THE VIA MEDIA OF ATTITUDE

1. annam brahma ity eka ahuh, tan na tatha, puyati va annam rte pranat; prano brahma ity eka ahuh, tan na tatha, susyati vai prana rte’ nnat, ete ha tv eva devate, ekadhabhuyam bhutva, paramatam gacchatah tadd ha smaha pratrdah pitaram, kim svid evaivam viduse sadhu kuryam, kim evasma asadhu kuryam iti. sa ha smaha panina: ma pratrda, kas tv enayor ekadha bhuyam bhutva paramatam gacchatiti. tasma u haitad uvaca; vi, iti; annam vai vi; anne himani sarvani bhutani vistanti; ram iti prano vai ram, prane himani sarvani bhutani ramante; sarvani ha va asmin bhutani visanti, sarvani bhutani ramante, ya evam veda.

It is a favourite theme of the Upanishads to consider the whole Reality as matter and spirit, or as the material universe and the universe of Prana, energy. A meditation is prescribed on the correlation between Anna and Prana, the two terms here representing matter and energy. There are those who think that matter is everything, it is the whole of creation, forgetting the fact that it is an expression of Prana, or energy, which is equally cosmic; there are others who think that energy alone is the ultimate reality, forgetting the fact that it manifests itself as matter or object form in the world of experience.

Annam brahma ity eka ahuh, tan na tatha: ‘It is not true that mere material bodies can be regarded as real ultimately, because they decompose themselves
into their original components when Prana is absent in them’. It is the Prana, or the energy, or the force that is behind things which keeps them in shape and maintains the form which they have taken at any given moment of time. It is also not true that matter does not exist, because it is an expression in space and time of the very same energy which is behind it as the invisible formless substance. So, form and formless being are the two aspects of Reality. They have to be blended together in contemplation. Neither should we go to the invisible, ignoring the visible, nor should we concentrate upon the visible merely, ignoring the aspect of the invisible reality behind it. Puyati va annam: ‘Everything that is material or of the nature of food decomposes itself and decays when Prana is absent’. And Prana too sustains itself on matter because it operates through matter. Our life is sustained by the food that we consume and food in turn is maintained in its original freshness by the energy that pervades it. So, there is an interdependence of matter and energy. On this, there is a linguistic concept introduced for the purpose of meditation, just as we had a mention made of contemplation on the literal significance of the letters of the word Hrdaya, or heart, on an earlier occasion. Here we are asked to contemplate symbolically on the meaning of a certain word - ‘Vi’. Vi, iti; annam vai vi; annam himani sarvani bhutani vistani, ‘everything is rooted in the material form and the food that is consumed, because of the fact that they are rooted in the material form’. The Sanskrit word for rootedness is Vistatva, Vistani, and so, contemplate on the very first letter Vi of this significant word Vistas, to be rooted, to be fixed or to be encompassed by something. Similarly, ram iti, prano vai ram, prane himani sarvani bhutani ramante, ‘it is on account of the manifestation of life, or Prana that people are happy’. The joy of life is nothing but the joy of breathing, and energy manifesting itself as Prana, and the Sanskrit word for this is Ramana. To Ram is to enjoy, to be happy, to be pleased and to be delighted. So, the words Ram and Vista - these two are semantically conceived and the first letters of these words are taken together, Vi and Ra. ‘Contemplate on these only’, says the teacher. This is a way of meditation, using merely the first letter of the two words which indicate certain significances of the function of the two aspects of Reality - Anna and Prana. ‘Whoever contemplates thus on a blend of the two aspects of Reality as Anna and Prana, matter and energy, enters into these two at the same time, combines the two in his own being and in his personal experience and life’. One who knows this secret of meditation does not over-emphasise either the aspect of matter or the aspect of energy. In other words, he combines in his practical life the two aspects of externality and internality. He is neither externally engaged as the extroverts are, nor is he internally engaged too much as the introverts are, but strikes a balance between the two.

The whole moral of the teaching in this section of the Upanishad seems to be that we must strike a via media, a golden means between the outward looking attitude and the inward investigation of a psychological nature. We should neither be too much engaged in external investigation of material form to the exclusion of the internal aspect of Reality which is psychological and of the nature of energy, nor should we emphasise too much on the internal aspect only, namely, things psychological, ignoring the external aspect, because the internal
and the external, the energy aspect and the matter aspect are two sides of a single Reality. Meditation should ideally be on a harmony between the two. This is, perhaps, the intention of the teacher in this section.

