

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

The Flame Without A Flicker

Part 1

Madhu kanda

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Published In
Esamskriti.com

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21st May, 2012

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Om Namah Shivay! It proves beyond doubt that we all are a part of Shiv, and He loves us and grants our every wish.

BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD (1) THE FLAME WITHOUT A FLICKER

INTRODUCTION

The holy corpus of the *Veda*, which is the repository of eternal knowledge and wisdom, is divided into four Books, known as Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. In each of the four Vedas a distinction, has been made according to content and form viz., (1) *Samhita*; (2) *Brahmana*; (3) *Aranyaka*; (4) *Upanishad*.

The *Samhita* is a collection of hymns or prayers, to God in various manifestations, containing also formulae necessary in the sacrificial use of these hymns, known as *mantras*. The word 'Samhita' means a collection of the *mantras* belonging to a particular section of the Veda, which are either in metrical verses (*Rik*) or sentences in prose (Yajus) or chants (*Saman*).

The *Brahmanas* teach the practical use of the verses and the chants presented in the Samhitas. However, the Brahmanas, though they are supposed to be only sacrificial injunctions for purpose of ritualistic utilization of the *mantras* of the Samhita, go beyond this restricted definition and contain much more material, such as *Vidhi* (a directive precept), *Arthavada* (laudatory or eulogizing explanation), and *Upanishad*, (the philosophical or mystical import of the chant or the performance).

The *Aranyakas* are esoteric considerations of the practical ritual, which is otherwise the main subject of the Brahmana. The opening passage of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, in which the horse-sacrifice is treated as a symbol, would serve as an example of how a ritualistic symbol and material is used as a cosmological concept for purpose of religious contemplation and philosophic meditation.

The *Upanishads*, except the *Isavasya*, which occurs in the Samhita portion of the Yajurveda, occur as the concluding mystical import and philosophical suggestiveness of some Brahmana or the other. The philosophical sections of the *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas* are usually detached for the purpose of study, and go by the name of *Upanishads*, brought together from the different Vedas to form a single whole.

Tradition considers that the *Brahmacharin*, or the celibate student (which is the first part of the dedication of human life) occupies himself with a study of the Samhita; the *Grihastha*, or the householder (which is the second part of the dedication of life) is expected to diligently perform the rituals detailed in the Brahmanas in relation to their corresponding *mantras* from the Samhitas. The *Vanaprastha*, or the recluse, the hermit (the third part of the dedication of life) rises above prayer as a chant and performance as a ritual, and busies himself with pure inward contemplation of the more philosophical and abstract realities hidden behind the outward concepts of divinity and the external performances of ritual. The *Sannyasin*, or the spiritually illumined renunciate (the fourth and concluding part of the dedicated life) occupies himself with direct meditations as prescribed in the Upanishads, whose outlook of life transcends all-empirical forms, outward relations as also space and time itself.

Among the ten Upanishads, it is the *Brihadaranyaka*, *Chhandogya*, *Aitareya*, *Taittiriya* and *Mandukya* that rise above the level of ordinary instruction and stand as most exalted specimens of a direct encounter with Reality.

BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD: AN OVERVIEW

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is like an omnibus, where anything can be found anywhere. It is a veritable research reservoir providing scope for intensive study by those who are pure in heart, sincere in their aspirations, and wholly devoted to lead a spiritualized life.

“The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is the most detailed and magnificent revelation of the ancient philosopher-seers, which, in its six chapters packed with thought and revelation, provides to the students a practically exhaustive and concentrated teaching on every aspect of life, making it an indispensable guidebook to the student of literature as well as the philosopher, the religious devotee, and the mystical and spiritual seeker engaged in meditation for divine realization”. - The Divine Life Society, Rishikesh

It occupies a pre-eminent place among the Upanishads since it not only delineates the fundamental principles of Vedanta but also describes a number of *upasanas* or meditations technically known as *Vidyas*, religious rituals, sacrifices, mythology etc. It also throws light on contemporary society especially about the noble nature of kings, high status of women in the spiritual field and their erudition in Brahma Vidya. It touches on almost every issue relevant to human life, and rises to such heights of philosophic genius as may rightly be considered as the greatest achievement of the human mind in history. Hence the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad represents a landmark in the development of early philosophical literature of India. Adi Sankaracharya’s commentary on this Upanishad is considered to be a masterpiece of thought and language.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad forms part of the *Satapatha-Brahmana* belonging to the *Sukla Yajurveda*. It consists of three Parts or *Kandas* containing 6 Chapters or *adhyayas* which are further divided into 47 Sections or *brahmanas* consisting in all 427 Verses or *mantras* or *kandikas* which are all in prose. These three Parts are 1. *Madhu Kanda* which expounds the teaching of the basic identity of the individual and the Universal Self, 2. *Muni Kanda* or *Yajnavalkya Kanda* which provides a philosophical justification of the teaching and 3. *Khila Kanda* which deals with certain modes of worship and meditation or *upasana*. These divisions correspond to the three stages of religious life viz., 1. *sravana* or hearing the *upadesa* or the teaching, 2. *manana*, logical reflection, *Upapatti* and 3. *nidhidhyasana* or contemplative meditation, *upasana*.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is the greatest of the Upanishads by its size as well as substance. Adi Sankaracharya tells us that this Upanishad is *Brihat*, great, on account of its magnitude in form and meaning, length and profundity and *aranyaka* or forest because of its knowledge having been taught in a forest and the term ‘Upanishad’ denoting Brahma Vidya, the knowledge of *brahman*. The famous ‘*Mahavakya*’ “*Aham Brahma Asmi*—I am Brahman” is from this Upanishad.

By far, the Muni Kanda, which accounts for almost half the number of the *mantras*, is the important part of this Upanishad which contains the brilliant expositions of the sage Yajnavalkya on the philosophy of Atman/Brahman as also several other related subtle topics, proving that he can be considered as among the greatest thinkers of the world of any age.

RITUAL AND PHILOSOPHY

It will be noticed from the outline of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad given below that it deals with the rituals in as much details as the philosophy of the Brahman. Sankara explains:

The Veda as a whole has two wings, *karma kanda*, covering rituals and methods of worship and *jnana kanda*, covering philosophy, both helping man to realize what is good and avoid what is evil. But as the means to realize the highest good is the knowledge of Brahman, *karma kanda* and *jnana kanda*, ritualism and philosophy, have been made use of for achieving the purpose. Through the performance of sacrifices, other rituals and forms of worship laid down in the *karma kanda* portion of the Veda, a man's heart becomes purified and he is then qualified to follow the disciplines of the *jnana kanda* or the Upanishads, the philosophical section of the Veda and thereby acquires the knowledge of Brahman. Thus *karma kanda* is an indirect help, whereas the *jnana kanda* makes possible direct experience of the Brahman. Hence we find the Upanishads follow the technique of super-imposing the philosophical ideas and implications on the rituals and sacrifices and thereby lifting the minds of the seekers from the lower regions of ritualism to the higher planes of sublime philosophy. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad has employed this technique in full to convey its message which we will be observing as we proceed in our study.

AUTHOR'S OPENING REMARKS:

In presenting this great Upanishad, taking into account the temperament of the modern educated minds, their needs and interests, only those sections dealing with profound philosophy and spirituality relevant to them have been covered in detail while giving mere passing references to the other sections dealing with rituals and mythology etc. that are out of relevance to present day society. However, in order to enable the reader to have a comprehensive mirror-image of the Upanishad before him, a preview of its contents is given below. The reference to the *mantras* made in the following format (IV-III-20) indicates Chapter No. (IV), Section No. (III), and the *mantra* No. (20).

PREVIEW OF THE BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD

(Consists of: 3 Parts or *Kandas* , 6 Chapters or *adhyayas*, 47 Sections or *brahmanas*, 427 Verses or *mantras* or *kandikas*)

(*Figures in brackets indicate the number of mantras*)

Part1 - MADHU-KANDA (146)

SANTI MANTRA

CHAPTER I (80)

Section I - Asvamedha-Brahmana

Meditation on the Sacrificial Horse as the Cosmic Person, Hiranyagarbha

Section II - Agni-Brahmana

Creation and Evolution of the Universe—The Concepts of Death and Sacrifice

Section III - Udgitha-Brahmana

Meditation on the Vital Force—Allegory of the Warfare between the Celestials and the Demons

Section IV - Purushavidha-Brahmana

The Saga of Creation

Section V - Saptanna-Brahmana

Meditation on the Seven Forms of Food, the Objects of Desires, Manifestations of the Supreme

Section VI - Uktha-Brahmana

Meditation on the Names, Forms and Actions as the Manifestations of Hiranyagarbha

CHAPTER II (66)

Section I - Ajatasatru-Brahmana

Meditation on the Lower and Higher Levels of Consciousness

Section II - Sisu-Brahmana

Meditation on Prana—Analogy of the New-born Calf

Section III - Murta-Amurta-Brahmana

Meditation on the Gross and Subtle Manifestations of Reality

Section IV - Maitreyi-Brahmana

Instruction on the Supreme by Sage Yajnavalkya to his Wife Maitreyi—All Love rooted in the Self—The Universe is Non-different from the Self before its Manifestation, during its Existence and after its Disappearance

Section V - Madhu-Brahmana

Mutual Relationship of Everything with Everything Else—Story of Sage Dadhyang Atharvan

Section VI - Vamsa-Brahmana

Line of Teachers and Disciples of this Knowledge contained in the First Two Chapters

Part 2 - YAJNAVALKYA-KANDA (176)

CHAPTER III (85)

Section I - Asvala-Brahmana

How to overcome the Defects in the Sacrificial Rites and their Results—Meditation combined with Rituals, the Means

Section II - Artabhaga-Brahmana

The Senses and Their Objects—The Supreme Being as Death of Death

Section III - Bhujyu-Brahmana

The Goal of Performing the Horse Sacrifice—Some Hints on Cosmic Geography

Section IV - Ushasta-Brahmana

Brahman, The Supreme—Direct and Immediate—Unknowable through the Individual Intellect

Section V - Kahola-Brahmana

Renunciation, the Means of Liberation—The Three Kinds of Desires—Balya, Panditya and Mauna

Section VI - Gargi-Brahmana

Meditation on the Conditioned Brahman

Section VII - Antaryami-Brahmana Or Uddalaka-Brahmana

Meditation on the Inner Controller

Section VIII - Akshara-Brahmana

Meditation on the Supreme Unconditioned Brahman

Section IX - Sakalya-Brahmana

The Number of Gods—Meditation on the Eight Persons and Their Corresponding Deities—Meditation on the Five Directions with Their Deities and Supports—Meditation on the Essence of the Vital Force—Comparison of Man with a Tree—Source of Rebirth or Creation Established as the Supreme Brahman

CHAPTER IV (91)

Section I - Shadacharya-Brahmana

Defects of the Meditation on Parts—Instruction on the Meditation on the Whole

Section II - Kurcha-Brahmana

A Short Analytical Study of the Three States of Waking, Dreaming and Deep Sleep

Section III - Jyotir-Brahmana

Meditation on The Supreme as The Light of Lights—Further Detailed Analysis of the States of Waking, Dream and Deep Sleep

Section IV - Saririka-Brahmana

What becomes of the Ignorant Jiva, and of the Knower of Brahman, after the Fall of the Body.

Section V - Maitreyi-Brahmana
A Restatement of Section IV of Chapter II

Section VI - Vamsa-Brahmana
Line of Teachers and Disciples for the Knowledge in, Chapters III and IV

Part 3 - KHILA-KANDA (105)

CHAPTER V (30)

Section I - Om Kham Brahma-Brahmana
Meditation on Brahman as The Whole, The Plenum

Section II - Prajapatya-Brahmana
Prajapati's Instruction to Celestials, Demons and Men—Three Main Virtues of Self-control, Compassion and Charity

Section III - Hridaya-Brahmana
Meditation on the Heart as Brahman

Section IV - Satya-Brahmana
Meditation on Truth as Brahman

Section V - Satya-Brahma-Samsthana-Brahmana
Meditation on the Three Syllables of the Word 'Satya'—Meditation on the Sun and on the Right Eye

Section VI - Manomaya-Brahmana
Meditation on the Cosmic Mind and the Individual Mind as Brahman

Section VII - Vidyut-Brahmana
Meditation on the lightning as Brahman

Section VIII- Vagdhenu-Brahmana
Meditation with the help of the Symbol of Cow for the Veda

Section IX - Vaisvanaragni-Brahmana
Meditation on the Universal Prana in the Meditator

Section X - Gati-Brahmana
The Course of the Soul After Death—The Gradual Ascent of the Soul in Krama-Mukti, Gradual Liberation

Section XI - Vyahita-Brahmana
Meditation on Illness, Death etc., as Supreme Austerities

Section XII - Pratrída-Brahmana
Meditation based on the Correlation Between Matter and Energy

Section XIII - Uktha-Brahmana
Meditation on the Identity of Prana with Uktha, Yajus, Saman and Kshatra

Section XIV - Gayatri-Brahmana
Meditation on the Four Feet of the Gayatri *Mantra*

Section XV - Suryagni Prarthana-Brahmana
Prayer to the Sun God and Fire God at the Time of Death

CHAPTER VI (75)

Section I- Prana Samvada-Brahmana
Meditation on the Vital Force—Story of the Conversation between the Organs and the Chief Vital Force

Section II - Karma-Vipaka-Brahmana
Meditation on the Five Fires—Story of Svetaketu and King Pravahana

Section III - Srimantha -Brahmana
Ritual-cum-Meditation for Attaining Prosperity

Section IV - Putramantha-Brahmana
Ritual-cum-Meditation for Attaining Progeny

Section V - Vamsa-Brahmana
The Line of Teachers and Disciples for the Knowledge contained in Chapters V and VI, and the Whole Upanishad

This Preview is summarized in the following table.

BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD					
<i>Madhu-kanda</i>		<i>Muni-kanda or Yajnavalkya-kanda</i>		<i>Khila-kanda</i>	
Chapter I	Chapter II	Chapter III	Chapter IV	Chapter V	Chapter VI
<i>brahmanas</i> or Sections 6	<i>brahmanas</i> or Sections 6	<i>brahmanas</i> or Sections 9	<i>brahmanas</i> or Sections 6	<i>brahmanas</i> or Sections 15	<i>brahmanas</i> or Sections 5
<i>kandikas or mantras</i>		<i>kandikas or mantras</i>		<i>kandikas or mantras</i>	
TOTAL NUMBER OF <i>MANTRAS</i> - 427					

In preparing these essays the following books have been extensively referred to for guidance.

