

Avadhuta Upanishad

Then, it is said, Samkriti approached the venerable Avadhuta, Dattatreya, and questioned: Venerable Sir, Who is an Avadhuta? What is his condition? What his characteristic? And what his worldly existence?

To him replied the venerable Dattatreya, the most compassionate:

The Avadhuta is so called
because he is:

- ❖ immortal [akshara]
- ❖ the greatest [varenya]
- ❖ discarded worldly ties
[dhutasamsarabandhana]
- ❖ the indicated meaning
of the sentence 'Thou art
That', etc.,
[tattvamasyadi-lakshya]

He who rests constantly in himself, after crossing (the barrier of) castes and stages (of social position) and thus rises above varnas and asramas and is in union (with God) is said to be an Avadhuta.

His joy [priya] is (to be envisaged as) the head; delight [moda] is his right wing; great delight [pramoda] his left wing; and bliss (his

very self). Thus he assumes a fourfold condition.

One should identify Brahman neither with the head nor with the middle part nor with the bottom but with (what remains in the shape of) the tail, since it is said that Brahman is 'the Tail' and substratum.

Thus, those who contemplate this fourfold division attain the supreme Goal.

Not by rituals, not by begetting children, not by wealth, but by renunciation [tyaga] alone a few attained immortality.

His (the Avadhuta's) worldly existence consists in moving

about freely, with or without
clothes.

For them there is nothing
righteous or unrighteous;
nothing holy or unholy.

Through all-consuming,
correct knowledge
[samgrahaneshiti] (the
Avadhuta) performs
Ashvamedha sacrifice within

(himself). That is the greatest sacrifice and the great Yoga.

Nought of this extraordinary, free action (of his) should be disclosed. This is the great vow [mahavrata]. He is not tainted like the ignorant.

As the sun absorbs all waters, and the fire consumes all things (remaining unaffected by them), even so, the pure

Yogin enjoys all objects,
unstained by virtues or sins.

As the ocean into which all
waters flow maintains its own
nature despite the water
pouring in (from all sides), so,
he alone attains peace into
whom all desires flow in like
manner; not he who seeks the
objects of pleasure.

There is neither death nor birth; none is bound, none aspires. There is neither seeker after liberation nor any liberated; this indeed is the ultimate Truth.

Many were my activities perchance in the past for gaining things here and hereafter, or for obtaining liberation. All that is now of the past.

That itself is the state of contentment. Verily remembering the same (i.e. the past) achievements involving objects, he now remains thus ever content. The miserable ignorant, desirous of children, etc., needs must suffer.

Wherefore shall I suffer, who am filled with supreme bliss?

Let those who yearn to go to the other worlds perform rituals. What shall I, who am of the nature of all the worlds, perform? For what and how?

Let those who are worlds, perform? For what and how?

Let those who are qualified interpret the Shastras or teach the Vedas.

I have no such qualification,
since I am free of action. I
have no desire for sleeping or
begging, bathing or cleaning.
Nor do I do them.

If onlookers thus superimpose,
let them do so. What matters
to me the superimposition of
others? A heap of the red-
black berries (of the *Abrus*
precatorius) would not burn,

even if others superimposed
fire on it.

Likewise, I partake not of
worldly duties superimposed
(on me) by others.

Let them, who are ignorant of
the reality, study the
scriptures; knowing (the
reality) why should I study?

Let them who have doubts
reflect (upon what was
studied). Having no doubts, I
do not reflect.

Were I under illusion, I may
meditate; having no illusion,
what meditation can there be
(for me)? Confusion of body
for the self, I never experience.

The habitual usage 'I am a
man' is possible even without

this confusion, for it is due to impressions accumulated during a long time.

When the results of actions set in motion [prarabdha-karman] are exhausted, the habitual usage also ends. This (worldly usage) will not cease even with repeated meditation unless such actions are exhausted.

If infrequency of worldly dealings is sought, let there be contemplation for you. Wherefore should I, to whom worldly dealings offer no hindrance, contemplate?

Because I do not have distractions, I do not need concentration, distraction or concentration being of the mind that modifies.

What separate experience can
there be for me, who am of
the nature of eternal
experience?

What has to be done is done,
what has to be gained is
gained for ever.

Let my dealings, worldly,
scriptural or of other kinds
proceed as they have started,

I being neither an agent (of action) nor one affected (by it).

Or, even though I have achieved what has to be achieved, let me remain on the scriptural path for the sake of the well-being of the world. What harm for me thereby?

Let the body be engaged in the worship of gods, bathing, cleaning, begging and so forth.

Let speech repeatedly utter
the tara-mantra or recite the
Upanishadic passages.

Let thought contemplate
Vishnu or let it be dissolved in
the bliss of Brahman. I am the
witness. I neither do nor cause
any doing.

Being contented with duties
fulfilled and achievements
accomplished, he ceaselessly

reflects as follows with a
contented mind:

Blessed am I, blessed am I.
Directly and always, I
experience my own self.

Blessed am I, blessed am I,
the bliss of Brahman shines
brightly in me.

Blessed am I, blessed am I. I
do not see the misery of
existence.

Blessed am I, blessed am I;
my ignorance has fled away.

Blessed am I, blessed am I;
no duty exists for me.

Blessed am I, blessed am I;
everything to be obtained is
now obtained.

Blessed am I, blessed am I.
What comparison is there in
the world for my contentment!

Blessed am I, blessed am I;
blessed, blessed, again and
again blessed.

Logical! The virtues accrued
have yielded fruit! Indeed they
have! By the richness of virtue
we are as we are.

Wondrous knowledge,
wondrous knowledge!

Wondrous happiness,
wondrous happiness!

Wondrous scriptures,
wondrous scriptures!

Wondrous teachers, wondrous
teachers!

He who studies this also achieves everything to be achieved. He becomes free of the sins of drinking liquor. He becomes free of the sins of stealing gold. He becomes free of the sins of killing a Brahmin. He becomes free of actions, ordained or prohibited. Knowing this, let him wander according to his free will. Om, Truth. Thus (ends) the Upanishad.