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Moksha Dharma Parva
The Swan and the Sadhyas
Shānti Parva
Chapter 288

Swami Tadatmananda
Arsha Bodha Center

युधिष्ठिर उवाच
Yudhishtira said,
yudhiṣṭhira uvāca

सत्यं क्षमां दमं प्रज्ञां

Truth, tolerance, self-control and wisdom -
satyaṁ kṣamāṁ damaṁ prajñāṁ

प्रशंसन्ति पितामह ।

these they praise, O Bhishma,
praśaṁsanti pitāmaha

विद्वांसो मनुजा लोके

the wise men in the world.
vidvāṁso manujā loke

कथमेतन्मतं तव ॥

What is your opinion about this?

katham etan mataṁ tava (288.1)

भीष्म उवाच

Bhishma said,
bhīṣma uvāca

अत्र ते वर्तयिष्येऽहम्

With regard to that, I will tell you
atra te vartayiṣye 'ham

इतिहासं पुरातनम् ।

an old story about
itihāsaṁ purātanam

साध्यानामिह संवादं

a conversation between the Sadhyas
sādhyānām iha saṁvādaṁ

हंसस्य च युधिष्ठिर ॥

and a swan, O Yudhishtira.
haṁsasya ca yudhiṣṭhira (288.2)

हंसो भूत्वाथ सौवर्णस्

Having become a golden swan,
haṁso bhūtvātha sauvarṇas

त्वजो नित्यः प्रजापतिः।

Prajapati, being unborn and eternal,
tvajo nityaḥ prajāpatiḥ

स वै पर्येति लोकांस्त्रीन्

moved about in the three worlds.
sa vai paryeti lokāṁs trīn

अथ साध्यानुपागमत् ॥

Then he approached the sadhyas.
atha sādhyān upāgamat (288.3)

साध्या ऊचुः

The Sadhyas said,
sādhyā ūcuḥ

शकुने वयं स्म देवा

O swan, we are devas.
śakune vyaṁ sma devā

वै साध्यास्त्वामनुयुज्महे ।

We Sadhyas want to ask you a question.
vai sādhyās tvām anuyujmahe

पृच्छामस्त्वां मोक्षधर्मं

We ask you about moksha-dharma, the doctrine of liberation.
pṛcchāmas tvāṁ mokṣa-dharmaṁ

भवांश्च किल मोक्षवित् ॥

You indeed know moksha.
bhavāṁś ca kila mokṣavit (288.4)

हंस उवाच

The swan said,
haṁsa uvāca

आक्रुश्यमानो न वदामि किञ्चित्

When attacked, I say nothing.

ākruśyamāno na vadāmi kiñcit

क्षमाम्यहं ताड्यमानश्च नित्यम् ।

When beaten, I always tolerate it.

kṣamāmy ahaṁ tāḍyamānaś ca nityam

श्रेष्ठं ह्येतत्क्षममप्याहुरार्याः

The noble ones say tolerance is best,

śreṣṭhaṁ hyetat kṣamam apyāhur āryāḥ

सत्यं तथैवार्जवमानृशंस्यम् ॥

along with truthfulness, integrity, and compassion.

satyaṁ tathaivārjavam ānṛśaṁsyaṁ (288.12)

वाचो वेगं मनसः क्रोधवेगं

The mind's urge to speak, urge for anger,
vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam

विवित्सावेगमुदरोपस्थवेगम् ।

urge to know, urge for food and sex -
vivitsā-vegam udaropastha-vegam

एतान्वेगान्यो विषहत्युदीर्णास्

one who bears these intense urges,
etān vegān yo viṣahaty udīrṇāṁs

तं मन्येऽहं ब्राह्मणं वै मुनिं च ॥

I consider him a brahmana and a sage.

taṁ manye 'haṁ brāhmaṇaṁ vai munim ca (288.14)

यो नात्युक्तः प्राह रूक्षं प्रियं वा

One who is reviled but doesn't speak harshly or pleasantly,
yo nātyuktaḥ prāha rūkṣaṁ priyaṁ vā

यो वा हतो न प्रतिहन्ति धैर्यात् ।

one who is attacked but doesn't retaliate, being patient,
yo vā hato na pratihanti dhairyāt

पापं च यो नेच्छति तस्य हन्तुस्

one who wishes no evil upon those who hurt him,
pāpaṁ ca yo necchati tasya hantus

तस्मै देवाः स्पृहयन्ते सदैव ॥

the gods always envy him.

tasmai devāḥ spr̥hayante sadaiva (288.17)

चत्वारि यस्य द्वाराणि

A person whose four gateways
catvāri yasya dvārāṇi

सुगुप्तान्यमरोत्तमाः |

are well-hidden, O Sadhyas -
suguptāny amarottamāḥ

उपस्थमुदरं हस्तौ

sex organs, stomach, hands,
upastham udaraṁ hastau

वाक्चतुर्थी स धर्मवित् ||

and speech, the fourth - he knows dharma.
vāk caturthī sa dharmavit (288.28)

यदि सन्तं सेवते यद्यसन्तं

Associating with a saint or a sinner,
yadi santam sevate yady asantam

तपस्विनं यदि वा स्तेनमेव |

an ascetic or a thief,
tapasvinam yadi va stenam eva

वासो यथा रङ्गवशं प्रयाति

like cloth gets dyed with color,
vaso yatha rangavaśam prayāti

तथा स तेषां वशमभ्युपैति ||

so too, one falls under their sway.
tathā sa teṣāṁ vaśam abhyupaiti (288.33)

यादृशैः संनिवसति

Like those one lives with,
yādṛśaiḥ saṁnivasati

यादृशांश्चोपसेवते |

like those one serves,
yādṛśāṁś chopasevate

यादृगिच्छेच्च भवितुं

like one wants to be,
yādṛg icchec ca bhavitum

तादृग्भवति पूरुषः ||

a person becomes like that.
tādṛg bhavati pūruṣaḥ (288.32)

अव्याहृतं व्याहृताच्छ्रेय आहुः

They say, silence is better than speaking.
avyāhṛtam vyāhṛtāc chreya āhuḥ

सत्यं वदेद्व्याहृतं तद्वितीयम् |

Secondly, when speaking, speak truth.
satyam vaded vyāhṛtam tad dvitīyam

धर्मं वदेद्व्याहृतं तत्तृतीयं

Thirdly, when speaking, speak righteously.
dharmaṁ vaded vyāhṛtam tat tṛtīyam

प्रियं वदेद्व्याहृतं तच्चतुर्थम् ||

Fourthly, when speaking, speak pleasantly.
priyam vaded vyāhṛtam tac caturtham (288.38)