1. The Principal Upanishads by Dr. S.Radhakrishnan
2. The Call of the Upanishads by Rohit Mehta
3. The Upanishads – a New Translation (Vol. 3) by Swami Nikhilananda
4. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad under Upanishad Series
published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai
5. The Message of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad by Swami Ranganathananda
6. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad by Swami Sivananda
7. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad by Swami Madhavananda
8. The Philosophy of Sage Yajnavalkya by Swami Brahmananda
9. Upanishads Retold (Vol. 1) by V.H.Date and
10. Sixty Upanishads of the Veda (Vol. 1) by Paul Deussen

With these introductory remarks we shall now make an attempt to knock at the doors of this Upanishad to have a look at its contents as sharply as our ability allows.

SANTI MANTRA: PEACE INVOCATION

It is customary to recite a *Santi Mantra* or a Peace Chant at the beginning and end of the study of the Upanishads. The Peace Invocation appearing at the start of this Upanishad appears for the Isavasya Upanishad also. It reads:

Om. purnam adah purnam idam puranat purnam udachyate purnasya purnam adaya purnam evavasishyate ||

Om santih! santih!! santih!!!

Om. That (Absolute) is infinite; this (universe) is infinite. (This) infinite emanates from the infinite (the Absolute). Then taking the infinitude of the infinite (universe), the infinite (Absolute) alone remains.

Om. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Even modern scientists are fascinated by this wonderful *mantra*. They are not a play of words but a mathematical fact defining the nature of the Infinity (Brahman). It says *purnam adah* – That Brahman is infinite; *purnam idam* – This universe is infinite; *puranat purnam udachyate* – From the infinite Brahman has come this infinite universe; *purnasya purnam adaya* – Having taken the infinitude of the infinite universe; what remains? *purnam eva avasishyate* – Purna or infinite alone remains. There is no fraction in the Purna. Brahman is *purnam*. This universe has come from that *purnam*, therefore this universe is also *purnam*. From that *purnam* this *purnam* has come. Having taken out *purnam* from the *purnam*, *purnam* alone remains.

This can be better understood with the concept of zero. If one zero is added to another zero or if one zero is deducted from another zero or if one zero is multiplied with another zero or if one

zero is divided by another zero what we get is nothing but zero. So too, are this universe and the Brahman in the language of the Upanishad.

This *mantra* establishes the non-difference of Brahman and the world including the *jivas*. Brahman is essentially infinite, the supreme fullness. As the phenomenal world has come out of the Absolute, it is also full. Our perception of the world as a separate entity and external to oneself is on account of *avidya* or ignorance. When this state of ignorance is destroyed we reach the state of enlightenment, Liberation. It is therefore said that microcosm is the effect and the macrocosm is the cause, both being of the nature of infinite. The principle of cause and effect says that 1. the effect is not different from the cause 2. the effect is merely a different form of the cause 3. the cause does not undergo any change because it created the effect and thus 4. the cause and effect are of the same nature.

Because infinity is partless and indivisible, whatever is said to emanate from infinite must also be infinite as there cannot be two infinities. Therefore the conclusion is that nothing has really emanated from the Infinite; the universe is essentially the same Infinite or Brahman; the individual also is essentially the Infinite for the reason that there is no possibility of a part emanating from the Infinite.

The *mantra* speaks of the Whole, remaining forever the Whole, even when divided or multiplied. The Whole is Brahman. It suffers no diminution, even when manifested, for the quality of things suffer no loss even when split into many bits. That which is indivisible even in the midst of division, must surely be transcendent, even while it is immanent. Such is the nature of the Brahman, and such is the nature of the *Atman*. Immanent and yet Transcendent, manifest and yet unmanifest, this is Brahman and this is the subject matter of this majestic Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

Before we go to the text of the Upanishad here are some of its highlights covering many important subjects, memorable maxims and famous dialogues.

1. The popular prayer ‘Lead me from darkness to light... ‘
2. Definition of Brahman as Truth of truths, Light of lights, Inner Controller etc.,
3. A dialogue between a husband and wife on what creates and sustains love.
4. At death what dies and what does not die?
5. Doctrine of transmigration.
6. Oneness of God and universe, as also God and man.
7. Meditation on the famous *Gayatri Mantra*.

HARIH OM TAT SAT

BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD (2): MADHU-KANDA: CHAPTER I

SECTION I:

ASVAMEDHA BRAHMANA

Meditation on the Cosmic Person, Hiranyagarbha through the limbs of the Sacrificial Horse.

(N.B. Instead of reproducing the *mantras*, only their gist is given with an explanation of each of them to maintain brevity).

PREAMBLE

As is customary with the Upanishads of the other Vedas to take the starting point with some rituals, the first two sections of the Yajur Vedic *Brihadarnayaka Upanishad* are connected with the horse sacrifice (*asvamedha yajna*) for interpreting the same allegorically.

The first section contains two MANTRAS which explain the mystical significance of the Horse Sacrifice (*asvamedha yajna*). The *asvamedha*, horse sacrifice, the most elaborate and important of the animal sacrifices in ancient India is interpreted in this and the next sections of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad as of cosmic significance - a miniature reproduction of world order. The *mantras* in this section use the horse sacrifice to interpret the Cosmic Person, *Prajapati* (*Hiranyagarbha* or *Viraj*). A similar comparison of the parts of the animals to the various parts of the world establishing a cosmic correlation occur in the Vajasneyi Samhita (22-25) and the Atharva Veda (9-7). The idea of sacrifice as a means to account for creation goes back to the *Purusha Sukta* of the Rig-Veda (X.90.129) where from each member or part of the primeval (cosmic) person, *Purusha*, some part of the world is stated to have emanated.

ASVAMEDHA YAJNA

In the horse sacrifice (*asvamedha yajna*) a horse is let loose and a security force of three hundred guards follow his track. If anyone hinders the horse's progress, the guards will have to fight with him. When the horse completes a victorious circuit of the earth and returns to the capital, he is offered as a sacrifice and the king who performs the sacrifice assumes the title of sovereign, emperor. Thus the performance of horse sacrifice signifies sovereignty over the world. Here the ritual is considered to be symbolic of conquest of ego followed by sacrifice of self-interest. The horse sacrifice is considered as the highest sacrificial performance as it is generally performed only by the Kings.

IMAGERY

The seekers are advised to meditate on such imagery (that is on *Prajapati* as represented metaphorically in the members of the horse) for attaining knowledge of Brahman. Giving a cosmic interpretation to the horse-sacrifice, it is used as a vehicle of religious faith. Different objects and phenomena of the universe are compared to various limbs and actions of a horse; for example, dawn is compared to the head of the sacrificial horse, the sun as its eyes, the wind as its breath, the year as its body, the heavens as its back, the aerial space as the hollow region of its

belly, the seasons as its limbs, the months and fortnights as its joints, when the horse shakes its body it is compared to thunder, its stretching is compared to lightning and so forth. This section is concluded by construing that the world has its abode in water.

At the horse sacrifice, two vessels are placed before and behind the horse. These former is made of gold and the latter made of silver and they are meant to hold sacrificial libations. They are called *mahiman*. They are symbolized cosmically as the eastern sea and western sea and also as the day and the night respectively. The sea is taken as the Supreme Self and source of the creation of the universe. Water conveys the idea of subtle elements. It stands for all the five elements. Water is all-pervading.

CONCLUSION

This meditation, like regarding an idol as a deity, purifies the horse and raises it to the status of the cosmic person, *prajapati*. Although only kings are entitled to perform the horse sacrifice, anybody can get the fruits of this sacrifice, if he imagines himself as a sacrificial horse and meditates upon parts of his own body as different parts of the cosmic being which will give him realization.

END OF SECTION I

SECTION II:

AGNI BRAHMANA

Creation and evolution of the Universe – The concepts of Death and Sacrifice.

PREAMBLE

In the previous Brahmana (Section), the world-order was identified with the sacrificial horse and its resting place was said to be the Supreme Self which was described as the ocean. This section describes the process of creation of the world.

MANTRA 1

The first *mantra* says in the beginning that is before any manifestation of name and form there was nothing whatsoever in the universe. Everything was devoid of name and form. The creation was in a dormant state. Even the five great subtle elements were in their unmanifested state. There was neither cause nor any effect preceding creation, but all existed as a potential cause.

The mantra then says that the world was covered by death and hunger. Death means absence of life in its manifested aspect. Before life manifested in creation, there was total negation of it, a total non-existence of it, a total absence of it, which is described here as a state of death. Hunger is considered as another name for death because to satisfy hunger one has to destroy (kill) something else like animals or plants or crops etc.

Absence of life in its manifested aspect is not capable of thinking unless there is some cause which has properties of thinking. This cause is provided by the will power, *ichcha sakti*, of death.

Impelled by this will power, death thought 'let me have a mind'. Mind corresponds to the will power which is the characteristic of the life principle. Thus the life principle was generated which animated itself throughout. As a consequence of such animation, death disappeared as darkness vanishes because of the light. This animation of the life-principle has been figuratively stated as 'He created the mind'.

Then the life principle went on worshipping; worship symbolizes the animation of *kriya sakti*, creative power. The will power and creative power led to an awareness of the activity of the mind and a feeling of happiness arising from such activity. They have been called fire and water respectively. They are collectively called *arka*; *arc* means worship and *kam* means happiness. While the process of creation was thus going on, water was produced as an effect of *kriya sakti*. The *mantra* concludes by saying that whoever thus knows the origin of fire and water, for him happiness is attained implying happiness is related to life principle.

MANTRA 2

In Vedanta, water is considered as substratum on which life subsists in this creation. Out of the primordial water sprang forth the embryonic state of the universe which solidified into earth. Thereafter, *prajapati*, the Creator, became tired and distressed because he separated himself from the Supreme Self, his abode, the stable of the sacrificial horse. His heat (*taijas*) and essence (*rasa*) then turned into fire.

MANTRA 3

After creation, both death and life principle, *prana*, became divided into threefold viz. the sun, *aditya*, (vital energy), fire, *agni*, (life) and air, *vayu* (space). The whole universe - the entire space with all its directions - is the cosmic body of self, the Atman. The mantra describes the different parts of the cosmic body as different directions of the universe.

MANTRA 4

Soon after the creation of cosmic organism, there followed creation of speech, union of speech and mind and creation of time. This is how the new-born baby in the form of universe sprang out of death. Every kind of life pre-supposes death as its cause just as the death of young age indicates the birth of old age. Death causes life to manifest as the saying "the child is the father of man" goes (the fatherhood is born out of the death of the childhood). The whole creation owes its origin to death. Death wanted to swallow the new-born babe because everything in the universe is always flying towards death (as Arjuna saw in the Viswa Rupa Darsana of The Lord in the XI Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita). The babe naturally cried in terror and the sound of that cry "*bhan*" became the first manifestation of speech.

MANTRA 5

Having manifested himself as time and space, He created the universe – Vedas, hymns, rituals, men and animals – by a combination of speech and mind (knowledge and will-power). The universe that emerged thereafter is like the cosmic body of the Self (Atman). Thus the process of

creation is a form of his own self-expression. Whatever he projected, he was bent upon eating it. This statement indirectly means that whatever is born is subject to death. This death is called *aditi* because it consumes all. He who knows that there is one all-pervading Consciousness in the entire cosmos becomes free from the clutches of birth and death which is metaphorically stated as becoming the eater of all the names and forms.

MANTRAS 6 & 7

These two mantras interpret the sacrificial horse and the *asvamedha yajna*. The performer of the horse sacrifice purifies the horse by means of specific rituals and then lets it free for one year. In the same way the man should seek to perform a greater sacrifice for which he has to cleanse his entire being – senses, mind and nature. The sacrificial horse signifies the individual soul and the horse sacrifice is a symbol of purifying one's mind from its animal nature and making it fit for higher attainments. In other words, one should perform the horse sacrifice to conquer oneself rather than conquer the others.

CONCLUSION

Asvameha yajna is a symbolic representation of sacrificing and conquering self-interest. Such a sacrifice is like the sun which shines and gives light to all throughout the year. This section has used the imagery of the horse sacrifice for identification of the Cosmos and concludes with an analogy between the horse sacrifice ritual and self-sacrifice.

The creator created a cosmic body out of himself through austerities and meditation. Thereafter he offered it as an oblation to himself. A horse is a symbol of that cosmic body. The implied message is that one should gain self-mastery by developing a spirit of sacrificing self-interest. Thus the sage of the Upanishad put the high philosophical truth in an aphoristic style. An important point that flows graphically from this section is that everything born in this universe is mortal, a food for Death.

END OF SECTION II

SECTION III:

UDGITHA BRAHMANA

Meditation on the Vital Force, Prana - Allegory of the Warfare between the Celestials and the Demons. The Prana: Its Glories and Redeeming Power – Superiority of breath among bodily functions – Glorification of the breath as Chant (SAMAN) – Prayers to accompany an intelligent performance of the Chant.

PREAMBLE

Before man possessed the philosophical capacity to comprehend the concept of *atman* in its purity as the principle underlying the things of the cosmos, he still had an unripe thought at the empirical and metaphysical planes to visualize the hypothesis behind the phenomenal world which was distinctly evident before his eyes. One such thought of the ancient man was the form

of *prana*, the ‘vital breath’ which assumes an important place not only in the history of the development of the doctrine of *atman* but also remains in the Upanishads as one of the customary symbols, *pratikam*, of *atman*. The Brihadaranyala Upanishad expounds the subject of *prana* in various ways one of which is the theme of this section.

This section starts with a description of the eternal struggle between the good and the evil represented by the *Devas* and *Asuras* or gods and demons respectively. *Devas* wanted to surpass and excel over the *Asuras* in a sacrifice. To achieve this end, they used *Udgitha*, a sacred song beginning with OM, The gods asked the sense organs – speech, smell, eye, ear and mind – to sing *Udgitha*. They all did so one by one. However, no sooner the sense organs sang, every time the demons struck them with sin, resulting in the co-existence of the evil with the good. Vexed with this problem, finally the gods asked *Prana*, the life force, to sing the *Udgitha*. The demons again tried to inflict the life force with evil. But this time they could not succeed in their efforts and they were destroyed as if they were a clod of earth hitting against a solid rock.

Thus the life-force, the power behind the senses, remained untainted by any evil. Life-force or *prana*. alone can keep the sense organs active taking them to a higher cosmic level. The life-source secured nourishment to itself and to the sense organs by singing *Udgitha*. This section concludes with an assertion that *prana* itself is the *Udgitha* and narrates the famous hymn called *pavamana mantra* - “*asato ma sad gamaya; tamaso ma jyotir gamaya; mrutyor ma amrutam gamaya*” (Lead me from unreal to the real; from darkness to light; from death to immortality).

MANTRA 1 - 2

1) The offsprings of Prajapati were twofold: the gods (devas) and the demons (asuras). Naturally, the gods were few and the demons many. They struggled with one another for mastery of these worlds. Being overwhelmed by the demons, the gods said: "Well, let us overcome the demons at the sacrifice by means of the Udgitha."