**Thirteenth Brahmana**

**MEDITATION ON THE LIFE-BREATH**

1. uktham; prano va uktham, prano hidam sarvam utthapayati. uddhasmad uktha-vid viras tisthati, ukthasya sayujyam salokatam jayati, ya evam veda.

Now the Upanishad tells us that we can meditate on Om, or Pranava, or a particular chant of the Sama Veda called the Uktha. This is a ritualistic interpretation of the employment of Om in certain sacrifices. Uktha means Om or also a particular chant of the Sama Veda. Ukham Prano: ‘The Prana is Uktha’. Every chant is made possible by the operation of the Prana, or energy within us. Contemplate the Prana as Om or the chant of Sama. Now again, here we have a meditation prescribed on the symbolic meaning of the letters of the word Uktha. Utthapayati uddhasmad uktha-vid viras tisthati, ukthasya sayujyam salokatam jayati, ya evam veda: ‘One who meditates on Uktha or this mystical chant rises above all others’. The meaning that one rises above all others is to be drawn out from the etymological meaning of the components of the word Uktha. Utthapayati means ‘rise above’, stand above or even raise someone else above the present position. So, one who contemplates on the etymological meaning of the word Uktha, which signifies rising above or standing above, raises oneself above the present condition of life, stands above others in every respect, causes others also to rise above themselves into a higher position, and ‘ultimately reaches union with the Cosmic Reality which is Uktha, or Om, a universal vibration with which one becomes united, having been able to meditate on it in this manner.’

2. yajuh. prano vai yajuh, prane himani sarvani bhutani yujyante; yujyante hasmai sarvani bhutani sraisthyaya. yajusah sayujyam salokatam jayati, ya evam veda.

Similarly we are asked to ‘meditate on Prana as Yajus.’ Here again we are given a purely linguistic meaning. ‘The Prana unites things, and where Prana is absent there is disintegration’. Prane himani sarvani bhutani yujyante: ‘Whoever contemplates Prana as Yajus, one of the Vedas, gets united with all things’. Not only that; he unites everything that is discrete and particular; he becomes a harmonising element in society; he becomes a peacemaker. One who has united himself with Reality becomes capable of uniting others also with Reality. Yujyante hasmai sarvani bhutani sraisthyaya. yajusah sayujyam salokatam jayati, ya evam veda: ‘He who is able to meditate on Prana as Yajus, that which unites things, attains pre-eminence. And after casting off this body...”
attains that realm of the divinities which is hymned by the Mantras of the Yajur Veda. He becomes one with the gods, the realm which is indicated by the Yajus, a celestial realm, far superior to the physical and the atmospheric regions. This is the consequence of meditation on Prana as Yajus, a uniter, a combiner, or a harmoniser of everything, a meaning that is drawn out from the etymological significance of the word Yajus.

Raising the minds of ritual-ridden people to higher realms superior to the realm of the rites or the rituals of sacrifice in religion, instead of suddenly giving them a philosophic concept for meditation and drawing them gradually from the ritual realm to the philosophical realm through the realm of the ritual alone - this seems to be the purpose of the Upanishad in this meditation.

3. sama prano vai sama, prane himani sarvani bhutani samyanci; samyanci hasmai sarvani bhutani sraisthyaya kalpante. samnah sayujyam salokatam jayati, ya evam veda.

Likewise, we are asked to contemplate on Prana as Saman. ‘That which unites things’ is also the meaning of Saman. In the same way as one is enabled to attain to the realm of the deities of the Yajus by the contemplation on the Prana as the uniter of all things and an harmoniser of principles, similarly is the effect that follows by meditation on Prana as the Saman. To unite, is the meaning that is drawn out from the word Yajus. ‘To harmonise, is the meaning that is drawn out of the word Saman. Everything comes together for him who contemplates Prana as the Saman, and one who thus meditates throughout one’s life attains the realm of ultimate harmony of things after the casting off of the body. This is the result of this meditation’.

4. ksatram: prano vai ksatram. prano hi vai ksatram: trayate hainam pranah ksanitoh. praksatram atram apnoti, ksatra dayajam salokatam jayati, ya evam veda.

