

THE HYMN OF CREATION

(A translation of the *Nâsadiya-Sukta*, Rig-Veda, X. 129.)

Existence was not then, nor non-existence,  
The world was not, the sky beyond was neither.  
What covered the mist? Of whom was that?  
What was in the depths of darkness thick?

Death was not then, nor immortality,  
The night was neither separate from day,  
But motionless did *That* vibrate  
Alone, with Its own glory one —  
Beyond *That* nothing did exist.

At first in darkness hidden darkness lay,  
Undistinguished as one mass of water,  
Then *That*which lay in void thus covered  
A glory did put forth by *Tapah*!

First desire rose, the primal seed of mind,  
(The sages have seen all this in their hearts  
Sifting existence from non-existence.)  
Its rays above, below and sideways spread.

Creative then became the glory,  
With self-sustaining principle below.  
And Creative Energy above.

Who knew the way? Who there declared  
Whence this arose? Projection whence?  
For after this projection came the gods.  
Who therefore knew indeed, came out this whence?

This projection whence arose,  
Whether held or whether not,  
He the ruler in the supreme sky, of this  
He, O Sharman! knows, or knows not  
                                            He perchance!

The main themes derived from the provided verses are as follows:

1. \*\*Primordial Absence:\*\*

- Describes a state where neither existence nor non-existence, world nor sky, was present. Questions what covered the initial mist and what existed in the thick darkness.

2. \*\*Eternal Vibration of That One:\*\*

- Presents the concept of a transcendent entity ("That") that vibrated alone, distinct from any other existence. Emphasizes the singularity of Its glory.

3. \*\*Emergence from Darkness and Glory of Tapah:\*\*

- Depicts the emergence from initial darkness, where Tapah (heat or fervor) played a crucial role. Describes the unveiling of glory as a result of this process.

4. \*\*Primal Desire and Seed of Mind:\*\*

- Introduces desire as the primal seed of the mind. Sages, through heart-based wisdom, discern existence from non-existence, and the rays of this understanding spread in various directions.

5. \*\*Creative Glory and Self-Sustaining Principle:\*\*

- Highlights the creative aspect of glory with a self-sustaining principle below and creative energy above. Portrays the emergence of gods following the projection.

6. \*\*Inquiry into the Origin and Projection:\*\*

- Raises questions about the origin of creation, seeking to know the way and the declaration of its source. Acknowledges the ruler in the supreme sky as the one who may or may not know about this projection.

These themes collectively contribute to a contemplative exploration of the state before existence, the emergence of creative forces, the role of desire and wisdom, and the inquiry into the ultimate source and ruler of the cosmic projection.