In this mantra the philosophy of good and evil is explained allegorically. The descendants of *prajapati* were of two classes viz. gods and demons. The gods were virtuous, fewer in number and younger. The demons were completely the opposite of these qualities and they were older and numerous. The rivalry between them over the ownership of these worlds continued for a long time till the gods decided to defeat the demons through the aid of *Udgitha* in the sacrifice. The *Udgitha* is a song (called as *saman* also) in the *samaveda*. The hymn begins with mystic syllable OM. The priest who chants this is called *Udgata*.

The point to keep in mind is that gods and demons are not different from man. These twin forces exist in man and are expressed through his senses, by speech, by sight, and other organs of action. When these external expressions are immaculate, man becomes god and he becomes demon if they are vicious. In this mantra, the terms ‘god’ and ‘demon’ stand for the sum-total of sense organs which by virtue of noble acts is named god and by the form of evil actions is known as demon. A regular warfare is going on in the world between these two forces, gods and demons, good and evil, since the dawn of creation.

In the course of this rivalry the gods decided to perform a sacrifice and sing the Udgitha and thereby defeat the demons. Sacrifice (meaning destruction of one's lower nature) and chanting (meaning meditation) represent righteous actions performed through senses for warding off evil.

According to the mantra, the gods thought to purify themselves in entirety and become holy so that the evil forces would become extinct. They took up the organ of speech first for this purpose.

2) They said to the organ of speech: "Chant the Udgitha for us." "So be it," said speech and chanted it for them. Whatever pleasures are there in speech, it secured them for the gods by chanting, and whatever good speech is there, it utilized for itself. Now, the demons knew that through this singing of udgitha the gods would overcome them. Hence they rushed at it (the speech) and pierced it with evil. That evil is what is found today when one speaks improperly; that is that evil.

The gods asked the organ of speech to sing Udgitha so that it can become the medium for warding off the evil by becoming holy. Obeying these instructions, the organ of speech made itself pleasant to the gods and spoke what was good. So it became 'good speech'. As the evil forces would not tolerate spreading of goodness, they charged the organ of speech with evil. This injection of evil has resulted in what we witness and hear today as bad speech or bad tongue. Thus the organ of speech has become the producer of both pleasant and unpleasant expressions. It is to be noted that when the organ of speech is identified with gods, it utters words of divine nature and when identified with demons the same organ utters filthy words. This is the allegory behind this mantra.

MANTRA 3 – 6

In a similar way, the gods asked the organs of nose, eye, ear, and mind to sing Udgitha and every time each of these organs was singing, the demons pierced evil in each of them. This is the reason why today these very same organs smell, see, hear and think respectively both what is good and what is evil.

Likewise the deities of the remaining sense-organs and the motor-organs were tried one by one. But they too got evil. None of them could do the task of sanctification well and transcend evil.

MANTRA 7

Then they said to the vital breath, *prana*, which resides in the mouth to sing the Udgitha. The *prana* chanted it. When the demons tried to contaminate it with the evil, they could not as the *prana* by itself is taintless. Speech, mind and the other organs have got their two-fold functions viz., good speech, bad speech, noble thoughts and ignoble thoughts and so on. But the vital breath, life force, is unattached and unconcerned with sense experiences and hence beyond evil and good tendencies. So the evil or demons got perished when it tried to penetrate the *prana*. The mantra says that the demons were blown out in all directions and destroyed as a clod of earth striking a rock gets itself shattered to small pieces all over.

After the defeat of the demons, gods were restored to their respective places, good tendency again prevailed and all the organs started functioning properly. He who knows this becomes his true self and his envious kinsmen perish.

MANTRA 8 - 16

When the divinity was restored to sense organs and illusion destroyed, they wondered as to what has happened to them. They discovered that the *prana*, vital force, which was the cause for their revival, resides in the mouth itself without any particular form. Hence the vital breath (*prana*) is called *ayasya* and also, because it is the essence (*rasa*) of the limbs (*anga*) of the body, *angirasa*. That deity, *prana*, is called "*dur*," because death remains far (*dur*) away from it.

Prana then took away the sins of the gods and deposited them at the ends of the quarters. People should not go to these quarters i.e., they should throw away the sins and keep themselves away from the negative tendencies. The implication is that the evil cannot go anywhere. The mind which has been rendered pure is free from this evil but not completely immune. Therefore, after subjugating the sense-impulses, one must transcend them. For transcending evil, one must dis-identify oneself from the sense-organs and identify with the *prana*. All the senses were restored to their original nature by the *prana*.

When the speech was freed from death it became the fire (*agni*); similarly nose becomes the air (*vayu*), the eye became the sun (*surya*), the ears became the quarters (*disha*), and the mind became the moon (*chandra*). They were all freed from individuality and became universal.

MANTRA 17 - 27

Then *prana* secured food for itself by chanting and transformed that food into different organs of the body. Anyone intending to defeat him (*prana*) in greatness and glory will become incapable of supporting his dependents. *Prana* is therefore called as *ayasya angirasa*, the essence of all limbs. Yes, the *prana* is the essence of the limbs. From whichever limb the vital breath departs, that limb withers away right then and there; therefore it is verily the essence of the limbs.

Prana is also *Brihaspati* (lord of the Rig-Veda). Speech is *Brihati* (Rig) and the vital breath is its lord (*pati*). Therefore it is called *Brihaspati*. It is also known as *Brahmanaspati* (lord of the Yajur-Veda). Speech is *Brahman* (Yajur) and the vital breath is its lord (*pati*). Therefore it is called *Brahmanaspati*. The point to note here is that *Prana* is equated with *udgitha* etymologically. The inseparable relationship between speech and the vital force is being established in these mantras.

Prana is *Saman*, too. Speech is, verily, *sa* and this (*prana*) is *ama*. *Saman* i.e., the chant of the Sama-Veda is known by that name (*saman*) because it is *sa* (speech) and *ama* (*prana*). Or because it (*prana*) is equal (*sama*) to the entire universe; therefore it (*prana*) is indeed the Sama-Veda. He who knows this vital breath to be such great value attains all happiness.

These mantras lay stress on the importance of articulated chanting of *saman* with sweet voice. He who has got expertise in this art of chanting is said to be wealthy and he is sought after by all to

perform sacrificial rites for the reason that *prana* expresses itself through the medium of speech and the body.

It considers that the one, who succumbs to the evil tendencies and is engrossed in prohibited actions, as dead. As immortality transcends death, it is sought for in the *mantras* known as *pavamana mantras*.

MANTRA 28

This is the last mantra of this Brahmana. It contains the most popular prayer which in modern days forms part of the logos of many organizations particularly in educational field. Let us, therefore, study it in detail.

In a sacrifice called *gyotistoma* the priest called *prastotri* sings twelve hymns, of which the result of singing the first three goes to the sacrificer (*Yajamana*) while that of singing the remaining nine, goes to the priest. These hymns are called *pavamana* which are of purificatory and repetitive in nature (*abhyaroha*).

The priest has to chant the beginning of the *saman*. While he is chanting it, the sacrificer (*Yajamana*) utters the following texts:

“*asato ma sad gamaya;*
tamaso ma jyotir gamaya;
mrutyor ma amrutam gamaya”

(Lead me from unreal to the real;
from darkness to light;
from death to immortality).

When the mantra says: "Lead me from the unreal to the real," "the unreal" means death and the "real," immortality; so it says, "From death lead me to immortality," that is to say, "Make me immortal." When it says: "From darkness lead me to light," "darkness" means death and "light," immortality; so it says: "From death lead me to immortality," that is to say, "Make me immortal." In the verse when it says: "From death lead me to immortality," the meaning is direct and clear.

Thus the prayer is for taking us from death to immortality or to make us immortal. We have therefore to be very clear about the terms death and immortality. We have seen in earlier mantras that death means evil and immortality means goodness. Death is evil because it makes the man succumb to the evil tendencies and goad him to perform all prohibited actions. Hence such sense-identification is evil and is nothing other than death. Thus when the prayer uses the terms ‘unreal’, ‘darkness’ and ‘death’, they all mean death or evil only.

The terms ‘real’, ‘light’ and ‘immortality’ mean immortality. Immortality does not mean physical existence in this body for ever. But it means ‘a state of deathlessness wherein the individual soul is in communion with the Supreme Soul, Brahman’.

“Lead me from death to immortality” means a prayer for total cessation of all attachment and false identifications. Immortality cannot be achieved unless one is free from the lower impulses of lust, anger and other such demonic qualities. Unless these devils are blown off and divinity restored, until evil is annihilated and death is transcended by establishing purity in thought, word and deed, one cannot hope to attain immortality.

“Thus, the human heart here pours out in prayer. This is a prayer not of a particular people but of all human beings everywhere and in this Upanishad it has been so briefly and beautifully expressed. In this short prayer all the aspirations of the human heart have been included. We all want to go from darkness to light, from untruth to truth and from death to immortality”. – Swami Ranganathananda.

After chanting the remaining hymns the priest and the sacrificer obtain whatever objects were desired by them. Through this process of meditation one conquers the world (wins the Hiranyagarbha). He who thus knows this *saman* (the *prana*, or vital force)-for him there is no fear of his becoming unfit for the world. The idea is that the *prana* cannot be defeated by Asuras i.e.by the senses which are addicted to evil; the *prana* is pure, and the five senses finding refuge in him, recover their original nature. The *prana* is the Self of all things, also of the speech and the *saman* itself that has to be sung and sung well. The *prana* pervades all creatures and he who identifies himself with that *prana* obtains the rewards mentioned in the Brahmana.

This saman is the same vital force which destroyed the evils of attachment of the senses with their objects and made them free from defects. This vital force is the restorer of divinity in all bodies. It is present in all bodies.

END OF SECTION III

HARIH OM TAT SAT

**BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD (3):
MADHU-KANDA: CHAPTER I**

SECTION IV:
PURUSHAVIDHA BRAHMANA
THE SAGA OF CREATION.

PREAMBLE

One of the oldest pastimes of man has been to activate his contemplative and analytical faculties to find out the final answer to the riddle of creation of the universe. We have answers to this enigma in every religion. We have scientific theories throwing up endless ever-changing conclusions. We have philosophers' speculations and poetic imaginations. But the mystery of creation remains as much unfathomed and unsolved today as in the Vedic days.

Creation is interpreted in the Vedas as a developmental course rather than as bringing into being something not hitherto existent. It is considered as a process and not an event. In the Vedas, the Upanishads and other Hindu scriptures the creation of the perceived universe is described over and over again in a bewildering variety of ways that often seem to contradict one another. This is because the Vedas being the revealed knowledge to several sages at different points of time the interpretation of a single theme varies in myriad ways. The human intellect being finite or limited it comprehends the Infinite or the Unlimited – Brahman - which has no qualities or attributes amenable for description, in a variety of colors. Thus we find each Upanishad and sometimes in the same Upanishad there are several theories about the saga of creation. (For a detailed analysis on this topic readers' attention is invited to my Article entitled "Mystery of Creation - Some Vedantic Concepts" appearing in this website under the category 'Vedanta' – <http://www.esamskriti.com/essay-chapters/Mystery-of-Creation-~-Some-Vedantic-concepts-1.aspx>).

In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad we have seen in Section II a discussion about 'Creation and Evolution of the Universe' through the concepts of Death and Sacrifice. This section of the same Upanishad expounds another theory about creation of the universe through the concept of 'Brahman', the totality called *Purusha*. The concept of *Purusha* has been discussed in various ways in several scriptures, Vedas, Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita.

It may be noted that the *Purusha Sukta*, the most commonly recited Vedic hymn in almost all Vedic rituals and ceremonies, expounds the concept of *Purusha* elaborately. It appears in the *Rig-veda* (10.7.90.1-16) and in various other Vedic Scriptures as also its contents have been reflected and elaborated in the *Bhagavata Purana* (2.5.35 to 2.6.1-29) and in the *Mahabharata* (Mokshadharma Parva 351 and 352).

This section of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad develops the concept of the *Purusha* as follows:

In the beginning there was only Brahman (Self). It was alone, undifferentiated and unmanifested. It is called *Purusha*. The word "I" was born when *Purusha* became conscious of Himself. *Purusha* was not happy being alone. So He projected out of Himself a pair – the male principle

and the female principle. This was the beginning of the universe of living beings. Urge to reproduce is a cosmic urge; there is nothing to feel embarrassed about it.

The entire creation is Self, the Cosmic Person Himself. The food that we eat and the energy that is derived from it is also He alone. He made the universe differentiated by name and form. He entered all these differentiated entities of the universe up to the tips of their nails like a sword in its scabbard, like the fire in its source. He is the person that breathes, sees, speaks, hears, and thinks. He is the Self that should be meditated upon as a Totality. Everything becomes One in Him. This whole universe is like footprints which ultimately lead to Him alone.

That Self which is the whole universe is also the Self in me, in you and everybody else. Therefore I am all this Totality, Brahman. Hence this Upanishad boldly declares “**Aham Brahma Asmi** - I am Brahman”. This one of the four *mahavakyas*, great sayings of the Upanishads.

The Upanishad proceeds telling us that the universe owes its elegance to its diversity. This diversity was also created by Him (the Cosmic Person). For example He created the four vocational orders in the society- the teachers or the priests, the rulers, the businessmen and farmers and the service providers. He also created Law and Justice – *Dharma*.

He is the Self in all of us. We must meditate on this Self and know It in our lifetime. If we do so, all our cravings will disappear since all our desires would have become ineffective as a burnt seed. Self is the support of all beings- from gods down to animals. Thus everything in the universe is interdependent and everything is dependent on Him. When we realize and practice this Truth, all living beings will wish well for us, just as we desire our own well being.

A man is complete only when he has a mind of his own, a loving wife, loving children, adequate wealth and a life style of performing good deeds. metaphorically, these five are like his Self, speech, breath, eyes and ears respectively. Thus the number five occupies an important place in many objects and phenomena of the universe.

MANTRA 1

In the beginning, this universe was the Self (Viraj) alone, in the shape of a person. He looked around and saw nothing else but His Self. He first said: "This is I". Therefore He came to be known by the name I (Aham). Hence, even now, when a person is called or summoned, he first replies: "This is I" and then says whatever other name he may have. Before all this (purvam), He had burnt up (aushat) all evils; therefore He is called Purusha (pur-ush-a), a Cosmic Person. He, who knows this, verily, destroys everyone who tries to become Viraj before him.

In the beginning, before the creation of bodies, all this was just the Self, undifferentiated from the body of *viraj*. This Self was like a human being in shape. He is referred to as the first born *virat*, the first person to have a body endowed with the capacity of willing, acting and knowing. He naturally felt his existence and expressed himself thus “I am”. This is the reason even today when somebody is called he immediately responds by saying “I am”. and then gives out his name. This being is now known as *Purusha*, the word *Purusha* indicating that he was the first

among all beings to have destroyed all evils in the form of attachment to sense-objects and ignorance. By identifying himself with pure vital force he killed the evil of attachment of the senses. One who meditates on this Cosmic Purusha excels all others in their spiritual endeavors.