Ksatram prano: ‘Prana is to be meditated upon as Ksatra’. This again is a peculiarity in Sanskrit. Ksatram prano trayate hainam pranah ksanitoh: The word ‘Ksatra’ is taken as an occasion to contemplate on Prana as ‘that which saves people from all kinds of sufferings’, a protector of all people, a saviour par excellence and a guide in life, one who provides the necessities of life. All these meanings are to be drawn from the word Ksatra as united with Prana which is the symbol here for meditation. ‘One who thus meditates on Prana as Ksatra, the saviour, the protector and one who frees people from every kind of sorrow or suffering reaches realms which are well-protected, which are free from sorrow of every kind, and attains to a salvation which is equivalent to freedom from all turmoil of physical life’. 
Fourteenth Brahmana

THE SACRED GAYATRI PRAYER

Now, we enter into a new subject altogether, a meditation on the mystical and to a certain extent linguistic meaning of the Gayatri Mantra in the Veda.

1. bhumir antariksam dyauh ity astav aksarani; astaksaram ha va ekam gayatryai padam, etad u haivasya etat, sa yavad esu trisu lokesu, tavaddha jayati, yo'sya etad evam padam veda.

The Gayatri is a Mantra well-known to people. Gayantam try iti gayatri: One who protects that devotee who by singing, chanting or reciting resorts to this Mantra is Gayatri. This is a Mantra with twenty-four letters, three feet and three quarters. The fourth quarter is a mystical one about which the Upanishad will be mentioning something very special towards the end. Now, how do we contemplate the feet of Gayatri? It is a Mantra; you must remember this. It is a chant of the Veda which has twenty-four letters. Particular methods of meditation on the correspondence between the letters of the different feet of Gayatri with certain other visible phenomena in life are prescribed here. Here again we are in the realm of poor language. Bhumir antariksam dyauh: Bhumi is earth; Antariksa is atmosphere; Dyau is heaven. Dyau is supposed to be a two-lettered word. It is a compound and not a single word. Bhumi, Antariksa, Dyau - earth, atmosphere and heaven - are designated by three words, three appellations, epithets or names, and these names are constituted of eight letters. Similar is the case with the first foot of the Gayatri Mantra which is of eight letters. So a correspondence is established in meditation between the eight letters of the first foot of Gayatri and the earth, atmosphere and heaven, so that the first foot of Gayatri is made equivalent to the entire visible world. These three worlds - the physical, the atmospheric and the celestial - are supposed to be designated again by what is called the Vyahrtis. Vyahrti is what precedes the chant of Gayatri. Bhur, Bhuva, Svah - these are the three words which are called Vyahrtis. They correspond to the three worlds, the physical, the atmospheric and the celestial. So is the first foot of Gayatri which is formed of eight letters. So, here a symbolic meditation is prescribed. What is the meditation? Contemplation on the first foot of Gayatri Mantra as all the three worlds themselves. ‘One who meditates on the first foot of Gayatri, in this manner, by identifying its letters with the three worlds, attains to the three worlds. He attains to the Supernal status of Mastery over the earth, atmosphere and celestial realms’. Sa yavad esu trisu lokesu, tavaddha jayati: Whatever is there in these three worlds, that this person will get. Who will get? One who meditates in this manner on the first foot of Gayatri by conscious identification of this foot of Gayatri with the three worlds. How is this correspondence established? ‘By the thought that the eight letters of the first foot of the Gayatri are the same as the eight letters of the three words, Bhumi, Antariksa and Dyau, meaning, earth, atmosphere and the heaven’.
It is very difficult to conceive all this, but these are the ways in which some of the *Rishis* in ancient times practised contemplation. It does not mean that we are to take each and every prescription as intended for ourselves. The Upanishad is not a single teaching. It is a body of varieties of teachings. Various types of meditations are prescribed, and when an initiation is given in a particular method of meditation, a particular chosen technique only is taken up, not the entire body. But we are studying the Upanishad for the purpose of information and edification of our own mind, so that the mind may get purified and become fit for any type of meditation as would be conducive to our temperament. They are very hard things to imagine. You cannot imagine even one of them when you actually sit for meditation, but they are very effective techniques. The confidence with which the sage of the Upanishad tells us that mere contemplation on this correspondence between the letters of the first foot of *Gayatri* and the letters in the three words, *Bhumi, Antariksa, Dyau*, will cause the meditator to go to the realm where he becomes a master of the three worlds, is indeed miraculous. You can imagine what mystery is hidden behind these meditations!

