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Moksha Dharma Parva  
**Vasishtha teaches Janaka  
 Yoga and Sankhya**  
 Shānti Parva  
 Chapters 291-295

Swami Tadatmananda  
 Arsha Bodha Center

युधिष्ठिर उवाच  
 Yudhishthira said,  
 yudhiṣṭhira uvāca

किं तदक्षरमित्युक्तं  
 What is that unchanging reality,  
 kiṁ tad akṣaram ity uktam

यस्मान्नावर्तते पुनः |  
 from which it is said, one does not return?  
 yasmān nāvartate punaḥ

किं च तदक्षरमित्युक्तं  
 What is that changing reality,  
 kiṁ ca tat kṣaram ity uktam

यस्मादावर्तते पुनः ||  
 from which it is said, one does return?  
 yasmād āvartate punaḥ (291.1)

शेषमल्पं दिनानां ते  
 You have just a few days left  
 śeṣam alpaṁ dinānām te

दक्षिणायनभास्करे |  
 during the sun's southern path.  
 dakṣiṇāyana-bhāskare

आवृत्ते भगवत्यर्के  
 When the sun returns,  
 āvr̥tte bhagavaty arke

गन्तासि परमां गतिम् ||  
 you will reach the highest goal.  
 gantāsi paramām gatim (291.4)

त्वयि प्रतिगते श्रेयः

When you leave us, the highest good -  
tvayi pratigate śreyaḥ

कुतः श्रोष्यामहे वयम् ।

from whom will we learn?  
kutaḥ śroṣyāmahe vayam

कुरुवंशप्रदीपस्त्वं

You are the light of Kuru clan,  
kuru-vaṁśa-pradīpas tvam

ज्ञानद्रव्येण दीप्यसे ॥

burning with the oil of wisdom.  
jñāna-dravyeṇa dīpyase (291.5)

भीष्म उवाच

Bhishma said,  
bhīṣma uvāca

अत्र ते वर्तयिष्येऽहम्

About that, I will tell you  
atra te vartayiṣye 'ham

इतिहासं पुरातनम् ।

an old story about  
itihāsaṁ purātanam

वसिष्ठस्य च संवादं

a dialogue between Vasishtha  
vasiṣṭhasya ca saṁvādaṁ

करालजनकस्य च ॥

and King Janaka.  
karāla-janakasya ca (291.7)

जनक उवाच

Janaka said,  
janaka uvāca

भगवञ्श्रोतुमिच्छामि

O Vasishtha, I want to learn  
bhagavañ śrotum icchāmi

परं ब्रह्म सनातनम् |

about supreme, eternal brahman  
paraṁ brahma sanātanam

यस्मान्न पुनरावृत्तिम्

from whom there is no return  
yasmān na punar āvṛttim

आप्नुवन्ति मनीषिणः ||

for the wise ones who reach it.  
āpnuvanti manīṣiṇaḥ (291.11)

वसिष्ठ उवाच

Vasishtha said,  
vasiṣṭha uvāca

हन्त ते सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि

O Janaka, I will tell you  
hanta te sampravakṣyāmi

यदेतदनुपृच्छसि |

what you asked.  
yad etad anupṛcchasi

योगकृत्यं महाराज

O Janaka, that which is gained through yoga  
yoga-kṛtyaṁ mahārāja

पृथगेव शृणुष्व मे ||

hear from me first.  
pṛthag eva śṛṇuṣva me (294.6)

योगकृत्यं तु योगानां

For yogis, they gain  
yoga-kṛtyaṁ tu yogānāṁ

ध्यानमेव परं बलम् |

meditation of supreme strength.  
dhyānam eva paraṁ balam

तच्चापि द्विविधं ध्यानम्

That meditation is twofold  
tac cāpi dvividhaṁ dhyānam

आहुर्वेदविदो जनाः ||

according to those who know the Vedas ...  
āhur vedavido janāḥ (294.7)

एकाग्रता च मनसः

... one-pointedness of mind  
ekāgratā ca manasaḥ

प्राणायामस्तथैव च |

and pranayama.  
prāṇāyāmas tathaiva ca

प्राणायामस्तु सगुणो

Prananyama is qualified,  
prāṇāyāmas tu saḡuṇo

निर्गुणो मनसस्तथा ||

and one-pointedness of mind is absolute.  
nirguṇo manasas tathā (294.8)

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यो

Withdrawing the senses from objects  
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyo

निवर्त्य मनसा मुनिः |

with the mind, a wise meditator  
nivartya manasā muniḥ

तं चोदनाभिर्मतिमान्

by controlling the mind,  
taṁ codanābhir matimān

आत्मानं चोदयेदथ ||

should concentrate on the Self.  
ātmānaṁ codayed atha (294.10,11)

विमुक्तः सर्वसङ्गेभ्यो

Free from all attachments,  
vimuktaḥ sarva-saṅgebhyo

लघ्वाहारो जितेन्द्रियः |

eating lightly, self-controlled,  
laghvāhāro jitendriyaḥ

पूर्वरात्रे परे चैव

early and late in the night,  
pūrva-rātre pare caiva

धारयेत मनोऽऽत्मनि ||

he should concentrate his mind on the Self.  
dhārayeta mano 'tmani (294.13)

न चाभिमन्यते किञ्चिन्

He doesn't think about  
na cābhimanyate kiñcin

न च बुध्यति काष्ठवत् |

or perceive anything, like a log of wood.  
na ca budhyati kāṣṭhavat

तदा प्रकृतिमापन्नं

Then, into his true nature  
tadā prakṛtim āpannaṁ

युक्तमाहुर्मनीषिणः ||

he merges, according to the wise  
yuktam āhur manīṣiṇaḥ (294.17)

योगदर्शनमेतावद्

So far, the teachings of yoga  
yoga-darśanam etāvad

उक्तं ते तत्त्वतो मया ।

have been accurately described by me.  
uktaṁ te tattvato mayā

साङ्ख्यज्ञानं प्रवक्ष्यामि

Now, I will describe the wisdom of Sankhya,  
sāṅkhya-jñānaṁ pravakṣyāmi

परिसङ्ख्यानिदर्शनम् ॥

the knowledge of enumeration.  
parisaṅkhyā-nidarśanam (294.26)

अहङ्कारस्तु महतस्

Then from mahat, ahankara is born  
ahaṅkāras tu mahatas

तृतीयमिति नः श्रुतम् ।

thirdly, thus we have heard.  
tṛtīyam iti naḥ śrutam

पञ्च भूतान्यहङ्कारादाहुः

From ahankara, the five subtle elements are born,  
pañca bhūtāny ahaṅkārād

आहुः साङ्ख्यानुदर्शिनः ॥

according to the followers of Sankhya.  
āhuḥ sāṅkhyānudarśinaḥ (294.28)

अव्यक्तमाहुः प्रकृतिं

They call the unmanifest, prakriti,  
avyaktam āhuḥ prakṛtiṁ

परां प्रकृतिवादिनः ।

those who know prakriti.  
parāṁ prakṛti-vādinaḥ

तस्मान्महत्समुत्पन्नं

From prakriti, mahat is born  
tasmān mahat samutpannaṁ

द्वितीयं राजसत्तम ॥

secondly, O Janaka.  
dvitīyaṁ rāja-sattama (294.27)

एताः प्रकृतयस्त्वष्टौ

These eight are fundamental  
etāḥ prakṛtayas tv aṣṭau

विकाराश्चापि षोडश ।

and sixteen are their modifications:  
vikārāś cāpi ṣoḍaśa

पञ्च चैव विशेषा वै

five gross elements, five organs of action,  
pañca caiva viśeṣā vai

तथा पञ्चेन्द्रियाणि च ॥

five sense organs, and the mind.  
tathā pañcendriyāṇi ca (294.29)

अनुलोमेन जायन्ते

They are born in sequence,  
anulomena jāyante

लीयन्ते प्रतिलोमतः ।

and they undergo dissolution in the reverse order,  
līyante pratilomataḥ

गुणा गुणेषु सततं

with substances merging into their origins  
guṇā guṇeṣu satataṁ

सागरस्योर्मयो यथा ॥

like waves merging into the ocean.  
sāgarasyormayo yathā (294.32)

क्षेत्रं जानाति चाव्यक्तं

(Atma) knows the field of experience and the unmanifest.  
kṣetraṁ jānāti cāvyaaktaṁ

क्षेत्रज्ञ इति चोच्यते ।

Thus it is called, "knower of the field."  
kṣetrajña iti cocyate

अव्यक्तिके पुरे शेते

Residing in the body,  
avyaktike pure śete

पुरुषश्चेति कथ्यते ॥

it is also called, Purusha.  
puruṣaś ceti kathyate (294.37)