MANTRA 2

When he did not see anything else whatsoever except himself. this first self, in the shape of a man, became afraid. Therefore people still are afraid when alone. This fear indicates the universal desire for self-preservation. The *virat* (the sum total of all gross bodies in the universe) then thought: "Since there is nothing else but Myself, what am I afraid of?" Thereupon His fears were gone; for what was there to fear? Assuredly, it is from a second entity that fear arises. Thus fear pre-supposes duality or a second person. When the truth of non-duality dawned on him, fear which was an effect of ignorance vanished.

MANTRA 3

Although his fear has passed away he was not at all happy due to his being alone. Therefore none feels happy when he is alone. He wished for a second person as his mate. He grew as big as a man and a woman closely embracing each other. He divided this very body into two. From that division arose husband (pati) and wife (patni). Therefore, as Yajnavalkya used to say, this body is one half of oneself, like one of the two halves of a split peanut. Therefore this space is indeed filled by a wife. He was united with her. From that union human beings were born.

The original being, Self, looks around and sees nothing else but himself. When he realizes his loneliness, he has two feelings, one of fear and the other of a desire for companionship. His fear is dispelled when he realizes that there is nothing else of which he has to be afraid of. His desire for companionship is satisfied by projecting another body of the size of man and woman united in close embrace. This body was then called husband and wife. From the union of these two the race of human beings is produced.

According to the mantra, Prajapati or Hiranyagarbha or the Cosmic Person, the Purusha appeared to divide himself into two halves indicating that both are his elements. The two are not separate; they do not mean any duality. One half of the Cosmic person becomes man and the other woman each incomplete without the other like the two halves of a split pea. When the peanut is split into two halves each half becomes incomplete without the other. Both the halves are needed to make each other complete. So too are men and women in the world. Thus the teaching of equality between the genders is as old as the Vedas themselves; but unfortunately we are not implementing this principle in our day to day life in our society.

In this passage the Upanishad presents man and woman as two equal halves, each incomplete without the other. This teaching of equality is of tremendous significance with far-reaching consequence viewed from the present day settings of gender-bias like sex-determination tests, female foeticides, and the so called honor killings of girls and such other facets of degradation of women as a class. This is a great advice that should inspire us in creating a society where the dignity of men and women can be maintained on equal footing. This mantra conveys the idea

that man and woman have been created equally – none superior or inferior to the other, nobody is better-half or worse-half.

MANTRA 4 - 6

A series of transformations of the original human pair into animal forms is described in these mantras which conclude with the statement that the Cosmic Person, Viraj, produced everything, whatever exists in pairs, down to ants. Then he (Viraj) realized: "Indeed, I am the creation, for I produced all this." Therefore He was called Creation. He who knows this becomes a creator in this creation of Viraj. Then fire, food, liquids, moon and gods were created. This is the highest creation of Viraj, that He projected the gods, who are even superior to Him.

Thus creation is nothing else but His nature and power of manifestation through which he goes on creating men, animals and other beings. Therefore creation is not different from Him. the Purusha.

MANTRA 7

The previous mantra told us about the equality of man and woman. But what is their true nature? Is she or he merely the changing phenomenon of the body or is there a changeless dimension in them? Sankara says such passages of the scriptures serve only as aids to the realization of the Self, Brahman. Thus the purpose for which the Upanishads talk about creation is only to take us from the changing unreal phenomenon to the changeless reality behind, wherein lies our true goal of life. (*asato ma sad gamaya; tamaso ma jyotir gamaya; mrutyor ma amrutam gamaya* as we have seen earlier). We then reject the unreal and affirm the real. This mantra takes us to that end. Thus after talking about creation of man and woman and other beings, the Upanishad introduces the subject of Brahman and *Atman*, the unchanging reality behind this changing universe, behind you and me and behind every man and woman.

We are told in this mantra about the nature of the ultimate reality, the self in us and the Self of the projected universe, the Primordial Stuff and the nature of cosmic evolution proceeding from it. The mantra initiates the exposition by saying:

Now, all this universe was then undifferentiated. It became differentiated by name and form: it was known by such and such a name and such and such a form. Thus to this day this universe is differentiated by name and form; so it is said. "He has such a name and such a form."

Everything was undifferentiated in the beginning. That One, differentiated itself into various things, with particular name and particular form. What makes for the difference between things? Only name and form, *nama* and *rupa*; the substance is the same but names and shapes make them look different. Name is an idea about an object while form is the visual embodiment of that idea. A golden chain and a golden ring look different but so far as gold is concerned both are one and the same. Similarly, the whole universe becomes differentiated into names and forms from what was in the beginning absolutely undifferentiated. This difference of labels of name and form continues even today. Obviously, if we transcend the distinction of names and forms,

we straightaway come to the original stuff itself viz., the undifferentiated Brahman. After that One had differentiated, what happened? The mantra says:

This Self has entered into these bodies up to the very tips of the nails, as a razor lies hidden in its case, or as fire, which sustains the world, lies hidden in its source. People do not see the Self, for when viewed in parts It is incomplete: when breathing, It is called the vital breath (prana); when speaking, the organ of speech; when seeing, the eye; when hearing, the ear; when thinking, the mind. These are merely Its names according to Its functions. He who meditates on one or another of Its aspects does not know, for It is then incomplete because the Self is separated from Its totality by being associated with a single characteristic.

‘That one entered into the many’ (*sa esa iha pravista*). This is like saying that gold has entered into several ornaments like chain, ring, and bangles and so on. That ultimate reality entered into all of us up to the tip of the nails (*nakhaagrebhyah*) which means that the all-pervading presence of that One is in every pore of creation. In this creation, the presence of that One reality is found in everything. But we do not see or experience such presence of the One reality in our day to day life. Why? The Upanishad explains with the help of beautiful illustrations:

It says just like a razor which we may put in its container or like fire that lies in its source, that One has entered this creation. Sankara says “As a razor lies in one part of the razor-container, or as fire lies in wood pervading it, so does the Self reside in the body pervading it in a general and particular way”.

Presently that One is seen only as functioning in all the names and forms and therefore we are not able to see that One as it is. We see the One as merely functioning in the many but not as a whole which is its true nature. This partial or splintered vision of the Self by us is illustrated in the mantra as vital breath while breathing, as organ of speech while speaking, as the eye while seeing, as the ear while hearing, as the mind while thinking. These are functional names which conceal the undivided nature of the reality. We see the One through its various functionalities but not in its true nature just as in the story of blind men and the elephant, each describing the animal on the basis of what he has touched and felt but none could describe the animal as a full entity. Hence the mantra says that such partial fractured knowledge of the Self is incomplete because of its dealing with the processes separately. One who meditates on such partial aspects isolated from each other does not know the truth at all. We must realize the Self not in its several split aspects but as an unified indivisible Self. Wholeness is integral insight.

Then how to get the knowledge of complete Brahman, *atman*, the Self? The Upanishad says by knowing the *atman* alone (*atma iti eva upasita*).

The Self alone is to be meditated upon, for in It all these become unified. Of all these, this Self alone should be known, for one knows all these through It, just as one may find an animal which is lost through its footprints. (As one finds lost cattle by following their footsteps, thus one finds everything, if one has found out the Self). He who thus knows the Self obtains fame and association with dear ones.

Meditate on the *atman* alone, the One behind the many, that pure consciousness behind all these various manifestations. That alone is fit to be investigated. Why to meditate only on *atman*? The Upanishad gives two answers to this question. One is “in that *atman* all these millions of processes become unified” which means that the multiplicity in the nature we see now was absolutely in a singular state in the beginning of creation. The second answer is that “only through this *atman* one understands all these diverse things of the world” just as one can trace the animal missing from the herd through its footprints. The implication is that this *atman*, though subtle, has left enough footprints on our experience one can certainly discover it. The mantra concludes by declaring that through this knowledge and understanding, we can achieve greatness, glory and fulfillment.

MANTRA 8

We have seen in the previous mantra the nature of the Primordial Stuff from which the universe has come which we refer to using the word *Brahman*, the Self in the cosmic context. This Self is also the self of all beings. In that context we call it as *atman* – the self in the human context (using the lower case for the letter “s”). Both are one and the same but referred to differently in two different contexts. This *atman* alone is to be known for therein all the diversities become unified and because only through *atman* we know everything else.

The present mantra furnishes one more reason as to why this *atman* alone should be known to the exclusion of the others. It says: it is because this *atman* is dearer than everything else and because it is the innermost reality. Sankara says: A thing which is extremely dear deserves to be attained by the utmost effort. So one should use the utmost effort to attain this *atman* which is dearer than everything else held dear in the world.

This mantra describes how dear this *atman* is. It says:

This Self is dearer than a son, dearer than wealth, dearer than everything else, because It is innermost. If one holding the Self dear were to say to a person who speaks of anything other than the Self as dear, that he, the latter, will lose what he holds dear - and the former is certainly competent to do so - it will indeed come true. One should meditate upon the Self alone as dear. He who meditates upon the Self alone as dear - what he holds dear will not perish.

This can be easily understood in our day to day life. For example, if the house is on fire we leave everything and run to a safer place to save ourselves leaving all our possessions behind which were acquired after a life term of struggle and tribulation.

MANTRA 9, 10

The previous mantra told us that the one thing to be known is the *atman* and that one should meditate upon *atman* as one’s own Self. What is meant by knowing Brahman? It is not like knowing a chair or a table. Brahman is not an object to be known by senses. Brahman is *anubhavasvarupa*, of the nature of experience just as experiencing beauty, truth etc. When we know a physical object we don’t become that object while if we know Brahman we become Brahman just as darkness becomes brightness when light is brought in. Hence the Mundaka

Upanishad (3.2.9) says *brahmavit brahmaiva bhavati*, the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. In order to state the necessity of this knowledge the present two mantras are introduced. These mantras depict the picture of such a person who knows Brahman and asserts that a knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

Mantra 9 raises an interesting question. We have seen that everything has come out of Brahman. So, if we know Brahman we know all or in other words the knowledge of Brahman means the knowledge of everything. That is the logic. If that is so, what did Brahman itself know by which It became all? What would have been the knowledge of that Primordial Stuff before differentiation or due to which It became all, especially when It was stated to have been alone?

Mantra 10 provides the answer as under.

This universe was Brahman in the beginning, before diversification. There was nothing else but Brahman. Then what else could Brahman know? It could know only Itself as ‘I am Brahman’ “*Aham Brahma Asmi*. This is the *maha vakya* of this Upanishad. When there was nothing else except infinite Brahman, It knew Itself as I am. From that “I” came this entire universe. In Vedanta, the primordial entity is pure consciousness; Brahman is consciousness and since consciousness is all-pervading everybody can have this kind of understanding as ‘I am Brahman’. Sankara says ‘Even before the realization of Brahman, everybody, being Brahman is really always identical with all. We think ourselves to be separate from each other only because of ignorance’.

The mantra says that whoever realizes this truth of Brahman knows himself as ‘I am Brahman’. Thus to realize Brahman is to become Brahman. It gives the examples of the sages, gods and human beings who had such experience of the Truth. Sankara emphasizes that everybody is having the capacity to realize that truth which is not confined to the sages or other gifted few alone. The mantra goes to the extent of telling us that even gods or anybody else cannot prevail against anyone from knowing the truth despite their attempts to prevent such enlightenment. Such is the power of this knowledge of Brahman.

This mantra concludes by telling us how the gods, who are very powerful, try to keep the human beings as their slaves by putting obstacles on their way to the knowledge of Brahman for they knew that once this knowledge is known to men they would keep them (gods) in a subordinate position and give up making them offerings. This can be interpreted as the power of the senses to prevent human beings from knowing Brahman. Hence we find the general ignorance of *Brahma Vidya* in the society.

MANTRA 11

After the creation of society, the issue relating to its organization for its smooth functioning was taken up by the Creator, Brahman. The following mantras deal with this matter.

In the beginning there were no groupings in the society. All the society was one only which was called *brahmana*. In the *puranas* this condition was described as *satya-yuga* when there was no necessity for any control and regulation by anybody since *dharma* was the spontaneous nature of

everybody. Due to externalization of consciousness the knowledge of the *brahmana* was not able to meet the requirements of the times. Hence the principle of *kshatram* (concept of power or dominion) came into existence. The *kshatriya* (ruler) was seated on the throne during ceremonial occasions and the *brahmana* sat below. There was mutual interdependence. In the absence of knowledge, power and law would work blindly. Knowledge is the source of power and both worked hand in hand. Therefore even though the king is exalted in the sacrifices, at the end of it he considered brahminhood as his source. He who slights a *brahmana* is deemed to strike at his own source. He becomes more evil, as one who slights his superior.

MANTRA 12

The *Brahmana* represents knowledge, the *Kashatriya* temporal power. They are not enough. A class or group is required for increasing production and acquiring wealth so that the society can flourish. He (Viraj) therefore projected the *Vaisya* group - those classes of gods who are designated in groups: the Vasus, Rudras, Adityas, Visve-devas and Maruts.

MANTRA 13

Still He did not flourish. He projected the *Sudra* order as *Pushan*. This earth is verily Pushan (the nourisher) for it nourishes all that exists. Pushan is he who nourishes the others through work.

“To have a well developed culture, society requires wisdom, power, wealth and service. Wisdom conceives the order and lays its foundation, power is its protector, wealth provides the means for carrying out the order and its dissemination and service keeps the whole social order going. These are the different functions essential for a normal well-ordered society. These distinctions are found among both gods and men”. – Dr.S.Radhakrishnan.

This is the basis of classification of people in the society into various groups in ancient India which later degenerated into classification based on birth and came to be called caste. Birth in a particular family was never the basis of grouping people in the society in the Vedic times as these mantras clearly show. The four groups like the head, arms, thighs and feet of a man, are inter-dependent. The welfare of one means the welfare of all. There was no question of any sort of exploiting of one by another in the original scheme of things.

MANTRA 14

Even after the establishment of the society and allocation of functions to each group among the members of the society, the *Purusha* was not satisfied. He felt something missing on account of the possibility of exploitation of the weak by the strong. He identified this problem and found the solution to this possible occurrence by projecting a particular form which is called *dharma* as the power to check injustice and regulate the affairs of the society. Dharma or justice is considered to be fiercer even than the fierce Kshatriya. The mantra says “there is nothing higher than justice. So even a weak man hopes to defeat a stronger man through justice, as one does with the help of a king”.

Truth is the understanding of things in accordance with the scriptures, which contain records of the true experiences of the ancient seers. It is the same thing that when practiced, is called justice and when understood in accordance with the scriptures, is called truth. Therefore the mantra says that which is justice is truth.

Justice (Dharma) in its double aspect of theory and practice controls all – those who know the scriptures as well as those who do not. If a person is in doubt about the true import of scriptures, he should ascertain it by observing what is practiced by good people. Again, if he is in doubt regarding the conduct of good people, he should ascertain its meaning from the instructions of the scriptures. Thus justice and truth are mutually dependent.

