
Nasadiya Sukta (Rigveda)

नासदीयसूक्तम् (ऋग्वेद)

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नासदासीत्रो सदासीत्तदानीं नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।
किमावरीचः कुलु कस्य शर्मत्रम्भः किमासीद्रुडनं गभीरम् ॥ १ ॥

Then even nothingness was not, nor existence,

There was no air then, nor the heavens beyond it.

What covered it? Where was it? In whose keeping

Was there then cosmic water, in depths unfathomed?

न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि न रात्र्या अह्ना आसीत्प्रकेतः ।

आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्भुवन्न परः किं यनास ॥ २ ॥

Then there was neither death nor immortality

nor was there then the torch of night and day.

The One breathed windlessly and self-sustaining.

There was that One then, and there was no other.

तम आसीत्तमसा गूण्डमग्नेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा ष्टमम् ।

तुच्छयेनाभ्वपिडितं यदासीत्तपसस्तन्मडिनाजयतैकम् ॥ ३ ॥

At first there was only darkness wrapped in darkness.

All this was only unilluminated water.

That One which came to be, enclosed in nothing,

arose at last, born of the power of heat.

कामस्तदग्ने समवर्तताधि मनसो रेतः प्रथमं यदासीत् ।

सतो बन्धुमसति निरविन्दन्वृद्धि प्रतीच्या कुवयो मनीषा ॥ ४ ॥

In the beginning desire descended on it -

that was the primal seed, born of the mind.

The sages who have searched their hearts with wisdom

know that which is kin to that which is not.

तिरश्चीनो विततो रश्मिरेषामधः स्विदासीउद्गुरि स्विदासीउत् ।

रेतो॑धा आ॒सन्म॒डि॒मान॑ आ॒सन्स्व॒धा अ॒वस्ता॒त्प्रय॑तिः प॒रस्ता॑त् ॥ ५ ॥

And they have stretched their cord across the void,
and know what was above, and what below.

Seminal powers made fertile mighty forces.

Below was strength, and over it was impulse.

को अ॒द्भ॒वा वे॒द॒ इ॒ष्ट॒प्र॒वो॒च्य॒त्कु॒त आ॒जा॒ता कु॒त॒ इ॒यं॒ वि॒सृ॒ष्टिः॑ ।

अ॒र्वा॒ग्नि॒वा अ॒स्य॒ वि॒सृ॒र्ज॒ने॒नाथा॑ को वे॒द॒ यत् आ॒भ॒भू॒व ॥ ६ ॥

But, after all, who knows, and who can say

Whence it all came, and how creation happened?

the gods themselves are later than creation,

so who knows truly whence it has arisen?

इ॒यं॒ वि॒सृ॒ष्टि॒र्यत् आ॒भ॒भू॒व॒ यद्दि॒ वा॒ दृ॒षे॒ यद्दि॒ वा॒ न॒ ।

यो अ॒स्या॒ध्यक्षः॑ प॒र॒मे॒ व्यो॒म॒सो अ॒द्भ॒ग वे॒द॒ यद्दि॒ वा॒ न॒ वे॒द ॥ ७ ॥

Whence all creation had its origin,

he, whether he fashioned it or whether he did not,

he, who surveys it all from highest heaven,

he knows - or maybe even he does not know.

This is the famous नासदीय सूक्त the 129-th sUkta of

the 10-th mandala of the Rigveda . It has been translated and

discussed by many scholars and there have been volumes dedicated

to just this one sUkta . The current translation is by A . L.

Basham, from his book entitled “The Wonder that was India”.

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