2. *rco yajumsi samani, ity astav aksarani; astaksaram ha va ekam gayatrai padam. etad u haivasya etat. sa yavatiram trayi vidya, tavad ha jaayati. yo’sya etad evam padam veda.*

*rco yajumsi samani:* There are three Vedas - *Rig, Yajur* and *Sama.* The plural of these is given here as *rco yajumsi samani.* ‘The *Rco, Yajus* and the *Saman* - here again you have eight letters’. These have to be set in correspondence with the eight letters of the second foot of the *Gayatri.* This is another kind of meditation. ‘What happens to the one who meditates in this manner, concentrating his mind on the correspondence between eight letters of the second foot of *Gayatri* with the three Vedas? He becomes a Master of the three Vedas, and attains to realms which are accessible to anyone who is a Master of the three Vedas’. Whatever is capable of being achieved through the three Vedas, that one achieves through this contemplation on the second foot of the *Gayatri Mantra* alone, just as one attains to mastery over the three worlds by contemplation merely on the first foot of the *Gayatri.*

3. *prano’ pano vyahah, ity astav aksarani; astaksaram ha va ekam gayatrai padam: etad u haivasya etat. sa yavat idam prani, tavad ha jaayati, yo’ sya etad evam padam veda. athasya etad eva turiyam darsatam padam paroraja ya esa tapati; yad vai caturtham tat turiyam; darsatam padam iti, dadrsa iva hy esah; paroraja iti, sarvam u hy evaisa raja upari upari tapati. evam haiva sriya, yasasa tapati, yo’ sya etad evam padam veda.*

Now the third foot is mentioned. *Prano’ pano vyahah:* There are the three essential energies in the system - *Prana, Apana* and *Vyana.* The letters are eight here, again. ‘*Prana, Apana, Vyana* mean three energies in our system and the epithet names of these energies are formed of eight letters’. ‘They have to be set in correspondence with the third foot of the epithet which is also constituted of eight letters’. Then what happens? A new miracle takes place.
Ity astav aksarani; astaksaram ha va ekam gayatrai padam. etad u haivasya etat, sa yavad edam prani, tavad ha jayati: ‘You become a Master of all the worlds constituted of living beings’. Wherever there is Prana operating, there one becomes a ruler, a master, which means to say, in the entire living world one becomes pre-eminent in every respect. One becomes the chief, a lord over all, as it were, among the realms that are living provided he contemplates on this correspondence between the letters of the third foot of Gayatri with the three energies within the system, Prana, Apana, Vyana.

Yo’syd etad evam padam veda. athasya etad eva turiyam darsatam padam: Generally, people do not know that there is any such thing as the fourth foot of Gayatri. Nobody chants the fourth foot. It is a mystical appendix, as it were, to the normal chant. The fourth Pada is not given in its entirety in the original text for some unknown reason. Parorajase-savadon is the fourth Pada which is beyond all Rajas. But the Upanishad tells us that this fourth foot is very important. It is something like the Amatra aspect of Pranava, the soundless aspect of Om which is spiritual in its nature, which is Consciousness in its essentiality. Some such thing is the character of this fourth foot of Gayatri. While the three feet of Gayatri may be said to comprehend everything that is temporal, the fourth foot is nontemporal. It represents an absolute state. It is a special feature of this mystical aspect of Gayatri recitation into which very few people are initiated. Generally, initiation is not given into the fourth foot, but is only given in the three feet. Turiyam darsatam padam: ‘The fourth foot is apparently visible’, really not visible. One cannot understand what this fourth foot is. As I mentioned to you earlier, you cannot understand what fourth dimension means. To us it is only a word without any sense, but it conveys every sense and every meaning from its own point of view. Likewise is this fourth foot of the Gayatri Mantra which is apparently visible, says the Upanishad, but really not visible to the eyes, which means to say that its meaning is not intelligible to the mind. It is something very mystical. Paroraja parorajase-savadon is the fourth Pada. ‘It is above the dust of the earth. It is superior to all that is manifest as creation. It is not material at all, and therefore it is called Paroraja’. It is super-physical. Ya esa tapati: ‘The one that shines before us’, the Surya, or the sun, is the supreme reality, the great superintending power, the deity behind this fourth foot of Gayatri. He has to be meditated upon through the recitation of the fourth foot.