Dharma which denotes law or justice is that by which unruly impulses are controlled. Even kings are subordinate to dharma, to the rule of law. Dharma is not made in the interests of the strong. It cannot be arbitrary. It is the embodiment of truth. Hence the mantra says “Verily that which is justice is truth. Therefore if a man speaks the truth, they say he speaks what is just and if he speaks what is just, they say he speaks the truth; verily both these are the same”. Satya and Dharma, truth and justice, are organically related.

MANTRA 15

This mantra says that Prajapati classified gods and men into these four groups for the effective performance of Vedic rituals.

MANTRA 16

This mantra discusses about the inter-dependence of different groups of people in the society. All beings in the relative universe, from the gods to the ants, are also slaves of desires which are satisfied through the fulfillment of their duties to one another. The cosmic process reveals the inter-dependence of men, the gods, the rishis, the Manes, and the animals. Duties to men are discharged through giving of shelter to guests and strangers, to the gods through the offering of oblations, to the rishis through the study of scriptures, to the Manes, through the begetting of children, to the animals by offering them fodder and water. These duties constitute an important factor in the Hindu ethics which believes that the gods, the rishis, the Manes, etc., protect men from injury because of these offerings.

The same idea is established in the theory of five great sacrifices *pancha maha yajnah* : *bhuta yajna*, *manushya yajna*, *pitri yajna*, *deva yajna*, and *brahmayajna*, sacrifice for animals, men, manes, gods and seers.

MANTRA 17

The question why man prefers the bondage of ritualistic work when he can rid himself of the bondage of duty by knowing Brahman is answered in this last mantra of this Brahmana.

There are two natural urges inherent in mankind. They are desires to have a wife and to possess wealth. The entire range of multiple desires of man can be grouped under these two categories

(*kamini and kanchana* as Sri Ramakrishna puts it); there cannot be any desire outside the scope of these two categories. The scriptures declare these are natural urges. Wife and wealth and the consequences arising therefrom constitute the entire work of earthly and heavenly longing of man. So when man is alone devoid of these two, wife and wealth, he feels a sense of incompleteness or void, until he gets any one of them. When he gets wife or wealth or both he is supposed to have attained the fulfillment of his desires. But rarely does it happen so.

Many times, even after fulfilling these inner urges he is haunted by a sense of dissatisfaction and incompleteness. Then how to get complete satisfaction? This mantra suggests a meditation by which these natural urges can be converted into spiritual energy; under this matters which are considered external and disconnected are brought within the realm of one's own self.

The seeker has to imagine his mind as his self, because the mind is the chief of the organs as the rest of the organs follow the mind. Then he has to imagine speech as his wife as speech follows the mind. Similarly vital breath is to be considered as his child, the eye as his human wealth, the ear as his divine wealth, and the entire body as his instrument of rites for he performs rites through his body. For a man who considers himself incomplete, completeness can be achieved in this way through imagination just as it can be brought about through wife etc. This sort of *yajna* can be performed through meditation even by one who does not perform rites. He, who imagines himself to be the sacrifice consisting of these five factors viz., mind, speech, vital breath, ear and eye, which are the main five avenues for action, realizes the universe as his own self.

END OF SECTION IV

HARIH OM TAT SAT

**BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD (4):
MADHU-KANDA: CHAPTER I**

SECTION V: SAPTANNA BRAHMANA

Meditation on the Seven Forms of Food, the Objects of Desires, Manifestations of the Supreme

PREAMBLE

The word 'food' in the Upanishads has much wider connotation than what is normally understood by it. 'Food' stands for all the inputs required to sustain life both at the individual and cosmic levels.

The Creator, *Prajapati*, by means of knowledge and contemplation (*medha* and *tapas*) produced seven kinds of foods viz., 1. solid food, what we generally call as food for consumption by all 2. milk (liquid food) 3. sacrifice (yajna) 4. symbolic offerings to gods 5. speech 6. mind and 7. life-breath. The first four, 'gross foods', sustain our physical life. The last three, 'subtle foods', are significant for our metaphysical life both at the individual and cosmic levels. The supply of these seven foods is never exhausted. Like Prajapati Himself, man continues to produce them through work. Their significance is brought out by many descriptions like three worlds, three Vedas, spirit of gods, ancestors and men, father, mother and children in a family, as also what is known, what is to be known and what is unknown.

Finally, the Upanishad enumerates the cosmic equivalents of speech, mind and life breath. Speech has earth as its body and fire as its luminous nature. Mind has heaven as its body and sun as its luminous nature. Life breath is born from a union of heaven and sun. In other words, life originates from cosmic mind. It is said to have water as its body (support) and moon as its luminous nature.

The idea behind these mantras is that by the absorption of the whole universe into one's Self, the individual "I" becomes the Cosmic "I".

**PRAJAPATI'S PRODUCTION OF THE WORLD AS FOOD FOR HIMSELF -
SEVEN KINDS OF FOOD (MANTRAS 1-13)**

The object of desire, in the language of the Upanishad, is generally called '*Anna*', 'food'. It is a peculiar term used in the Upanishads. *Anna* means food, or a diet of the senses. So, the diet of the senses is the object of desire. All objects of desire are the food for the senses and the mind. The whole world of manifestation may be regarded as the food for consciousness. All that is material is a food for the spiritual contemplating principle. Prakriti is thus the 'food' for Purusha. Now, what is this food? What is an object, and how many kinds of objects are there towards which the desire moves, the Upanishad answers in the following mantras.

We are told that there are seven kinds of food which God has created for the satisfaction of the individuals. The ordinary food that we eat every day is one kind of food. The milk that comes out from the breast of the mother is another kind of food, natural to children, whether they are human or otherwise. The sacrifices offered to the gods or the divinities called *Darsha* and

Purnamasa, the offerings that we make to gods especially during the new moon and the full moon occasions, are two other kinds of food that sustains the gods, because that is the way we establish a connection between ourselves and the celestials. There is then a threefold food which is psychological in nature, called in the Upanishadic language as speech, mind and *Prana*. These are the internal apparatus of the individual to come in contact with things outside and therefore they are called the instruments of food.

By means of entanglement in this sevenfold food, the subject-individual gets caught up in the object-atmosphere or the outside world. The objects catch hold of the subjects by attracting them towards themselves and making the subjects depend on them. Anything on which you depend is the food of yours, and all these seven things are mentioned as things on which individuals depend for their sustenance.

People consume food of various types endlessly, for ages, over centuries, and yet, the food is not exhausted. Why is it so, is the question raised in the Upanishad. How is it that food is not exhausted despite its being eaten for centuries. If anyone knows the reason why food is not exhausted in spite of its being consumed endlessly, such a person goes to the gods and partakes of the immortality, or ambrosia of the gods. He rejoices in the nectarine realm of the celestials. This is the thesis, mentioned in an outline, in the first Mantra of this section, whose meaning is explained in greater detail in the following mantra.

Now the question, why food-stuff is not exhausted, is answered. It cannot be exhausted because the desire of the human mind or any mind for that matter is inexhaustible. As long as a desire is present, its object also will be present. You cannot exhaust the object of your desire as long as the desire itself is not exhausted. The presence of an object of desire is implied in the presence of the desire itself. So, as long as there is an inexhaustible reservoir of desire in people, there would be an inexhaustible reservoir of supply also. So, no food in this world can be exhausted as long as there is a need for food. When the need is there, fulfillment has to be there, in one form or the other. It is the presence of desire, or longing, or requirement that is the cause of the presence of the counterparts of these requirements in the form of objects of desire, or food-stuffs etc. The individual person is an inexhaustible source of desire, and therefore the universe of objects will not be exhausted for that person with such desires. To put it in the language of economics, as long as the demand is there, there will be supply also.

Again and again you create the objects of desire by the intensification of your desires. By your actions you create circumstances for fulfillment of desires; and actions are nothing but manifestation of desires. It is desire operating in the form of action, and action is the movement of desire, in one way or the other, towards this object of fulfillment. So, by actions which are propelled by desire, the objects of desire are sustained. One who knows this truth will not be bound by the sting of desires.

In other words, if desire is to be absent, the world itself would become absent. The world in front of you exists because of your desires. If the desires of all created beings get absorbed into their own sources, the universe will vanish in one second. It cannot exist. So, if the desires are not present, there will be no objects of desire and the world would have immediately extinguished itself.

This whole passage is a very complicated structure, the meaning of which is manifold which ultimately point out to the fact that a desire is not an unspiritual activity of the mind, when its meaning is properly understood and its purposes are directed towards the Supreme Fulfillment which is its aim. But it becomes a binding factor if its meaning is not understood, and if one merely hangs on to the literal meaning of desire, without knowing its spiritual implication.

THE THREE-FOLD CREATION

The Creator fixed for himself the three kinds of food, namely, the mind, the speech and the vital force. The mind is the real seer, not the eyes, and the mind is the real sense-organ and not the other well-known ones; because it is observed that when the mind is elsewhere the eyes will not see their objects and the senses do not act for the purpose they are intended. Thus, it is to be concluded that the mind is the principal medium of knowledge. What are generally known as desire, resolution or determination, doubt, faith, or the absence of it, patience, or impatience, modesty, understanding, fear, are all, in fact, the mind itself operating in different ways and forms. One can feel a sensation through the mind even if one is touched from the back.

Likewise, all modulations of voice and formations of sound may be said to be comprehended by the principle of speech. While speech can express the character of objects, it cannot express itself. In a similar way, *Prana*, *Apana*, *Vyana*, *Udana* and *Samana* are different forms of the activity of the central vital force. This central vitality is designated in this passage as '*Ana*', without the prefixes attached to its other forms mentioned before. The entire personality of the individual, the whole body, is composed and consists of these three elements only, namely, mind, speech and *Prana* (vital force).

The principal functions in our body are speech, mind and *prana*, through which we do everything that we can do in this world. The words that we utter, the thoughts that we think, and the energy that we have - these are the constituent factors of our personality through which we deal with others, which we regard as our endowments or faculties of action. These have to be set in tune with the outer world which are three in number viz., this physical world, the atmospheric world and the celestial world, or the divine paradise.

These three functions - speech, mind and *Prana* - are to be identified with certain other important factors also, in meditation, namely, the Vedas for instance. Just as there are three worlds with which the three functions have been identified for the purpose of meditation, there are three Vedas, three repositories of knowledge, or wisdom, with which these functions have to be identified. The meditation suggested is that the speech-principle may be identified with the *Rg* Veda, the mind with the *Yajur* Veda and the *Prana* with the *Sama* Veda.

Just as there are three worlds, there are three types of denizens in this world. The inhabitants of these worlds are also to be identified with the three functions in meditation. The gods inhabit the heaven; the *Pitrs*, or ancestors, inhabit the atmospheric realm which is midway between the earth and the heaven. The human beings inhabit this physical world. These three have to be identified in meditation, so that they also become harmonized with our own being.

The speech is to be identified with the celestials, the mind with the *Pitrs*, or ancestors in the atmospheric realm, and the *Prana* with all created beings here in this physical world. The idea behind this meditation is that everything conceivable should be set in tune with one's own being.

The irreconcilability of our being with something or the other in the world outside is the cause of difficulties in meditation. If everything can be harmonized with what we are, the mind will go straight to its target of meditation without any problem on the way. Every problem is a kind of irreconcilability and the whole function of these meditations is to find ways and means of reconciling ourselves with anything and everything.

Also, you identify yourself with the family members. Do not have any kind of tension with them. You have a father; you have a mother; you have children in the family. Now you set your mind in tune with these in meditation, the mind as the father, speech as the mother and the *Pranas* as the children, because they come out of the union of speech and mind.

So, you have here symbols for meditation which take into consideration whatever is immediately present in the family, whatever is the object of your learning the Vedas, whatever is regarded by you as the entire creation, the three realms of being, the three worlds mentioned here and the inhabitants of all the three worlds. Nothing is left out; everything is brought into consideration.

The purpose of the meditation is to enable you to identify your being with all these beings. It is not a meditation on some external objects merely for the purpose of apprehending its outer character. The meditation, whatever be its nature, has its final aim in communion with the object, so that the object ceases to be an object and becomes a part of you. The intention of meditation is to abolish the existence of the object and affirm the existence of the subject only which remains there as an enhanced existence.

This is the central intention of this Upanishad meditation, an enhancement of the magnitude of the subject, which is achieved by the absorption of the objects into the subject so that they may not come and interfere with the meditation.

There are three types of objects - known objects, objects which are to be known, and the objects which have not been known. All these three types have to be identified with speech, mind and *Prana*.

What is the result that follows from this meditation? You become that very visible thing, the entire visible realm within you. The visible word shall not be an obstacle to you afterwards. It shall protect you, take care of you, help you onwards, rather than put an obstacle before you.

While speech can express things clearly, the mind is of a different nature altogether. It cannot express things as clearly as speech does. You cannot understand your own mind as clearly as you can understand what you have spoken through words. Your expressions through speech are clearer than the thoughts in the mind which are more complicated. So, the mind is something to be known, not already known clearly. Such a thing which the mind is has to be identified with everything that is capable of being known, but not yet known, the worlds that are not clearly visible, but can be inferred by deduction etc.

The faculties mentioned are to be employed for the purpose of meditation on the known realms of being and those realms that are not known, but are capable of being known by methods of knowledge, and those other realms which are unknown totally. So, the comparison made between these three realms of objects of knowledge and the instruments, namely, speech, mind and *Prana* is that speech expresses everything that is visible, that which is of the known world, while the mind can infer the existence of even those which are not directly known. The imperceptible also can be inferred by induction and deduction by the mind, and therefore the mind is to be meditated upon as connected with the realm which is superior to the merely perceptible or the visible.

The *Prana* is something inscrutable. The *Prana* is a different realm altogether over which we have no control. We can direct our thoughts by the employment of consciousness and we control our speech by the use of common sense, but we have no say in the matter of the movement of the *Prana* which has its own say. It works of its own accord by a law which is independent, as it were, of the one over which we have some say. We can stop thinking, we can stop speaking, but we cannot stop breathing or restrain the activity of the *Prana*, completely.

Here, in the Upanishad it has been the practice to identify the *Prana* with *Hiranyagarbha*, the Cosmic *Prana*, or *Sutra-Atman*. It is considered as the unknown. In this threefold meditation on the realms connected with speech, mind and *Prana* there is an inclusiveness of every realm of existence - that which is known, that which is hidden behind and not visible or perceptible, and that which is totally unknown; here is a kind of meditation on the three realms of existence - the visible, the invisible and the transcendent causal state.

The analysis provided here in these passages of the Upanishad is intended to gain entry into a realm which transcends the ordinary realm of speech, mind and *Prana* as individuals. By analysis of this kind, we begin to understand what is the reason behind the limitation imposed upon speech, mind and *Prana*. When the limitation is understood we gain mastery over the limitation. We become unlimited in our capacity over these functions, and then one does not have any imposing force in front of him. Then he becomes the lord over everything.

