



# *The Isha Upanishad*

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**yaathaa-that-yato thaan  
vyada-dhaach  
chaash-vatee-bhyah  
samaa-bhyahah**

He is all-pervasive, pure, body-less, without wound, without sinews, taintless, untouched by sin, omniscient, ruler of mind, transcendent, and self-existent; he has duly allotted the (respective) duties to the eternal years (i.e., to the eternal creators called by that name).

When we become an enlightened person '*paryagaat* – a person who must know and is enlightened' to the fact that the Greatest of all is '*akaayam* - unembodied; *avranam* - without reproach; *asnaaviram* - without veins; *kaviih* - omniscient; *maneese* – philosopher, *paribhooh* - the greatest of all; *svayambhooh* – who is self-sufficient' When we become knowledgeable and enlightened and realize that God is radiant, formless, flawless and indivisible, beyond reproach, pure and uncontaminated by evil, the self-sufficient, all-knowing, without form and self-existent. This same great Omnipresent being has been granting righteous desires to the souls since '*saasvateebhyah* - immemorial; *samaabhyah* – time'. We ask O God that you grant us all our righteous desires which will help us to continue on that path to your abode.

(9)

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते ।  
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ विद्यायाँ रताः ॥९॥

**Andhan tamah pravi-shanti  
Ye 'vidyaam upaasate  
Tato bhooya ivaa te tamo  
Yau vidyaa-yaam rataa-hah**

Those who worship *avidya*, enter into blinded darkness; but into greater darkness than that, enter they who are engaged *invidya*.

Those who are engaged in the culture of evil activities and '*andham* - gross ignorance' blindly devote themselves and worship '*upaasate* – worship' these illusions shall '*pravisanti* - enter into' into the darkest '*tamah* – darkness' region of ignorance'. Worse still are those who are engaged in the so-called culture of knowledge, the false knowledge '*vidyaayaam* - in the culture of knowledge; *rataah* – engaged'!

This verse, the ninth verse in the Isha Upanishad tells us about those who live their lives engaged in the culture of evil activities! It tell us what becomes of those of us who think in inhuman ways, in evil ways!

But what are these evil activities?

- 1) It is those activities which are not peaceful, loving, kind, tolerant, and helpful to others! This verse says that those of us who engage in hurtful behavior and who find pleasure in inflicting pain and hurt on others! *They shall enter into the darkest region of ignorance. 'tamah – darkness'*

- 2) Those of us who are selfish and uncaring towards the other children of God and our brothers, sisters, our mothers and fathers! *They shall enter into the darkest region of ignorance. ‘tamah – darkness’*
- 3) Those of us who abuse women and children!
- 4) Those who devote themselves to the illusions of the world and worship these illusions. *They shall enter into the darkest region of ignorance. ‘tamah – darkness’*
- 5) And it says that worse still are those who are engaged in the so-called culture of knowledge, the false knowledge! Those who make themselves the slave to their egos and use knowledge not to enlighten themselves but to feed the ego! *They shall enter into the darkest region of ignorance. ‘tamah – darkness’*
- 6) Those of us who hate and dislike and engage in gossip and push people apart instead of bringing people together and promoting Love. *They shall enter into the darkest region of ignorance. ‘tamah – darkness’*

(10)

अन्यदेवाहुर्विद्ययाऽन्यदाहुरविद्यया ।  
इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचक्षिरे ॥ १० ॥

*Anya devaa-hur vid-yaya  
anyada-ahur-avidya-yaa  
iti shu-shruma dheera-naam  
ye nas tad vi-cha-chak-shire*

“They say that by *vidya* a really different result is achieved, and by *avidya* a different result.” Thus have we heard (the teaching of) those wise men who explained that to us.

The wise sages and gurus have *chakshire* - explained to us that one result is derived from the practice of ‘*vid-yayaa* - by the true culture of knowledge’, and that a different result is obtained from the culture of ‘*avidyayaa* - by culture of illusion and ignorance’. Meaning here that we expend energy in the thought and practice of knowledge. First, it is a waste of effort and energy in following false knowledge and doing things which leads to unrighteous ends and opposes our inner, inherent nature of righteousness. So, let us choose instead to expend our energy of thought and action in performing righteous duties and knowledge.