Yad vai caturtham, tat turiyam; darsatam padam iti, dadrsta iva hy esah; paroraja iti, sarvam u hy evaSa raja upari upari tapati. evam haiva sriya, yasasa tapati: ‘The meditation here is on the sun, on the Purusha in the sun, not merely on the physical orb of the sun’. This is a spiritual energy that is resplendent in the sun that is the object of meditation here. The deity, the divinity which is superior to the physical form of the sun, that deity, that Purusha, Hiranmaya Purusha is the object of meditation during the chant of the fourth foot of Gayatri Mantra. Surya is, thus, mystically involved in the chant of the fourth foot of Gayatri. ‘Such a person who contemplates in this manner on the inward meaning, or the inner significance of this fourth foot is glorified in this world, endowed with all prosperity, becomes renowned in every respect and
shines like the sun himself, as it were. One who knows this becomes that - *ya evam veda*.

4. *saisa gayatry etasmims turiye darsate pade parorajasi pratisthita, tad vai tat satye pratisthitam; caksur vai satyam, caksur hi vai satyam; tasmad yad idanim dvau vivadamanav eyatam aham adarsam, aham asrausam iti. ya evam bruyat; aham adarsam iti, tasma eva sradda-dhyama. tad vai tay satyam bale pratisthitam; prano vai balam; tat prane pratisthitam, tasmad ahuh: balam satyad ogiya iti, evam vesa gayatry adhyatmam. pratisthita sa haıısa gayams tatre; prana vai gayah; tat pranams tatre; tad yad gayams tatre, tasmad gayatri nama. sa yam evamum savitrim anvaha, esaiva sa. sa yasma anvaha, tasya pranams trayate.

*Saisa gayatry etasmims turiye darsate pade parorajasi pratisthita*: ‘The entire *Gayatri Mantra* is really rooted in the fourth foot’. It is the *Prana Shakti*, it is the essence, as it were, of the whole *Gayatri*. It is the ocean into which the river of the *Gayatri Mantra* enters. It is the ultimate meaning of the *Gayatri*. Just as the non-temporal, or the meta-empirical or the spiritual includes within itself all that is temporal and manifest, so is the fourth foot inclusive of all the meaning that is contained in the first three feet - *satye pratisthitam*.

*Caksur vai satyam, caksur hi vai satyam*: Here again we are brought back to the old type of meditation which was mentioned earlier in a different context. ‘*Satya* is truth, and one has to contemplate the fourth foot of *Gayatri* as ultimate truth’, the truth that is symbolically represented by ‘actual perception of values through the eyes which are presided over by the sun’, which again is the deity of the fourth foot of the *Gayatri Mantra*. One can meditate on strength. The more you move towards reality the more also you become strong, the more also you are able to perceive things clearly. The capacity to visualise things in their truth is coincident with increased energy and power or capacity. So, one is expected to meditate on *Shakti*, or *Bala*, or power, or energy which follows automatically in the wake of this meditation. *Gayatri* also is called *Savitri*. Sometimes people call the *Gayatri Mantra, Savitri Mantra*. The Upanishad says both mean one and the same thing. What you call *Gayatri* is the same as *Savitri*. It is *Savitri* because it is connected with *Savitri*, or the sun. It is *Gayatri* because it protects whoever chants it. *Gayatri nama. sa yam evamum savitrim anvaha, esaiva sa. sa yasma anvaha, tasya pranams trayate*: ‘Your *Pranas* are protected by this Mantra. Therefore it is called *Savitri*; therefore also it is called *Gayatri*.

