We should resort to him to illumine us on what is real. We should also be aware that all kinds of calculations continue to work all around and in our body mind equipment all the time. He is the Lord of all Calculations. Arithmetic in Sanskrit is Ganakavidyaa

The word Shiva stands for Purity. The son of the pure one, lord Shiva, Ganesh is ever ready to bless us.

We must pray to Ganesh to give us the wisdom to choose actions that are proper and have the strength to perform them in consistency with Rrtm.

Section Eight

Translation

One who studies- recites this atharvasheersha will be blessed with a mental framework that is prone towards brhman. Obstacles of all kinds will not thwart his studies. He will be always happy . He will be free from falling the great falling into the five.

Demerits incurred in the day will be destroyed by studying-reciting this in the evening.

Demerits incurred at night will be destroyed when studied-recited early morning. Study-

Recitation of this in the evening and in the morning will render one free of demerits.

He will attain dharma, artha, kama and moksha.

Notes

The five refers to the five debts that we owe the moment we have taken our birth. The debts are to the five principles or panchabhutas, our ancestors, mankind, the rishis and the devatas.

Negligence on our part by not paying this debt causes us to fall into the "pit of great demerits" .automatically. Feeding of animals, having offspring and performing shraddh (rites to the departed), taking care of guests, studying our scriptures and worshipping the devas are the respective ways of discharging these debts.

Demerits or paapa are incurred when thoughts inconsistent with ritam are deliberated upon and then followed by actions. Actions opposite of this earn merit or punya.

Translation

Mantra siddhi is obtained if he performs this by the bank of a great river while contemplating on the reflection of the sun during a solar eclipse. He becomes free from great obstacles, free from great limiting conditions and great demerits. He gains the knowledge that covers all. He gains the knowledge that covers all. This is the veda. This is the upanishad.

Notes

To be thorough in any knowledge one of the best ways is to teach what one has learned and thus test it in the crucible of discussion. In ancient days, in gurukulas where upanishads were taught, the teacher and his disciples engaged in Tarka vidya . This is the Knowledge of Discussion and Argument. There were ground rules framed for this to allow a fair discussion. A warning is issued regarding the role of having a motive to teach based on mere fancy or passion. The student of this upanishad must be cognizant of the cosmic connection this has. Through contemplation, study and regular use of this text one becomes proficient. After proficiency is attained then one knows how this can be taught. The teaching is to be adjusted to the receiver's capacity. The entire upanishad (atharvasheersha) can be wielded like a mantra. Several methods with specific results are listed in this upanishad.

Kubera symbolises wealth. He is the Protector Deity of the Northern Direction.

Durva is a dark green grass that has many nodal growths. This symbolises longevity and growth. Garlands made from these are offered at Ganesh temples.

Homa is the Fire Offering Ritual common in India whose origins are from Vedic times.

Modaka is a sweet delicacy that may be best described as dumplings made with rice flour, jaggery (Indian brown sugar) and coconut. When the modak is held in the hand of a murthi or icon of Ganesh then it represents reward.

Chathurthi is the fourth day of the lunar cycle. Shukla chathurthi generally falls on the fourth day after new moon. This day is sacred for worshippers of Ganesh.

Ghee is clarified and strained butter.

Brahmanas are those whose way of life revolves around the study and propagation of knowledge of Brhman- the Great Divine.

Primal veiling refers to maayaa. For example, if brhman is one side of the coin the other side is maaya. If brhman is male then maayaa is female. This veiling is what causes us not to understand the Reality that is hidden behind all creation and phenomenon. The finite is thus mistaken for the Infinite. If brhman is static then maayaa is kinetic energy. It is this energy that brought the world into existence and keeps it going.

More rituals are listed for those who wish for specific gains.

Limiting conditions or doshas are found as part and parcel of creation. The pancha mahabhutas that are the building blocks of this universe have the three gunas (properties) tamas (inertia), rajas (activity) and satva (equilibrium) as integral parts of them. All three gunas have intrinsic conditions that are growth promoters and growth limitors. Since the whole universe and all its contents including us are made up of a combination of the derivatives it is natural that doshas affect us too.

This then is the Knowledge. This then is the Teaching.

SECTION TEN is the same as SECTION ONE.

*End of LESSON TWO - GANAPATI UPANISHAD
Of GANESHA TATTVAM -Praveshika
Jayatu Shree Dunttee*

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