(11)

विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयै सह ।  
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते ॥ ११ ॥

*Vidyaaam cha-vidyaam cha  
yas tad vedo-bhayam saha  
avidya-yaa mrityum teer-tvaa  
vidyaya mritam-ashnute*



He who knows these two – *vidya* and *avidya* – together, attains immortality through *vidya*, by crossing over death through *avidya*.

Only one who can understand enough to be able to differentiate ‘*vidyaam* - knowledge in fact; and *avidyaam* -ignorance’. The person who understands the process of illusion and that of true knowledge ‘*saha* – simultaneously’ side by side! He who can explain the difference between ignorance and who can use this knowledge of difference between the two will be able to choose the right path in life. Because of this knowledge, this person will transcend the influence of repeated birth and death, and eventually enjoy immortality.

(12)

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसम्भूतिमुपासते ।  
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ सम्भूत्यो रताः ॥ १२ ॥

*Andhan tamah pravi-shanti  
ye 'sam-bhootim upaa-sate  
tato bhooya iva te tamo  
yau sam-bhoot-yaam rataah*

Those who worship the Un-manifested, enter into blinding darkness; but those who are devoted to the Manifest, enter into greater darkness.

This verse from Isha Upanishad says that those who are engaged in the worship of ‘*andham* – of ignorance and of false Gods’ will ‘*pravishanti* - enter into, *tamah* - darkness’ into the darkest region of ignorance. So too will those who ‘*upaasate* – worship, *asambhootim* - demigods’ of the impersonal and false Absolute. This means that there are those of us who in the weakness of our human-ness, raise others to God-like status and then we worship them. To do this in and of itself is ‘*pravishanti* - entering into, *tamah* – darkness of ignorance’ How many times have you heard those who do drugs and smoke all kinds of things say that they feel some sort of ‘peace or meditative’ state? This shloka tells us that those who involves themselves in activities that somehow leads to that false ‘peace of mind’, like drugs and empty recitations of words without focus, which we then continue on to worship also exists in *tamah* – darkness of ignorance’!

Our Havan Sandhya and Meditation, when done with true focus on God is the shortest, most direct path to God!

(13)

अन्यदेवाहुः सम्भवादन्यदाहुरसम्भवात् ।  
इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचक्षिरे ॥ १३ ॥

*Anya-devaa-huh sam-bha-vaad  
Anyada-hur asam-bhavaat  
iti shu-shru-ma dheeraanaam  
ye nas tad vicha-chak-shire*

“They spoke of different results from the worship of the Manifested, and they spoke of different results from the worship of the Unmanifested” – thus we have heard (the teaching of those wise men.)

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This verse tells us that one result is obtained by worshipping ‘**sambhavaat** - by worshipping the Supreme Lord, the cause of all causes’, the true and Supreme God and that another and different result is achieved by worshipping ‘**asambhavaat** - by worshipping what is not the Supreme’, or the false Gods. All this is taught to us by the **dheeraanaam** - wise ones of clear undisturbed minds who **vichachakshire** -clearly explained it.

(14)

सम्भूतिं च विनाशं च यस्तद्वेदोभयै सह ।  
विनाशेन मृत्युं तीर्त्वा सम्भूत्याऽमृतमश्नुते ॥१४॥

**Sam-bhoo-tim cha vinaa-sham cha**  
**yas tad vedo-bha-yam sa ha**  
**vinaa-she-na mrityum teerth-tva**  
**sam-bhoot-yaam ritam ash-nutey**

He who knows these two – the Unmanifested and Destruction – together, attains immortality through the Unmanifested by crossing death through Destruction.

One should **veda** – should know perfectly well that **sambhootim** - God and nature in both the **vinaa-aham** - the temporary material manifestation and the un-manifested forms, where **vinaashena** - with everything which not of material, tangible nature. When one knows these, he surpasses death and the cosmic manifestation with it. This person will find his place in the **sam-bhootyaa** – the eternal Kingdom of God and he will; **ashnute** – enjoy his **amritam** - eternal life of bliss and knowledge. This person enjoys immortality.

(15)

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।  
तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥१५॥

**Hiran-mayena paatrena**  
**Satyas-yaa pihitam mukham**  
**tat tvam pooshann-apaa-vrinu**  
**satya-dharmaa ya-drishtaye**

The the face of the Truth (Brahman in the solar orb) is concealed with a golden vessel. Do thou, O Sun, open it so as to be seen by me, who am by nature truthful (or, who am the performer of rightful duties).