5. *tam haitam eke savitrim anustubham anvahuh: vag anustup; etad vacam anubruma iti. na tatha kuryat. gayatrim eva savitrim anubruyat. yadi ha va apy evam-vid bahv iva pratighnati, na haivatad gayatrya ekam cana padam prati.*

There is another *Gayatri Mantra of Anustubh* metre, not the *Gayatri* metre that occurs in the *Veda. Gayatri* is a *Mantra*; it is a deity; it is also a metre. Now, *Gayatri* is a particular metre in the *Veda* and this metre is of twenty-four letters.
But Anustubh is another metre which has thirty-two letters. So, there is another Gayatri Mantra mentioned somewhere else which is constituted of thirty-two letters and is chanted in the Anustubh metre. The Upanishad says, ‘that is not the proper Gayatri’. The proper Gayatri is the one which is in the Veda, not the Anustubh one. Tam haitam eke savitrun, anustubham anvahuh: ‘There are some people who think that the Anustubh Mantra (Gayatri) is the real one’. Vag anustup; etad vacam anubruma iti na tatha: ‘It is not so’, says the Upanishad. Na tatha kuryat: ‘You should not chant the other one’. Gayatrim eva savitrtm, anubruyat: ‘Only the Gayatri Savitri which is in the Vedas should be chanted’, not the Anustubh one which is of thirty-two letters. Yadi ha va apy evam vid bahv iva pratigrhnati, na haiwatad gayatrya ekam cana padam prati: ‘What is the glory of this Gayatri? If you are to accept as gift everything that is available anywhere; if you can receive such a gift, that altogether cannot be regarded as equivalent even to one foot of Gayatri’. Apy evam vid bahv iva pratigrhnati na haiwatad gayatrya ekam cana padam prati: ‘If you are to accept as gift everything that is available anywhere; if you can receive such a gift, that altogether cannot be regarded as equivalent even to one foot of Gayatri’. It is not so’, says the Upanishad.

6. sa ya imams trin loken purnan pratigrhniyat, so’sya etat prathamam padam apnuyat; atha yavatiam trayi vidya, yas tavat pratigrhnihyati, so’sya etat dvitiyam padam apnuyat; atha yavad idam prani, yas tavat pratigrhnihyati, so’ sya etat tritteyam padam apnuyat; athasya etat eva turityarn darsatam padam, paroraja ya esa tapati, naiva kenacanapyam; kuta u etatav pratigrhnihyati.

Sa ya imams trin loken purnan pratigrhniyat, so’sya etat prathamam padam: ‘When you chant the first Pada, first foot of the Gayatri Mantra, you become endowed with mastery over the three worlds’. Apnuyat; atha yavatiam trayi vidya, yas tavat pratigrhnihyati, so’sya etat dvitiyam padam apnuyat: ‘If you can chant correctly even the second foot merely, you become endowed with all the glory that comes to one by study of the three Vedas’. Athasya etat tritteyam padam apnuyat: ‘If you recite the third foot of the Gayatri Mantra, you become capacitated to rule over every living being anywhere’. Athsyaya eva turtyam darsatam padam, paroraja ya esa tapati, naiva kenacanapyam: ‘If you are to meditate on the fourth foot of Gayatri, what can I tell you’, says the Upanishad. How can I explain to you the glory that will come to you? Nothing of this world can equal that. No gift of the three worlds can equal this fourth foot’. Not the three Vedas, not all beings put together, ‘nothing mentioned up to this time can equal the glory that comes to one who meditates on this fourth foot of Gayatri’. Paroraja ya esa tapati, naiva kenacanapyam: kuta u etatav pratigrhnihyati: ‘How can you describe the glory that comes through the meditation on the fourth foot? It is inexpressible; it is transcendent; it is superior to everything which is material or visible’.
7. tasya upasthanam; gayatri, asy eka-padi dvi-padi tri-padi catus-pady a-pad asi, na hi padyase. namas te turiyaya darsataya padaya parorajase; asav ado ma prapad iti; yam dvisyat, asav asmai kamo ma samrddhiti va; na haivasmai sa kamah samrddhyate yasma evam upatisthate; aham adah prapam iti va.

