



## Muṇḍakopaniṣad Mantra 3



यस्याग्निहोत्रमदर्शमपौर्णमासम्  
अचातुर्मास्यमनाग्रयणमतिथिवर्जितं च ।  
अहुतमवैश्वदेवमविधिना हुतम्  
आसप्तमांस्तस्य लोकान् हिनस्ति ॥ १ । २ । ३  
yasyāgnihotramadarśamapaurṇamāsam  
acāturmāsyamanāgrayaṇamatithivarjitaṃ ca ।  
ahutamavaiśvadevamavidhinā hutam  
āsaptamāmstasya lokān hinasti ॥ 1|2|3

yasya – for the one who performs agnihotra; agnihotram – the agnihotra ritual; adarśam – not accompanied by darśa ritual; apaurṇamāsam – not accompanied by paurṇamāsa ritual; acāturmāsyam – without cāturmāsyā ritual; anāgrayaṇam – without āgrayaṇa ritual; atithivarjitaṃ – without worship of guests; avaiśvadevam – without vaiśvadeva ritual; ahutam – not (done) daily; avidhinā hutam – offered without following the stipulations; tasya – for that person; āsaptamām lokān – all the seven worlds; hinasti – destroys.

For the one who performs the agnihotra that is devoid of darśa and paurṇamāsa rituals, without sya ritual, without āgrayaṇa ritual, without worship of atithis, not accompanied by worship of a viśvedevās and not offering oblations in the stipulated manner – for that person the agnihotra ritual destroys all the seven worlds (he does not get the result of the ritual)'

Yasy āgnihotram adarśam apaurṇamāsam: agnihotra that is not accompanied by darśa and paurṇamāsa rituals. An agnihotrin<sup>1</sup> is expected to perform darśa and paurṇamāsa rituals also. Darśa is the karma that is performed on the new moon day and is associated with agnihotra. Agnihotra which is unaccompanied by darśa ritual, is adarśa. Darśa is to be followed by another ritual that is to be done on the full moon day. That is known as paurṇamāsa. Agnihotra which is not accompanied by paurṇamāsa ritual is apaurṇamāsa. Darśa and paurṇamāsa are one ritual really. Only an agnihotrin performs

<sup>1</sup> The one who performs the agnihotra daily is called agnihotrin

these rituals. The one who is not an agniotrin cannot perform darśa and paurṇamāsa. **If mere agnihotra is done daily and properly, it has its own results. But accompanied by darśa paurṇamāsa it has a better result. This is the contention of the śāstra.**

**Acāturmāsyam:** agnihotra not accompanied by cāturmāsyā. Cāturmāsyā karma is performed every fourth month and completed through the year. If this particular ritual is not performed, that agnihotra is called acāturmāsyā.

Anāgrayaṇam : agnihotra not accompanied by āgrayaṇa ritual. Āgrayaṇa ritual is done as the autumn begins, and also during spring. In both these seasons we get new grains. With the new grains one cooks the food and that is offered unto the fire. One can simply perform the agnihotra ritual without the above accompanying rituals. But one should definitely follow a few things mentioned below.

Atithi varjitaṃ : agnihotra not accompanied by worship of guests.<sup>2</sup> Atithi pūjā refers to entertaining an athithi, a guest, everyday. An athithi is one who comes without prior information. Before one takes one's midday meal, one should come out and look for anyone who is looking for an invitation for bhikṣā. This used to be the daily practice in India. If some one comes, the person should be properly received and given food. This is called atithi pūjā. Atithi varjita means an agnihotra without atithi pūjā.

Ahutam : agnihotra not done daily. One has to do the agnihotra ritual daily. If it is done irregularly, then it is called ahutam. One has got to do it without omissions. Otherwise, all that one has done becomes a waste. If it is not possible at all to perform the ritual on a particular day or days, there are methods for making up the omission. There are prāyaścitta karmās, rituals of atonement. Prāyaścitta karmās cannot be used as an alternative. When one is in a situation where one cannot do it at all, only then can one have that as an option. Ahutam means not done daily solely due to indifference.