बहुधात्मा प्रकुर्वीत

Atma creates the manifold  
bahudhātmā prakurvīta

प्रकृतिं प्रसवात्मिकाम् ।

prakṛiti, which generates everything else  
prakṛtiṁ prasavātmikām

तच्च क्षेत्रं महानात्मा

in the the field of experience. The great atma  
tac ca kṣetraṁ mahān ātmā

पञ्चविंशोऽधितिष्ठति ॥

presides as the 25th.  
pañcaviṁśo 'dhitiṣṭhati (294.35)

तत्त्वानि च चतुर्विंशत्

These 24 substances are  
tattvāni ca caturviṁśat

परिसङ्ख्याय तत्त्वतः ।

for correct enumeration.  
parisaṅkhyāya tattvataḥ

साङ्ख्याः सह प्रकृत्या तु

Followers of Sankhya know, in addition to prakṛiti,  
sāṅkhyāḥ saha prakṛtyā tu

निस्तत्त्वः पञ्चविंशकः ॥

the 25th which is not a substance.  
nistattvaḥ pañcaviṁśakaḥ (294.42)

तदा विशुद्धो भवति

One then becomes pure  
tadā viśuddho bhavati

प्रकृतेः परिवर्जनात् |

by separating oneself from prakriti.  
prakṛteḥ parivarjanāt

अन्योऽहमन्येयमिति

"I am separate. Prakriti is separate."  
anyo 'ham anyeyam iti

यदा बुध्यति बुद्धिमान् ||

Knowing thus, one is wise.  
yadā budhyati buddhimān (295.20)

मत्स्योऽन्यत्वं यथाज्ञानाद्

Due to ignorance, a fish does not know it is separate  
matsyo 'nyatvaṁ yathājñānād

उदकान्नाभिमन्यते |

from water. It does not understand.  
udakān nābhimanyate

आत्मानं तद्वदज्ञानाद्

So too, due to ignorance,  
ātmānaṁ tadvad ajñānād

अन्यत्वं नैव वेद्म्यहम् ||

I did not know myself as being separate.  
anyatvaṁ naiva vedmy aham (295.25)

ममास्तु धिगबुद्धस्य

A curse upon me for my ignorance  
mamāstu dhig abuddhasya

योऽहं मग्नमिमं पुनः |

because of which I am immersed in life again,  
yo 'haṁ magnam imaṁ punaḥ

अनुवर्तितवान्मोहाद्

born again due to ignorance,  
anuvartitavān mohād

अन्यमन्यं जनाञ्जनम् ||

going from one birth to the next.  
anyam anyam janāj janam (295.26)

सहवासं न यास्यामि

I will no longer associate myself with prakriti,  
sahavāsaṁ na yāsyāmi

कालमेतद्धि वञ्चनात् |

having being deceived for a long time.  
kālam etad dhi vañcanāt

वञ्चितोऽस्म्यनया यद्धि

I was deceived by prakriti,  
vañcito 'smy anayā yad dhi

निर्विकारो विकारया ||

thinking I was just a modification.  
nirvikāro vikārayā (295.32)

न चायमपराधोऽस्या

This is not prakriti's fault.  
na cāyam aparādho 'syā

अपराधो ह्ययं मम ।

The fault is mine alone.  
aparādho hy ayam mama

योऽहमत्राभवं सक्तः

I was so attached that I could not  
yo 'ham atrābhavaṃ saktaḥ

पराङ्मुखमुपस्थितः ॥

remain separate.  
parāṅ-mukham upasthitaḥ (295.33)

एवं परमसम्बोधात्

Due to knowledge of reality,  
evam parama-sambodhāt

पञ्चविंशोऽनुबुद्धवान् ।

I now know myself as the 25th.  
pañcaviṃśo 'nubuddhavān

अक्षरत्वं नियच्छेत

One should seek the unchanging reality,  
akṣaratvaṃ niyaccheta

त्यक्त्वा क्षरमनामयम् ॥

having abandoned the changing.  
tyaktvā kṣaram anāmayam (295.38,39)

पञ्चविंशात्परं तत्त्वं

Beyond the 25th, a greater truth  
pañcaviṃśāt paraṃ tattvaṃ

न पश्यति नराधिप ।

cannot be found, O Janaka.  
na paśyati narādhipa

साङ्ख्यानं तु परं तत्र

Thus, the ultimate truth of Sankhya  
sāṅkhyānāṃ tu paraṃ tatra

यथावदनुवर्णितम् ॥

has been correctly explained.  
yathāvad anuvarṇitam (295.45)