Tasya upasthanam gayatri: You have to pray to Gayatri, meditate on Gayatri by certain methods. One of the methods is a verbal chant, a prayer offered to the great deity of the Gayatri. A particular chant is given here. Tasya upasthanam: ‘A holy devout worship or adoration is called Upasthana’. What is it? Gayatri ity: ‘O Gayatri, the great one! You are one-footed, two-footed, three-footed and you possess the fourth foot also’. Eka-padi; dvi-padi, tri-padi, catus-pady: You are one-footed, two-footed, three footed or four-footed as the case may be. ‘You are everything, but really you have no feet. That is also true’ A-pad asi: Who can say that you have feet. These feet are only concepts in our mind. You are universal, all-comprehensive. So, you are A-pad, without any feet whatsoever. Na hi padyase: ‘You never move anywhere’, therefore why should you have any feet? You are the immovable all-pervading being. Therefore you never move like the four-footed animals or four-footed beings - na hi padyase. Namas te turiyaya: ‘Prostration to you, the fourth reality indicated by the Supreme Consciousness’. Darsataya padaya: ‘That Reality which appears to be there in front of us, yet we cannot recognize through our intelligence’. Parorajase asav adom: ‘That Being which is above all manifestation in the form of Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, the material form’. Ma prapad iti; yam dvisyat, asav asmai kamo ma samrddhiti va; na haivasmai sa kamah samrddhyate yasma evam upatisthate; aham adah prapam iti va: ‘Whatever you wish in your mind at the time of the chant of the Gayatri Mantra, that materialises itself. That becomes your property. Not only that; nobody can get what you can get. You stand above all people. You may prevent someone from getting by the chant of the Gayatri, and you may get everything that you require by the chant of the Gayatri”. Both things are possible. The positive and the negative aspects of the power that accrues to one by the chant of Gayatri are mentioned here. The positive aspect is that you are capable of acquiring everything. The negative aspect is that you are able to prevent anything, if it is necessary to do so. You can oppose and prevent anything from taking place if it is not supposed to take place at all according to your will; or if it is to take place, it can take place also by your positive will. So, if you wish it should take place, it will; and if you wish it shall not, it will not.

8. etadd ha vai taj janako vaideho budilam asvatarasvim uvaca: yan nu ho tad gayatri-vid abruthah, atha katham hasti bhuto vahasiti. mukham hy asyah, samrat, na vidam kakara, iti hovaca; tasya agnir eva mukham: yadi ha va api bahu ivagnau abhyadadhati, sarvam eva tat samdahati; evam haivaivam-vid yady api bahv iva papam kurute, sarvam eva tat samsaya suddhah puto jaro’mrtaṁ sambhavati.

Etadd ha vai taj janako vaideho budilam asvatardsvim uvaca: This is a peculiar anecdote here. It appears, there was a sage called Budila Asvatarasvi.
Perhaps, he was a reciter of the Gayatri Mantra. He became an elephant in his next birth by the chant of the Gayatri. Janaka was riding that elephant, and due to Purvavasand the elephant could speak. It said that it was a reciter of the Gayatri Mantra. Yan nu ho tad gayatri-vid abrathah, atha katham hasti bhato vahasiti: Janaka says: ‘You say you are a meditator on Gayatri. How have you become an elephant upon which I am sitting and riding?’ What is the secret? How can a Gayatri Upasaka become an elephant in the next birth? Mukham hy asyah, samrat, na vidam cakara: The elephant said: ‘King, I did not know the faith of Gayatri. I made a mistake in the chant. I did not know some aspect of it. I knew everything except something. That something has brought me to an elephant’s birth’. ‘I see’, said Janaka. ‘This is the case’. Iti hovaca, tasya agnir eva mukham: ‘Fire is her mouth. This you did not understand’, says Janaka. Here fire can mean anything; one does not know what actually the Upanishad intends. Perhaps it is to be identified with the Sun himself. He is symbolic of the fire-principle. Also in the ritual of the chant of the Gayatri there are certain Nyasas, as they are called, placements which invoke Agni and other deities as the various limbs of the conceived body of the deity of Gayatri.

Yadi ha va api bahu ivagnau abhyadadhati, sarvam eva tat samdahati; evam haivaivam-vid yady api bahu iva papairc kurute, sarvam eva tat sampsaaya suddhah puto’jar’o mrtah sambhavati: ‘Just as anything that is thrown into fire is burnt to ashes, whatever it be, so does one burn to ashes every sin that one might have committed in the earlier births provided one knows the secret of Gayatri in its entire form’. Agni as the Mukha and the fourth foot, particularly, must be understood. We must meditate on Gayatri in its entirety and not part by part, and must also be able to identify the deity of the Gayatri as one with one’s own being, united with one’s own being, and with the chant which is Gayatri Mantra. All three should become one. The Sadhana which is the Gayatri, the Sadhaka who is the meditator and the deity should all be contemplated as a single being. This is the intention of the Upanishad. By this one attains to supernal regions.