Avaiśvadevam : an agnihotra not accompanied by the viśvedevā ritual. This ritual also has to be done every day. In this ritual, the viśve devās, a particular group of deities, ten in number are offered food. This is to be done every day before eating.. There is certain anna śuddhi, purification of food etc., involved in this ritual. If it is not done, that agnihotra is called avaiśva devam.

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<sup>2</sup> अतिथि पूजनं च अहन्यहन्यक्रियमाणं यस्य । - मुण्डक भाष्यम्

Avidhinā hutam : agnihotra done without following the rules. There are vidhis, stipulations in doing agnihotra. One has to follow all the steps. One has to do the ritual without omitting any step; otherwise the karma becomes avidhinā hutam, that which is offered without following the stipulations.

That agnihotrin who performs agnihotra properly and does all the rituals mentioned here, can get any one of the seven lokas<sup>3</sup>. – bhūḥ, bhuvah, suvah, mahaḥ, janaḥ, tapaḥ and satyam. But if it is not accompanied by all these things, one cannot get any one of them. What happens to that agnihotra?

Āsaptamān lokān hinasti : it destroys all the seven worlds. Here the śruti depicts, through a hyperbole, the results of improperly performed karmas. The statement here is that such karmas destroy all the seven worlds, which means that the person does not get the result of the agnihotra ritual. What he gets is only the āyāsa, tiresome effort, in performing the ritual.<sup>4</sup> With sun blazing outside when one performs this ritual sitting by the side of the fire, that is great effort. He has to fan the fire every now and then to get it to produce the flames. The smoke produces tears. That is the only result he gets. What denies the result is not adarśa or apaurṇamāsa rituals, but atithi varjitam, avaiśvadevam, ahutam, avidhinā hutam. So, an agnihotrin also must perform daily pañcamahāyajñānās, the five great sacrifices<sup>5</sup>. One of them is atithi pūjā. These daily rituals must be there in one's life; then only is agnihotra effective.

One meaning of himsa is that all the seven lokas including brahma-loka<sup>6</sup> are denied for this person. Śaṅkara gives another meaning also. If a person does agnihotra of the above type, he will not get any piṇḍodaka, oblations of rice-balls and water.<sup>7</sup>

For seven generations there will not be any person to perform śrāddaha, a ritual performed at the death anniversary of one's parents.

Therefore, karmas like agnihotra should be performed properly. The daily life must be proper, śrāddaha must be there and the rituals should be done in time. This is the nature of karma. It is continued in the next mantra.

*To be continued..*

<sup>3</sup> These are the svargas – heavens, said to be successively higher than the previous ones in terms of quality of enjoyment.

<sup>4</sup> तस्य कर्तुः लोकान् हिनस्ति हिन्स्तीव आयास-मात्र-फलत्वात् ॥ ते लोकाः एवेम्भूतेन अग्निहोत्रादि कर्मणा तु अप्राप्यत्वाद् हिंस्यन्ते इव । आयासमात्रम् त्वय्यभिचारीत्यतो हिनस्ति इत्युच्यते - मुण्डक भाष्यम्

<sup>5</sup> अध्यापनं ब्रह्मयज्ञः पितृयज्ञस्तु तर्पणम् । होमो दैवो बलिभौतो नृपयज्ञोऽतिथिपूजनम् ॥ मनुस्मृतिः ३ ॥७० ॥७१

<sup>6</sup> आसप्तमान् सप्तम् सहितान् । मुण्डक भाष्यम्

<sup>7</sup> पिण्ड दानाद्यनुग्रहेण वा सम्बध्यमानाः पितृ पितामह प्रपितामहाः पुत्र पौत्र प्रपौत्राः स्वात्मोपकारकाः सप्त लोका उक्त प्रकारेण अग्निहोत्रादिना न भवन्ति इति हिंस्यते इत्युच्यते - मुण्डक भाष्यम्