

विचखु गीता (विचखुकर्तृकमहिंसाधर्मप्रशंसनम्)

महाभारत शांतिपर्व (पञ्चषष्ट्यधिकद्विशततमोऽध्यायः)

Vichakhnu Gita

भीष्म उवाच

अत्राप्युदाहरन्तीममितिहासं पुरातनम् ।

प्रजानामनुकम्पार्थं गीतं राज्ञा विचखुना ॥ १ ॥

Bhishma said,

In this connection (of harmlessness), is cited an old narrative recited by king Vichakhnu through compassion for all creatures.

छिन्नस्थूनं वृषं दृष्ट्वा विलापं च गतां भृशम् ।

गोग्रहे यज्ञवाटस्य प्रेक्षमाणः स पार्थिवः ॥ २ ॥

Beholding the mangled body of a bull, hearing the exceedingly painful groans of the kine in a cow-slaying sacrifice, and observing the cruel Brahmins gathered there for assisting at the ceremonies, the king, lamented with the following utterances.

स्वस्ति गोभ्योऽस्तु लोकेषु ततो निर्वचनं कृतम् ।

हिंसायां हि प्रवृत्तायामाशीरिषा तु कल्पिता ॥ ३ ॥

When the slaughter had commenced, the words expressive of a blessing (to those helpless animals) 'Let there be a fortune to all the kine in the world.' were pronounced by the monarch; who continued in the protest.

अव्यवस्थित मयादैर्विमूढैर्नास्तिकैर्नरैः ।

संशयात्मभिरव्यक्तैर्हिंसा समनुवर्णिता ॥ ४ ॥

Only those who are transgressors of defined limits of the righteousness, destitute of intelligence, atheists, sceptics, and desirous of the acquisition of celebrity through sacrifices & religious rites; speak highly of the slaughter of animals in sacrifices.

सर्वकर्मस्वहिंसा हि धर्मात्मा मनुरब्रवीत् ।

कामरागाद्विहिंसन्ति बहिर्वेद्यां पशून् नराः ॥ ५ ॥

The righteous-souled Manu has commended (the observance of) harmlessness in all religious routines. But urged by their mere desire & attachment of the fruit, men slaughter animals only on the outer alter of the sacrifice.

तस्मात् प्रमाणतः कार्यो धर्मः सूक्ष्मो विजानता ।

अहिंसा सर्वभूतेभ्यो धर्मेभ्यो ज्यायसी मता ॥ ६ ॥

Hence, guided by authority of the scriptures (in respect of slaughter viz. abstention from slaughter or harmlessness) wise-one should decide the true course of duty which is exceedingly subtle. Conversant with the religious-practise, Harmlessness to all creatures is considered as the highest of all duties.

उपोष्य संशितो भूत्वा हित्वा वेदकृताः श्रुतीः ।

आचार इत्यनाचाराः कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥ ७ ॥

Observing the rigid vow of fasting and disregarding the indicated fruits of Vedic-rituals, one must regard a conduct with selfish motive as improper conduct because seeking the fruits with selfish motive is mere wretchedness.

यदि यज्ञांश्च वृक्षांश्च यूपान्श्चोद्धिश्य मानवाः ।

मांसं खादन्ति न वृथा नैष धर्मः प्रशस्यते ॥ ८ ॥

Reverentially mentioning, sacrifices, cutting trees for sacrificial stakes, & eating meat by men, is not in vain; this practice, however, is not worthy of applause.

सुरा मत्स्या मधु मांसमासवं कृसरौदनम् ।

धूर्तैः प्रवर्तितं ह्येतन्नैतद् वेदेषु कल्पितम् ॥ ९ ॥

कामान्मोहाच्च लोभाच्च लौल्यमेतत्प्रकल्पितम् ।

Wine, fish, honey, meat, alcohol, and preparations of rice and sesame seeds, have been introduced by cunning-ones; the use of these (in sacrifices) is not mentioned in the Vedas. The hankering after these has aroused from pride, delusion, and cupidity.

विष्णुमेवाभिजानन्ति सर्वयज्ञेषु ब्राह्मणाः ॥ १० ॥

पायसैः सुमनोभिश्च तस्यापि यजनं स्मृतम् ।

The true Brahmins realise the presence of Vishnu in every sacrifice; whose worship also should be made with agreeable rice boiled in milk and flowers as have been mentioned in the Vedas.

यज्ञियाश्चैव ये वृक्षा वेदेषु परिकल्पिताः ॥११ ॥

यच्चापि किञ्चित् कर्तव्यमन्यच्चोक्षैः सुसंस्कृतम् ।

महासत्त्वैः शुद्धभावैः सर्वं देवाहमेव तत् ॥ १२ ॥

(The leaves and flowers of) such trees as have been indicated in the Vedas should be used in the sacrifice. Whatever oblations & offerings sanctified by the persons of pure hearts, cleansed natures and those eminent for knowledge and holiness, are all worthy of being offered to the Supreme Deity and not unworthy of His acceptance.

युधिष्ठिर उवाच

शरीरमापदश्चापि विवदन्त्यविहिंसतः ।

कथं यात्रा शरीरस्य निरारम्भस्य सेत्स्यते ॥ १३ ॥

Yudhishtira said,

The body, all sorts of dangers and calamities are continually at war with each other. How, therefore, will a person who is totally free from the desire, but out of the fear of harming others becomes unable to take up any profession, will succeed in keeping up his body?

भीष्म उवाच

यथा शरीरं न ग्लयेन्नेयान्मृत्युवशं यथा ।

तथा कर्मसु वर्तेत समर्थो धर्ममाचरेत् ॥ १४ ॥

Bhishma said,

One should, when able, acquire merit and act rigorously in such a way that in the process nobody should meet with the death or languish.

{ एवं स्यात् सति किमर्थं जीवो जीवस्य जीवनम् }