As is the case with speech and mind, so is the case with *Prana* in its instrumentality in meditation.

If our contemplation is on infinitude, infinite is the effect that we can produce by words, speech and even breathing - if our soul is connected to the infinite. Then, every function can produce any effect. What speech can execute, *Prana* can do; what *Prana* can do, mind can do; and so on in the case of every other function. Otherwise ordinarily, each function has its own independent capacity which is different from the capacity of other functions. In the case of a *Yogin*, they mingle one with the other, so that anyone can perform the function of any other. Thought and speech and mind and soul differ not one from the other in the case of one who has identified himself with the infinite source of things.

TWO ASPECTS OF CREATION: VARIABLE AND CONSTANT (MANTRAS 14-15)

PREAMBLE

The creator Prajapati is both changeless and ever-changing. This is illustrated by the analogy of a lunar fortnight. The moon appears to be of different size everyday even though it is always the same. Likewise the creator appears to have fifteen variable parts which constitute the world of multiplicity and a constant part, Brahman. Accordingly the creator is also called a Cosmic Person, *purusha* of sixteen parts. Like Him, man also has a constant spiritual Self and a variable physical self.

The analogy of waxing and waning moon is extended to wealth – it increases and decreases so often. In a second analogy, wealth is compared to the rim of a wheel, while life is like its hub.

THE SELF IDENTIFIED WITH THE SIXTEENFOLD PRAJAPATI

The meditation is further extended in the following mantras. We can contemplate the creative principle in its relevance to the principle of time, or the passage of time. As we have observed earlier, the Upanishad gives us various symbologies for contemplation. In fact, one can utilize any phenomenon for the purpose of meditation. Anything and everything in this world of space, time and objects can become an instrument or aid in meditation on the Absolute. You can meditate on space; you can meditate on time; you can meditate on any object. Anyone of these can become a passage to the infinite. So, here the suggestion is that certain aspects of the manifestation of time can be regarded as instruments for the purpose of meditation.

The creator is sixteen-fold in power, as it were. *Sodasa-kalah praja-patih: Prajapati* is the Creator. He has sixteen forces, sixteen aspects of energy or sixteen digits of expression. Now, these sixteen digits are compared here, for the purpose of meditation, with the sixteen digits of the moon that is connected with sixteen processes by way of days and nights which constitute a half of the lunar month.

There are fifteen days in the bright half of the lunar month, as there are fifteen days in the dark half. One half of the lunar month is of the waxing moon; the other half is of the waning moon. Both are of fifteen days and fifteen nights in duration. Each particular day including the night is supposed to have connection with one digit of the moon, and each particular digit is connected with the mental functions in an individual.

It is said that the moon is the presiding deity over the mind. The waxing and the waning of the moon have some connection with the mental horizon. People who are insane or not properly balanced in their mood are supposed to be affected by the movements of the moon. But the moon affects even normal persons, not merely the abnormal ones. Only, the normal persons do not feel the effect so much as the others who have no control over their minds. Because of the intense force that we exert on our own minds by our egos, we are unable to feel the force of the moon on our minds, but if we are to relax the mind completely and not impress the ego upon the mind too much, then we may be able to discover the distinction we feel one day after another as the moon waxes or wanes.

Here, the meditation process mentioned suggests that the digits, or the powers, which are symbolically connected with the fifteen days and nights of the lunar half month, are veritably forces of the Creator Himself.

Now, another symbology is presented for purpose of meditation. Sixteen are supposed to be the digits of power in a human being. Fifteen are temporal; one is transcendental. Whatever you have, and whatever you are - these two aspects are the objects of meditation here. We are aware of the distinction between these two - whatever you have, and whatever you are.

Whatever you *have*, is called wealth, and whatever you *are*, is called the soul. Whatever you have is temporal; whatever you are is eternal. People generally lay too much emphasis on what they have, rather than on what they are. There is a tendency in people to accumulate more and more of wealth and extend the domain of their possessions. They wish to have the largest infinitude of *having*, rather than *being*. It is naturally expected of people to enhance their *being* to infinitude, but instead of that, they try to enhance their *having* to endlessness. There is greed to possess more and more of things. Even if the whole earth were to be possessed, you will not be satisfied. If the earth and the heavens are to become your possessions, you are not going to be happy, because satisfaction does not come from temporal relationship. Satisfaction is a character of eternity manifest, and if our relationship is only with the temporal, that which we really *are* will always remain grief-stricken and neglected completely. We ignore our being in our interest in what we want to have in this world. This is not to be. A co-ordination has to be established between what we *have* and what we *are*, or what we would *like to have* and what we *ought to be*.

A person appears to wax and wane according to the extent of the wealth that one has. The richer you are in your possessions, the larger you consider yourself to be in the estimation of yourself and of others. The lesser is your wealth and riches, the poorer you consider yourself to be. So, there is a waxing and waning of the individual also as is there are waxing and the waning of the moon outside. But the waxing and the waning of the individual in respect of wealth outside is not to be stressed too much, because, even if all the wealth is lost, there is something remaining in you, which is more valuable than everything that you might have lost.

The self that you are is like the axle of a wheel, which is the cause of the movement of the wheel, notwithstanding the fact that the spokes also are necessary. While the spokes move up and down, the axle does not move. It is the permanent element which is fixed in the movement of the wheel. So is the entire world of possessions and wealth, riches which rotate and revolve round the axle of the self without which there would be no motion and progress at all, just as without the axle there cannot be a movement of the wheel.

The soul is the centre; the wealth that we have is only a periphery, a circumference, moving and passing.

People generally are in a position to console themselves and reveal their composure even after losing everything they possess, provided that their soul-power is intact. People do not grieve so much for the loss of wealth as for the loss of themselves. You know very well that you are more valuable than your wealth. You have a greater love for your own self, ultimately, than for anything that you possess. So, if everything that you have is lost completely, and you alone are

left finally, single, unbefriended, unconnected with others, yet you have a satisfaction of your own - after all, I am. If you also are not to be, that would be much worse than to lose everything that you have or might have had.

So, the contemplation is that the *Atman* is superior to everything that is external and possessional. And, as is the connection between the circumference and the centre of the wheel or the spokes of the wheel with the axle, so is the connection between the entire world of possession outside and the self within. They have to be co-ordinated in a proportionate and harmonious manner for the purpose of establishing union between the external and the internal, finally laying the proper emphasis on the Universal Internal, which is the *Atman*, which, when realized, puts an end to all greed for wealth, and, then, even a need for possession becomes absent because of the fact that the *Atman* is all the wealth of the world. The *Atman* is not merely the centre in you, but the centre which is everywhere.

SON'S ROLE IN SPIRITUAL LIFE (MANTRAS 16-20)

PREAMBLE

There are three worlds, each requiring performance of a specific task for its attainment by man. The material world requires continuity of family name, the world of ancestors requires performance of sacrifices and certain other rituals and the world of cosmic powers called gods is attained by spiritual knowledge.

THE THREE WORLDS AND THE MEANS OF WINNING THEM

There are three worlds as we have already studied - this world, the atmospheric world and the celestial world: *Manusya-loka*, *Pitr-loka* and *Devaloka*, as the scriptures tell us. We have to gain entry into all these worlds and have mastery over them. Renown in this physical world is attempted to be perpetuated by people. Even after death, they want to be known to men. How can you perpetuate your greatness even after death? The progeny of yours is the perpetuation of your glory. The son says, his father is such-and-such a person. The great man's name continues through the son. The progeny is the continuation of the glory and the value of the person.

So, one gains renown in the physical realm by the progeny that he has. The family continues its tradition; otherwise, he would be cut off root and branch by the death of the physical body. The physical world remembers the individuality of a person through the legacy that he leaves in the form of the family tradition and the children. Hence, one gains this world, as it were, through the progeny - *manusya-lokah putrenaiva jayyah*. *Nanyena karmana*: You cannot achieve renown in this physical world after your death by any other means than by this that is suggested.

Karmana pitr-lokah: But, if you want to gain entry into the world of the forefathers, the ancestors, there is no other way than to perform certain rites which are of a sacrificial nature. Certain libations, certain *Yajnas* are performed whose effect called *Apurva* produces a force which carries the soul after death to *Pitr-loka*, wherein the soul enjoys the results of its deeds, until their momentum is exhausted, and then it comes back to this world to repeat the same actions, and so on, endlessly, in the cycle of time.

Vidyaya deva-lokah: The higher, celestial realms are to be attained only through knowledge, not by progeny, not by any kind of ritual, but by understanding, by spiritual contemplation. Here, *Deva-loka* is to be understood in the sense of every realm that is superior to the *Pitr-loka*. It is that knowledge is regarded as the highest of achievements, and the divine regions, the celestial realms transcending even the paradise of angels, are attainable not by ordinary action, but by deep contemplation, *Upasana*, worship, which is the knowledge spoken of in this mantra.

FATHER'S BENEDICTION AND TRANSMISSION OF CHARGE

Mantra 17 describes a ritual for handing over one's responsibilities to a son. Thereafter according mantras 18-20 the divine speech, mind and life of the departing person enters his son, while he becomes one with the Cosmic Speech, Cosmic Mind, and Cosmic Life, thereby the son acquires tremendous powers.

SUPERIORITY OF LIFE PRINCIPLE: COSMIC AND INDIVIDUAL (MANTRAS 21-23)

PREAMBLE

Our organs of perception and action – five *gyana indriyas* and five *karma indriyas* – are dependent on Life Principle, *prana*, for their functioning. Life Principle is supreme, not just at the individual level but also at the cosmic level. It is said to be the premier among the other principles like energy and mind. The Upanishad regards air, fire and sun as the symbols of principles of life, energy and knowledge (light) respectively.

Life Principle is eternal, changeless and always the same. It has no individuality. it supports all body functions. Using sun as a simile, the mantra says that everything rises from *prana* and also sets therein.

The theme here is the position of the senses and the mind in the universal state, as distinguished from their condition in the individual form. This subject is discussed by means of an anecdote. The great Creator, *Prajapati*, projected the senses and the mind. He diversified Himself into the form of this world, and each form He took became an individual by itself. Each individual felt a necessity to come in contact with other individuals. The necessity of one individual to come in contact with another brought forth another necessity as a corollary thereof, namely, the projection of certain instruments of contact. How can one come in contact with another? There must be a means of communication. The means are the senses and the mind.

The diversification of *Prajapati* into the universe of manifestation implies the individuality of these parts and the need of each one to contact others, as well as the rise of the senses and the mind. There was the world of senses and of meditation. These senses are presided over by certain deities. On account of there being different deities, or divinities, superintending over different senses, there is likely to be a tendency on the part of the senses to assert themselves as independent functions. Just as every part of the Creator who diversified Himself into the many

asserted itself as an individual, there could be a subsequent situation when each sense organ also may assert itself.

It did so, actually. The senses asserted themselves independently, so that the eye cannot hear, the ear cannot see, and so on. There is no mutual give-and-take spirit between the senses. The harmonization of the functions of these senses has to be effected by another principle altogether. The senses themselves cannot do this. As we require a Governor or an Administrator to harmonize the individualities of persons working in an organization of people, to avoid mutual conflict and chaos, there is a need for a synthesizing principle within us, without which each sense would work in its own way and there would be no co-ordination of one with the other.

Egoism entered all the senses. And, what is the consequence of this sort of egoistic affirmation? Death possessed them! Everyone who has this self-affirming ego shall be possessed by death. Death is the law of God operating in a world of egoistic individualities. It is not some terrible spectre in the form of a *Yama*, or *Yama-dutas* that come and threaten us. The law of the universal justice raises the rod of punishment upon the ego which has sprung as an upstart in this creation.

The ego has really no place to exist, but, somehow, it has usurped the place of cosmic powers and asserted its own independence, a false freedom, a vain glorious existence. Death operating and affecting individuals means the universal law acting in an inexorable manner, not in the form of a punishment or as a wreaking of vengeance upon anybody, but as an automatic function of the balancing power of the universe. Such a law took possession of the senses. So, the eye went on seeing, but got tired. How, long can you go on seeing? The ear went on hearing, but got fed up. It could not hear anymore. The speech gets exhausted by endlessly speaking. They get fatigued on account of excessive activity. This fatigue that comes upon oneself is a tendency to exhaustion, debility and destruction. This is the incoming of death.

The Upanishad says that everything sensuous was affected by death, but that hidden Power, the central *Prana* within, works as the force of the soul. It is the soul within us that can be equated with the Cosmic *Prana*, in the end, which is not affected by death. Everything that is personal is subject to destruction, not the soul which cannot be so destroyed. That alone remained unaffected by the sway of death, because the soul does not assert itself egoistically. The ego is an external function; it is not the soul, or the essence of being in us. This essence in us is not affected, but the external appearance in the form of the ego, the senses, etc. was overpowered. Therefore, when one takes resort to the soul i.e., this central *Prana*, one neither increases nor decreases, neither exerts nor feels grief in the mind. That is the permanent nature in us, which temporal forms and influences cannot touch.

The senses conferred among themselves and decided: "There is no use of our asserting independence like this. Without this central being we are nowhere. So, let us collaborate with this central function, the *Prana*, the soul force." Then they acted in conformity with this divine force. Therefore, the senses also are called *Prana*.

Just as the head of a family rules the tradition of a family, the central *Prana* rules the tradition of the senses. The surname of a person who is leading the family is continued by the progeny and everyone who comes afterwards. Likewise, in a similar tradition, as it were, the term *Prana* is

applied to the senses also, in the Upanishads particularly, because they follow this central *Prana*, work together with it and harmonize themselves with it.

Therefore, we do not see any conflict of sensations in one's personality. The eyes see, but do not hear; the ears hear, but do not see, and so on, but, yet, we are able to synthesize their functions in ourselves. It is the central 'I' which feels, "I see," and "I am the same person that hears also," and "I can taste and smell and touch" etc. The differentiated functions of the senses are brought together into a synthesis by an eternal principle within, which is the *Prana-Sakti*, representative, or the ambassador, we may say, of the Cosmic *Prana*, the Self in all.

One person who is a meditator on the cosmic *Prana* has no opponents. But, if anyone opposes that person, this opponent shall dry up, says the Upanishad. One who meditates on the Universal *Prana* has no enemies. He does not oppose any person, or anything. If, by any indiscretion, someone else starts opposing this person, that person shall not survive any more. *Antato mriyate*: He dries up and perishes. So, hate not, oppose not, insult not, or harm not a being who is in union with cosmic forces. *Iti adhyatmam*: This is an anecdote in respect of our internal function the senses.

Now, the same analogy is continued in respect of the higher forces called divinities, or deities, *Devatas*, who superintend over the senses. In the same way as the senses started asserting their independence, the deities also began asserting themselves. *Agni*, the deity of fire, who is the presiding divinity over speech, began asserting himself. "I shall burn always." The sun asserted himself, "I shall shine forever." So was the case with other celestial divinities, also. But this is not the truth, narrates the Upanishad. There is no such thing as individual importance, finally, either in the case of the senses or the divinities, much less with ordinary mortals.

