

कठोपनिषद् Kāthopaniṣad

पराचः कामाननुयन्ति बालास्ते मृत्योर्यन्ति विततस्य पाशम् ।

अथ धीरा अमृतत्वं विदित्वा ध्रुवमध्रुवेष्विह न प्रार्थयन्ते ॥

parācaḥ kāmānanuyanti bālāste mṛtyoryanti vitatasya pāśam ।

atha dhīrā amṛtatvaṁ viditvā dhruvamadhruveṣviha na prārthayante ॥ 2.1.2 ॥

Persons without proper discrimination go after objects of senses. They get enmeshed in the snares of Death which is widespread. The discriminating people who come to know what immortality is in the midst of impermanent things, do not seek anything else here. 2.1.2.

Those who go after the sense objects and not after what they ought to seek are called here bālāḥ, meaning they are like children. They are avivekinaḥ, persons without proper discrimination in them. Such persons go after the objects which destroy the person. Their commitment is only to what is generally understood to be achieved due to śobhanā adhyāsa which is seeing something that is not there. It is seeing in the object a value which is not there. Seeing gold as gold is one thing but seeing it as some thing that gives security in life is a different thing. To be objective, gold is to be understood as a pure metal and that it is a valuable one. But to assume that it would give security and that one's life will be fulfilled by possession of it is something is different. It is a clear case of misapprehending something that is not there which is called adhyāsa. In the Vedas, the description of heaven is bewitching and enticed by it one could think that he would solve all problems by reaching heaven.

If one sees himself as a wanting person, he is not going to solve the problem by achieving something or by giving up something. If the problem is clear, he is a viveki. If it is not clear, he is an aviveki and is like bālāḥ, children. Children give their hearts to balloons and they see in them a certain security. They cling on to the saree of their mothers hoping it will protect them from the threatening monkeys. They look upon it as something that will provide some security. This is purely śobhanā adhyāsa. In the piece of cloth of the other, the child superimposes security. The child is generally capable of doing that for lack of knowledge. So too people superimpose upon situations and objects and people also. They superimpose values upon objects which are not there. Later, when they grow up also they do not change much. From balloon, they transfer śobhanā

adhyāsa to some other things like 'stocks'. Balloon and 'stocks' have similarity. Both of them inflate and deflate.

Those who have śobhanā adhyāsa are called bālāḥ. They are committed to external world of objects alone. Goaded by adhyasa or superimposition and desire, they see themselves as wanting persons and that is the cause for pressure in their lives. The sense of dissatisfaction is natural because one's svarūpa is just the opposite. Pūrṇatvam is the svarūpa. One gets estranged from himself and hence he can't be at home. The fact that he continues to be a wanting person reveals that there is self-dissatisfaction which arises from self-confusion. Not discerning this, the wanting person would go definitely one's own likes and dislikes which he picks up while growing up in a given culture and society. Based upon personal idiosyncrasies, one has one's own rāga and dveṣa. Each one has his own or her own likes and dislikes and according to that he or she goes after the ends. The ends are dictated by rāga and dveṣa and that is very natural. They are external – parācaḥ and they follow - anuyanti anugacchanti— those ends. All the time they walk on the beaten tracks alone. They do not stop for a moment and see where they have reached.

Bālās te mṛtyoryanti vitatasya pāśam: The one who is always around is the Lord Death, Mṛtyu. He is everywhere— vitataḥ vyāptaḥ. Those who are external—parācaḥ, get into his pāśa. Pāśa is that by which things are bound— pāśyate badhyate yena iti pāśaḥ. That by which those who are external are bound are body-mind-sense complex. Really speaking avidhyā kāma karma alone is the pāśa. Avidhyā is ignorance and error born out of kāma. From kāma is born karma and karmaphala. A result of this karma phala is to be born with a body-mind-senses complex. When that karma phala is over, he is reborn to perform the same karma. This alone is pāśa. With this pāśa he is to be born again and again and is caught in a never ending vicious circle of being born, growing, undergo modifications, decline and death. During the life also there is continuous maraṇam, death. He is caught up in disease and old age. Really death arrives slowly. One organ after the other attempts to quit, and this means the Lord of Death is doing his work quietly and silently.

Knowing very well from Sastra through a teacher that the very nature of oneself is not limited by time and does not undergo any change, dhruvam, he does not dwell upon the objects of senses which are variable. Place, time and situations appear existing because of one's svarūpa which is dhruvam and the adhiṣṭānam, the substratum for everything. Gaining this knowledge, one does not ask for anything else in this world - dhruvam adhrueṣvīha na prārthayante. They transcend the three-fold desires, viz. progeney, wealth and loka.