The real **mukham** – face of truth ‘**satyasya** - of the Supreme Truth’ is ‘**apihitam** - covered’ ‘**paatrena** – covered by a brilliant covering! It is covered by ‘**hiranmayena** - by a dazzling golden brilliance’. O Lord, O ‘**pooshan** - O sustainer we ask you to please **apaavrinu** - kindly remove’ that covering and **drishtaye** - show Yourself to Your ‘**satya** - pure; **dharmaaya** - unto the devotee’.

We pray O Lord to help us remove all obstacles, in whatever shape or form, so that we can realize our true self and the divinity within.

(16)

पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्यं प्राजापत्यं व्यूहं रश्मीन् समूहं  
तेजः । यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि  
योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥१६॥

*Pooshan-ekar-she-yama soorya  
Prajaa-patya vyoohar ashmeen-samooha  
Tejo yat-te roopam kalyana-ta-mam  
tat-te pashyaami  
Yo saav-asau puru-shah soham asmi*

O Thou, who art the nourisher, the solitary traveler, the controller, the acquirer, the son of Prajapati, do remove Thy rays, do gather up thy dazzle. I shall behold that form of Thine, which is the most benign. I am that very person that is yonder (in the sun).

O my Lord, you who are the supreme philosopher, and ‘*pooshan* – the maintainer’ of the universe, you who controls all aspects of the Universe and who is the destination of the pure devotees. **O** *prajaaapatya* - the well-wisher of the *prajaaapatīs*’ the progenitors of mankind and ‘*soorya* - the destination of the *sooris* (all great devotees); I beg of you to please help me remove, to ‘*samooha* - kindly withdraw’ the brilliance of your transcendental rays so that I can see Your ‘*roopam* – form’ of bliss. This does not really mean that God removes his brilliance. This means that may God grant us the intelligence through the knowledge of the Vedas so that we may have the ability to see through the shroud of mystery and become one with God. May we become capable of identifying ourselves as one with God. Help me O Lord that ‘*pashyaami* - I may see’ beyond, to understand the teachings of the Vedas and Help me O God to remove any veil of ignorance or false knowledge so that I may understand your true nature and by doing so, that I may understand my own true nature. ‘*sah* - myself; *aham* - I; *asmi* – am’ – ‘**Soham** – I am that’

You who are the eternal Supreme God, who is called ‘that’ and ‘I am that’.

(17)

वायुरनिलममृतमथेदं भस्मांतै शरीरम् ।  
ॐ क्रतो स्मर कृतै स्मर क्रतो स्मर कृतै स्मर  
॥१७॥

*Vaayur-anilam-amritam-mathedam  
bhasmaantam shariram  
Om krato smara kritam smara  
krato smara kritam smara*

Let my vital force, my *praana*, my *vaayuh* – my air of life go back to the *anilam* – the total reservoir of immortal air; and now let this *shareeram* – this body be *bhasmaantam* - reduced to ashes. O soul, *krato* – the enjoyer of sacrifices, – *smara*– please remember *kritam* - all that has been done for you. *smara* – and please remember OM!

We pray for the soul, that life giving vital force that sustains the body and is immaterial and immortal. At death even after the body is finally reduced to ashes, the soul which reaped the karma of that body and cannot die, we pray that you keep your vitality and your success for your future, and that you carry on and remember your past deeds and your errors and is motivated to become ever pure and pure. Remember God.

(18)

अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान् विश्वानि देव  
वयुनानि विद्वान् । युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठां  
ते नमउक्तिं विधेम ॥१८॥

*Agne naya supathaa raaye asmaan  
vishwaani deva vayunaani vidwaan.  
Yuyo-dhyas-mai juhuraanam eno  
bhooyish-thaan te nama uktim vidhema*

O *Agne* - brilliant Lord, thou art the knower of all our *vayunaani* – thoughts and deeds! And we pray to thee to lead us *naya* – to lead or guide us to walk along the *supathaa* – the righteous path for *raaye* – wealth and wisdom. We ask for your help to eliminate our bad habits and to guide us away from the *juhuraanam* – perverse crooked path in our lives! O Lord, we *vidhema* – offer to thee our *namah* – salutation, deep reverence and devout devotion!

O brilliant Lord, O Agne, thou art the knower of all our thoughts and deeds and we pray to thee to lead us along the righteous path for wealth and wisdom. You are the all-knowing One, you know all our vices. Help us eliminate our vices. We offer to thee our deep reverence and devout devotion.

*Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om*