The deities, *Agni*, *Aditya*, *Chandra*, and the others, are only an expression, a functional part of the Universal Cosmic *Prana*. That being alone is free from the tendency to self-assertion. Everyone else has this urge to assert oneself. Neither *Aditya*, nor *Agni*, nor *Chandrama* can be said to be independent deities. They are all His names. They do not shine of their own accord. They are supplied with energy from elsewhere. *Bhayad agnis tapati, bhayat tapati suryah*, says the Upanishad. Fire burns due to fear of this Supreme Being, as it were; Sun shines due to fear, Wind blows due to fear, Rain falls due to fear of this Being. There is the uplifted thunderbolt of the eternal Reality without fear of which nothing would be in harmony in this world. The universal justice is there like a raised terror. One who knows this terror of the Absolute, which is the eternal justice prevailing everywhere, he alone is free from this devilish urge to assert oneself, the ego, which is the *Asura* in everyone.

So it is the Cosmic Being alone, the *Prana-Sakti*, the *Sutra-Atman*, *Isvara*, who is real. Everyone else is just partaking of a facet or an aspect of this Divinity even when one feels an importance in respect of oneself.

The sun rises and sets on account of the operation of this Cosmic *Prana*. If the planets move round the sun due to the gravitational pull of the latter, who assists the sun to occupy its position? The sun also has a status in the astronomical universe. It has an orbit of its own. And, likewise, everything has a function and an orbit and a place in this universal structure. There is a

harmonious rotation and revolution of everything in respect of everything else. There is a relativity of motion in the entire universe. How comes this relativity of motion? Why should there be this harmony? Why this following the course, or the orbit of each one? Why not jump from one course to another? Why does this not happen? Because there is that Power which holds everything in unison.

Why does not one hand of a person fight with his other hand? You have never seen your right hand or left hand fighting with each other, because there is something in you, the 'you' which keeps both these in position, in harmony. So is everything in creation held in harmony by this invisible Being, that is the God of the universe. On account of its working alone, the sun rises and sets; else he could go anywhere. There is that Law, that *Dharma*, which has its own principle of working, of which no one has knowledge, but without which no one can exist. *Tam devas cakrire dharmam*: That is the *Dharma*, or the Supreme justice which every god has to obey, to which every individual bows, and every sense-organ works in accordance with it. That law is unchangeable, not-amendable. It is an eternal constitution. It was, it is and it shall be the same at all times - *sa eva adya sa usvah*.

END OF SECTION V

SECTION VI: UKTHA BRAHMANA (MANTRAS 1-3)

Meditation on the triad, Names, Forms and Actions as the Manifestations of Hiranyagarbha

PREAMBLE

This vast complex world can be reduced to a triad of name, form and action – *nama, rupa* and *karma*. Speech is the cause, the support, the common factor in all names; sight in all forms and body in all actions. The essence of all these three is *prana*. This immortal principle is veiled by the empirical world.

THE THREE-FOLD CHARACTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Everything in this world can be classified into *names, forms* and *actions*. *Trayam va idam, nama rupam karma*: Name, form and action are the three categories into which everything can be brought together. What we call name is one of the characteristics of objects. The appellation or the nomenclature of objects is called name. It is a part of language, and so what we call name is nothing but speech; says the Upanishad.

Speech is language, and the way in which an object is named is the joint activity of various other aspects of the personality, the main function being the mind working in conjunction with the organ of expression, namely, speech. Whatever be the difference among the names given to the various objects, there is a common substratum among all these names, that is, the basic vibration which is the principle of language.

Just as the various colors have a basic substance which, by different permutations and combinations, takes varying shades called colors, likewise the different appellations, the names given to objects, even the different languages of the world, are the various shapes taken by a

single vibration called the mode of speech. Speech is therefore not the particularized word that we utter, nor even the particular language that we speak, but that which is prior to the expression of speech itself. And that generalized form of the very intention to express by name any particular object is what we may call the fundamental speech.

The Upanishad says that speech is the common equalizing factor existing and operating behind and prior to all ordinary expressions by way of naming, wording, etc. *Etad esam brahma, etadd hi sarvani namani bibharti*: Speech is *Brahman* itself, because it supports in a universal form, as it were, every type of verbal expression or linguistic manifestation.

In the same way as all names or word-formations are basically rooted in a fundamental universalized source, namely, the transcendent speech, all forms that we perceive or visualize have a common background. There is a general form which manifests itself as particular forms. What we call form is nothing but a kind of abstraction which the senses make, a function of isolation performed by the senses from the general reservoir of forms which has many other forms within it, apart from the one that we perceive with our eyes, even as a block of stone may contain many statues inside it. You cannot know how many statues are inside a block of stone.

Whatever form you wish, you can extract from that stone. Likewise, from this general ocean of form, you can extract any particular form. That depends upon the structure of the eyes and the nature of the light rays that fall upon the object, and many other things. It is the manner in which the general universal form is received or reacted upon by the structure of our eyes that is responsible for the type of perception of forms with which we are familiar in this world. Hence, there is the visual isolation of a particular aspect of the universe of forms for the purpose of perception, assisted by every other sense-organ.

Universal sound is there; universal taste is there; universal touch is there. And from this universality of sensation, a particular aspect is segregated, isolated or extracted by a particular given sense of an individual or a species of individuals, and then we have a common world of perception, as we call it.

The common form is the equalizing factor behind particular forms. *Sarvaih rupaih samam*: This is common among all forms. Just as the same wood may be present in various types of furniture The Universal Form is *Brahman*, as is the Universal Name, which is everywhere.

Likewise, there is a general form of action and a particular type of it. The individuality is the source of action, which is the complex of body, mind, etc., the intellect included. Action proceeds from individuality. The nature of the action that one performs is determined by the nature or the pattern of individuality into whose mould one is cast. Otherwise, there is no such thing as any determined action. T

he way in which one conducts oneself in a given atmosphere is what is called action. Now, this manner of conducting oneself depends upon the nature of the individuality itself. The determining force behind the way of conducting oneself in the world is the nature of one's personality which is not merely the body, but everything that is inside it, also, the five vestures, or three layers, as we may call them. So, this is, also a kind of abstraction. There are many ways

in which one could conduct oneself. There are many types of action possible, other than the one we are performing, but we do only certain types of action, because they alone are possible under the circumstances of this particular individuality of ours. Thus, there is a general reservoir of possibility out of which particular actions emerge on the basis of different types of individuality.

In this general possibility of action, God's action, which we may call *Hiranyagarbha's* action, or *Virat's* action, there is potentiality of every type. From that source, the particular possibility arises. The universal possibility is the equalizing factor behind all particular possibilities of action. The general form of possible action matches at the root every particular manifested action. *Etad esam brahma*: This universal action is *Brahman* itself, because it is common to all, and *etadd hi sarvani karmani bibharti*, because it supports all particular actions.

Tad etad trayam sad ekam ayam atma, atma ekah sann etat trayam. tad etad amrtam satyena channam, prano va amrtam, nama-rupe satyam; tabhyam ayam pranas channah:

The Cosmic Form is called *Amrtam*. Name and form are called *Satyam*; the apparent reality is *Satyam*; the visible world is *Satyam*. It is real from its point of view and to the extent it is workable, but the immortal is behind it.

The Ultimate Reality is different from the appearance. Cosmic *Prana*, *Hiranyagarbha*, Universal Energy, the Supreme Being, is *Amrta*, or the immortal. From it, everything proceeds. It is all names, all forms, and all actions. There, the senses do not differ from one another. It is not that the eyes can only see and the ears only hear. Anything can be done by any other function or an aspect of Being. That is why, perhaps, the scriptures tell us that everywhere it has feet and everywhere it has eyes and everywhere it has heads, which means to say, any limb of it is equal to any other limb, and everywhere any function can be performed by it, different from the way in which individuals act on account of the limitations of the body-mind complex.

The Cosmic Being who is called *Prana* here is immortal, and that is the ocean of all possibilities of name, form and action, whereas what we call ordinary name and form from our point of view, the visibilities and the possibilities of formation are only temporarily real. They are *Nama-Rupa*; they are *Satya* or true for the time being only, not eternally. The eternal Reality is *Amrta-Prana*, Immortal Force. This Supreme Being is covered over by *Nama-Rupa Prapancha* - the name and form world. We are unable to see the ocean because of the waves dashing on the surface. We see only the movement of waves. The basic substratum is not visible on account of the activity on the surface. There is a substratum behind every name, every form, and every action. If that could be discovered and plunged into, one becomes immortal at once, and frees oneself from the clutches of births and deaths, which are the characteristics of all particularized names and forms.

This is the philosophy and the advice given to us in the concluding portion of this chapter of the Upanishad.

END OF SECTION VI
END OF MADHU-KANDA: CHAPTER I
HARIH OM TAT SAT

**BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD (5):
MADHU-KANDA: CHAPTER II**

SECTION I - AJATASATRU-BRAHMANA
A PROGRESSIVE DEFINITION OF BRAHMAN

Meditation on the Lower and Higher Levels of Consciousness

PREAMBLE

In the first chapter of Madhu Kanda we studied that the ultimate reality, as seen externally, is nothing but the differentiated world of names, forms and actions. But the ultimate truth lies behind this network of name and form process. Hence the Upanishad suggested “*atma iti eva upasita*” – Meditate upon the supreme truth as your own self. In keeping up with this objective of meditation the Upanishad now starts telling us about the nature of the individual to understand the nature of the universe.

Thus this second chapter begins with an interesting story in the form of a dialogue between Balaki Gargya, a learned sage and Ajatasatru, the wise king. The theme of the story is that when we deal with the various objects of the external world we mistake them to be real and the highest incontrovertible truth. The Upanishad tells us that it is not so and points out that the reality is unconditioned by any of these objects and that is our true Self. The dialogue hinges upon the subject of the conditioned *Brahman* and the unconditioned *Brahman*, the formed or the manifested aspect of Reality and the formless or the absolute nature of It.

The learned Balaki insists upon the forms of manifestation as objects of meditation and the king who was more educated in this line emphasizes, on the other hand, that no form, no particular manifestation can be regarded as complete in itself unless its universal background is also taken into consideration. The whole conversation between these two persons is on the theme of recognizing the universal in every mode of manifestation. And the highest universal is Consciousness whose faint hints are observable in the state of deep sleep when all externality of being is withdrawn. Ajatasatru concludes his explanation with two analogies – a spider and a spark from a fire. Then follows a famous saying that Brahman is ‘Truth of the Truths’ – ‘*satyasya satyam*’.

In this dialogue, Balaki, though a Brahmana, represents the imperfect knowledge of Brahman, while Ajatasatru, though a Kshatriya, represents advanced knowledge of Brahman. While Balaki worships Brahman as the sun, the moon, etc., as limited, Ajatasatru knows Brahman as the Self. The mistake committed by Balaki was that he describes Brahman through concepts while Brahman is that which cannot be conceptualized and which is beyond words and concepts. Ajatasatru therefore corrects him.

We now take up the second chapter which is a kind of instruction touching on the distinction between qualified and unqualified Reality, the conditioned and unconditioned *Brahman*, the Reality with attributes and the Reality without attributes, *saguna brahman* and *nirguna brahman*.

MANTRAS

1. There was a learned man, called Balaki, a descendent of Garga family. He was proud of his learning and considered himself to be the wisest. He was also a good speaker. He wanted to parade his knowledge before an emperor called Ajatasatru, the king of Kasi. Imagining that he knew *Brahman*, he went to the court of king Ajatasatru and told him: "I shall teach you *Brahman*."

The king was highly pleased. "Well, I have a very good Master to teach me *Brahman*. You are so kind, indeed. Even for the very generous gesture of offering to teach me *Brahman*, I shall give you a thousand cows, like king Janaka." People always say, "Janaka, Janaka." "Very good, let me also have this humble privilege of imitating this great, charitable man, learning from you and offering you too a gift of thousand cows in the same manner. People everywhere run about in search of learned ones and here you come to me with such generosity of feeling to teach me *Brahman*. It's very kind of you indeed!" Such was the happiness of the king. Janaka was a well-known learned king and Ajatasatru feels that he also has some of Janaka's qualities.

2. What did the teacher Balaki Gargya tell? "Do you know how I meditate on *Brahman*?" asked the scion of the Gargya. "I meditate upon the sun as *Brahman*. You also do that meditation." But the king retorted; he did not accept this teaching. It appeared that the teacher went to the wrong disciple. The king, instead of saying, "I thank you, I shall meditate upon the sun as you instructed me," gave him back in his own coin. "Do not speak to me like this. This is not the way I meditate."

The king said so, because he seemed to know something more than the teacher himself. He said "I also meditate upon the sun, but not as you tell. The reason is that the sun is only a conditioned form, and you are considering this conditioned form as the Absolute. This is not the way in which it should be contemplated. There is a reality, *purusha*, behind the sun. I meditate upon that reality, *Brahman*.. There is a general reality behind the particular form, the sun. Why not meditate upon that instead of the particular form? It could have taken many forms other than the sun, and so if you resort yourself to that general being behind the form, naturally you would be in the realization of every other form. You will have every form under your control.

Now how do I meditate the transcendent support of everything? There is an energizing vitality behind the sun. That is what I meditate upon, the King of all beings. I meditate upon him as all-surpassing, as the head of all beings and as resplendent. *Surya* or the sun, is held by the Veda as the eye of all creatures, the *Atman* or the very Self of all beings. That means to say there is something in the sun which is not visible to the ordinary eye. The supreme head of all creatures and the basic reality behind all things is He - this is the way I meditate, and not the form of the sun.

One who contemplates thus in this manner the general transcendent reality behind the sun becomes supreme among all people. He becomes a king in the circle he moves, and this is the result of such meditation. This is what the disciple told the so-called instructor".

It may be noted that both Balaki and Ajatasatru discussed the matter among themselves, the former keeping a lower concept and the latter keeping a higher concept of Brahman. Ajatasatru contemplates on a more generalized form of objects than their particular ones which is the focal point of Balaki.

In this way the mantras 3 to 13 that follow in this section take different objects as Brahman with higher and higher attributes for debate. This conversation is tabulated as under.

Mantras	What Balaki Gargya considered as Brahman	What Ajatasatru considered as Brahman
3	Moon as a form	Considers the moon as an embodiment of the cosmic vitality and energy which beams forth through the form, as if it is dressed in white robes. Meditation is upon the coolness of the moon, its watery aspect, its rays and its light or luminosity - all as nothing but the expression of <i>Prana</i> .
4	Lightning as <i>Brahman</i> because it flashes forth indicating as if the spiritual light itself is flashing.	Meditation on the general background of all luminosity, contemplating on the luster of lightning.
5	<i>Akasa</i> or Space as <i>Barhman</i> .	Meditation is on completeness of perception, and its immobility. Everything moves, but space does not move. It is fullness. Contemplation is on fullness or infinitude which includes space in it. Instead of going for the manifested form of space, contemplation is on that which is prior to the manifestation of space, the Supreme <i>Bhuma</i> , the fullness of Being, the immobile Reality.
6	Air or <i>Vayu</i>	Meditation upon the quality of <i>Vayu</i> as an indomitable entity before whom nobody can stand, an invincible force of every kind of power, or capacity and not on the tangible form of <i>Vayu</i> .
7	Fire or <i>Agni</i>	Contemplate on fire as supreme tolerance. Nobody can tolerate things as fire does. It accepts whatever is thrown into it without any objection. Fire is a consumer, acceptor and absorber of anything and everything. Fire is tolerance incarnate. So, meditation is on fire as universal tolerance, a capacity to absorb anything into oneself and not on fire as luminosity.
8	Meditates on the water because it is liquid and it is formless.	Meditates upon water as that which is agreeable because water has the character of agreeability. Everyone is fond of water. Water is agreeable to everyone, human, subhuman or superhuman. So contemplation is on the general character of goodness, amiability and agreeability which is reflected in the principle of water.

Mantras	What Balaki Gargya considered as Brahman	What Ajatasatru considered as Brahman
9	<p>Meditates upon that which is seen in the mirror.</p> <p>Note: There is a kind of meditation called <i>Darpana-Yoga</i>. It is said that nothing is more attractive than one's own face. It is liked by people more than anything else. If you look at your face in the mirror, you would not like to withdraw your attention from it. You would go on looking because you are somehow the most beautiful person in the world according to you. Others are secondary. No one can be as beautiful as 'I'. Everyone thinks like this. The mind is drawn to the face in the mirror. If you wish to concentrate upon an object, concentrate on your own face first. Then the mind will not wander away. Your difficulty of the drifting mind will not be there afterwards</p>	<p>Does not contemplate on the form that is reflected in the mirror but the capacity of reflection itself. That is what is regarded as superior to what is reflected. How is reflection possible is more important than, what is reflected. Meditation is on the reflecting capacity in the mirror which is something different from the form of the mirror or the shape of the reflected form. The capacity to reflect is prior to the object that is reflected. This method of meditation goes to the prior, the antecedent, rather than the subsequent or the posterior; because the posterior is the effect. There is something in the mirror which enables it to reflect the object in itself. That something is superior to the object that is reflected; that is <i>Brahman</i>, the object of meditation.</p>
10	<p>Gargya said “when you walk, especially in the dark, alone, you hear sound coming from behind, as if somebody else is walking behind you. Some people fear to walk in darkness, alone, because they hear some sound from behind, as if somebody was walking behind them, or pursuing them. What is this sound from behind? I contemplate on that because it is a peculiar aspect of Reality, from my point of view.”</p>	<p>The King said “I contemplate on the reason behind hearing that sound. It is not that someone is walking behind you. It is the peculiar vibration of the <i>Prana</i> emanated by the soles of the feet. It is a thud created by the <i>Prana-Sakti</i> that is ejected through the feet when you walk. You cannot hear it when you walk in the midst of people or when you are in a crowd or when you are otherwise engaged, etc. When you are alone, in darkness especially, then only you silently hear this sound made by the <i>Prana</i> in your own body. I consider <i>Prana</i>, the life principle, as the object of meditation rather than the sound that it makes because of walking. I contemplate on <i>Prana</i> as <i>Brahman</i>, because this sound comes from <i>Prana</i> only”.</p>

Mantras	What Balaki Gargya considered as Brahman	What Ajatasatru considered as Brahman
11	Contemplates on the quarters of the heaven, the directions, as the symbol of <i>Brahman</i> , because of there being a resemblance between the quarters of space and the nature of <i>Brahman</i> , the resemblance being that both point to an endless existence	Contemplates on the presiding deities of these directions, <i>Asvins</i> , rather than on the directions themselves which are only their outer expressions
12	Contemplates on the shadow of one's own body.	Meditation is on shadow as death. The shadow of an object is the appearance of the object. This relationship between the reflection and its original is the same relationship that obtains between appearance and Reality. Appearance is death (<i>mṛtyu</i>) from one angle of vision. Reality is life. Inasmuch as all those who are caught up in appearances are subject to transiency, death comes upon everyone. We may regard the shadow as a symbol of death.
13	Meditates on the selfhood of his personality as Brahman.	The king considers the self mentioned by Balaki as 'individual self' while what he contemplates upon is Brahman, the higher Self, the Cosmic Mind. A consciousness of the lower self is merely an expression of the consciousness of higher Self.

When Balaki's conceptions of Brahman were thus rejected one by one by Ajatasatru, he had nothing further to say and hence fell silent with his head down.

14. When Balaki did not speak further and kept quiet Ajatasatru queried: "Is this all, or is there anything further for you to tell me; is everything over?" "That is all," he replied. "I have nothing else to tell." Then Ajatasatru spoke: "With this little learning that you have you cannot be said to have known *Brahman*." Gargya understood where actually he stands. "Yes; I appreciate what you say. I, now, approach you as your disciple. There is no other alternative for me. I came with the idea of teaching you. Now I have to stand before you as your student."

Gargya knew only the conditioned Brahman and not the Absolute Brahman, which is the ultimate cause of all things, yet he had attempted to teach Ajatasatru about the Supreme Brahman. It is not that the knowledge of conditioned Brahman is futile; it is only with that knowledge the aspirant acquires the knowledge of Supreme Brahman. The understanding of the relative character of Brahman cannot be discarded so long as one is attached to the world.

Balaki knows that the profound knowledge of Brahman can only be transmitted by a teacher to his disciple. Hence he, though a Brahmana, asked Ajatasatru, a Kshatriya, to accept him as his disciple.

15. Ajatasatru said: "It is contrary to usual practice that a brahmin should approach a kshatriya, thinking: 'He will teach me about Brahman.' Nevertheless, I will instruct you." So saying, he took Gargya by the hand and rose. They came to a sleeping man. Ajatasatru called that sleeping man by using various words such as O Great One, O White-robed One, O Radiant One, O Soma etc., which were used by Balaki earlier when he was referring to Brahman. But that sleeping man did not get up. The king pushed him again and again with his hand till he awoke. Then he got up. This incident became an occasion for further instruction by Ajatasatru on the nature of the Self.

This is how philosophy begins here with a new turn. This philosophy is the study of three states – waking, dream and deep sleep – *jagrat*, *svapna* and *susupti avastha* which is technically called “*avasthatraya prakriya*”, methodology of three states to understand about the truth of the world and human beings.

16. Ajatasatru said to Gargya: "Do you know this person was sleeping and would not get up when I called him by the names of the *Prana* which is the reality, as you have mentioned to me? But when I shook him, he woke up. Now, this intellectual self, who is the human being, was not conscious of anything when it was asleep. Where was it when it was sleeping? Where did this person go? There is an entity in the human individual, called intellectual being, *Vijnana maya-Purusha*. This is the highest endowment that you can think of in the human individual. As a matter of fact, there is nothing in the human being except the intellect. This is the highest property that one can have. Where has it gone during deep sleep? Where was it buried, and where from has it come now when the body was being shaken by me? What is the answer to this question? Balaki, can you tell me where was this when asleep?"

Atman reflected in the *buddhi* (intellect) or Atman limited by the *upadhi* of *buddhi* appears as the Jiva or individual soul. The question implies that the Jiva does not experience the notions of action, agency and result during deep sleep. At that time Atman remains in a transcendental state. When the Jiva awakes it deviates from its true nature and becomes conscious of action, agency and result.

Gargya had no answer and replied “I do not know where it has gone or from where it has come.

The question raised by Ajatasatru was answered by himself as Balaki did not know the answer. The aim is to show that there is in Atman or Pure Consciousness, a total absence of action, agency and experience of the result.

17. Ajatasatru continues his instruction. It is difficult to understand what the true human being, or the true Self is. The true Self is not anything that is visible, not even something intelligible, easily. The external form of the individual, which has an apparent consciousness, intelligence and a capacity to act, is not the true Self of the individual, because all these appurtenances of action, and the so-called individuality of ours, cease to be self-conscious in sleep. The energy is withdrawn; consciousness is withdrawn; the ability to perceive is withdrawn. It appears as if life itself has gone. There is a practical non-existence of the individual for all conceivable purposes. What happens is that the central consciousness, which is the Self, draws forth into itself all the energies of the external vestures, viz. the body, the *Prana*, the senses, the mind, etc., and rests in

itself without having the need to communicate with anything else outside. It is only in the state of deep sleep that the self goes back to its own pristine purity.

It suggests why Ajatasatru felt the need to go to a sleeping man, rather than to a waking individual for the purpose of citing an example in instruction. The reason is that in the waking state the self is entangled in object-consciousness whereas in sleep it is withdrawn into itself. The analysis of the individual in the waking condition is difficult. We are split into a thousand fragments in the waking condition. We are not an integrated personality in waking. We are distracted individuals and have no peace of mind when we are awake. We run here and there in the waking state for the reason that we are already split into fragments. We are cut into parts. We are never whole in the waking state. And, so, it is difficult in the waking condition to analyze the true nature of the self.

The waking one may appear as good as the sleeping one. But, what is the difference? Both are individuals, both are human beings; in both the self exists, no doubt. But the difference is that consciousness is not centered in itself in the waking state. It is, then, scattered outside among objects. It is meandering through all sundry things, and, therefore, the teaching in the waking condition is more difficult than in the context of sleep. What happens in sleep? Ajatasatru says that the self is withdrawn in sleep. It is in the centre of itself. It is in the cosmic space, the ether of consciousness.

When everything is withdrawn by the self into itself, that state is called *Svapa*, in Sanskrit - *tad grhita eva prano bhavati, grhita vak, grhitam caksuh, grhitam srotram, grhitam mana.*: what happens in sleep? The *Pranas* are drawn back to the self. They gravitate towards the self, rather than to objects of sense. Speech also is withdrawn; you cannot express anything in language, during sleep. The eyes are withdrawn; you cannot see anything there. The ears are withdrawn; you cannot hear anything. The mind, too, is withdrawn, you cannot think, also. All transaction with external things is put an end to and one remains what one really is in the state of deep sleep. When the organs are absorbed or restrained in deep sleep, the self rests in its true nature.

18. Now the dream state. We have our own world in dream. We manufacture our own country, our own residence, our own activity and everything else. This creation of a new world in dream is out of the material of past experience in previous waking conditions. These are the worlds which the dreamer creates. You become an emperor, or a learned man, whatever you like, in dream, according to your own wish. You become high and you can become low; you are rich and you are poor; you are happy or unhappy; you are this and that. Like a lord do you wander in the world of dream. As an emperor or a king may go for excursions in his own country, with a large retinue, hither and thither, likewise is this intellectual or psychological self moving in the world of dream with all the objects that it has created out of its own desires; and it appears as if it is in a world of freedom which has been created by its own imagination and will.

From the standpoint of Reality there is no difference between dream and waking experience. The world experienced in the waking state is as unreal as the dream world. Since the gross and subtle worlds in these two states are perceived by the seer, the self, it goes without saying that self, the perceiver, is different from the perceived and therefore it is always pure. – Sankaracharya.

19. What happens when the dream ceases and there is a withdrawal of consciousness into sleep? One knows nothing. There are various nerve currents within. They are called the *Hita-Nadis*. They are supposed to be seventy-two thousand in number - *dva-saptatih sahasrani*. They ramify themselves in every direction throughout the body, and it is through these nerve currents that the mind travels in the waking and the dreaming states drawing the consciousness of the self together with it, and so it appears that we are conscious physically. They are all centered, as if in the hub of a wheel, in the centre of the heart, which is called the *Puritat* where the mind sleeps when it is free from all activity. The *Puritat* is also a central nerve current where the mind gets lodged in the state of deep sleep. It withdraws itself from all these seventy-two thousand nerve channels, when it is about to sleep.

Our physical consciousness, or bodily consciousness, the feeling that the body is conscious in the waking state, is brought about by a mixture of properties affected by the activity of the mind which is the medium between the physical body and the self inside. The mind is not conscious by itself. It is something like a mirror which is not self-luminous. A mirror is not light, for the light comes from somewhere else. But, though the mirror has no light of its own, it can shine through borrowed light to such an extent that we may see only the light there and not the mirror.

Likewise, the mind is a kind of transparent substance, we may say, through which the light of the self passes. And it completely absorbs the consciousness into itself. It becomes apparently self-conscious. As the light of the sun may get absorbed into the object, e.g., the glass pane, and the glass itself may appear shining, as if it is itself the light, so the mind, the psychological being in us, apparently assumes the role of consciousness for practical activity in daily life, and it charges the nerve currents with consciousness when it moves through them.

When it absorbs itself into the centre and goes to the *Puritat*, it does not move outwardly through the nerve currents and hence the body loses consciousness. The body had no consciousness even before, and its real nature is exposed now in sleep. It appeared to be conscious on account of the vibration of consciousness which was communicated to it through the mind. The mind having been withdrawn in sleep, consciousness also, automatically, withdraws itself, because the consciousness we have is nothing but mental consciousness. And when the mind is thus withdrawn, everything that is sustained by the mind also is put to sleep.

You cannot know that you are breathing; eyes cannot see; and so on. They are able to discharge their functions because they are charged with consciousness. As if a magnet is brought before an iron rod which gets charged by the magnet on account of its proximity to it, the sense-organs get charged with consciousness through their proximity to the mind, and, so, they begin to act as if they are alive by themselves. But when this withdrawal of the mind takes place in sleep when it goes back to get itself lodged in the *Puritat*, the senses lose contact with consciousness. Then the eyes cannot see; the ears cannot hear, etc.

One is very happy; Like an innocent child one sleeps. Like a great king one sleeps. Like a lofty genius one sleeps. Everyone sleeps in the same way. Whether you are a genius, an emperor, or a child, it makes no difference to you. When you are fast asleep, you cannot know what you are. Who knows what one is when one is asleep? One does not know whether one is a rich person or a poor person, a saint or a sinner. It does not mean that the rich person's sleep is more pleasant

than the poor one's. Both sleep equally well. The child's sleep and the adult's sleep are the same. The king's sleep and the beggar's sleep are alike. The man's sleep and the woman's sleep do not differ. What happens to all these differences in sleep? Where do they go? They were really not there. Differences are artificially constructed for reasons which are quite apart, not at all connected with the true nature of oneself.

When one goes to one's own essential nature, there is a uniformity established, so that the whole universe becomes one mass of being. The sleep of everyone is uniformly structured. There is no up and down or a difference in intensity or degree in the sleeps of different people or different things, whether of an ant or of an elephant. This is so because the Self is one. We all go to a single ocean of consciousness when we are asleep, but when we wake up we become little ripples, small waves with all the idiosyncrasies and differences, with a vehemence that asserts itself as independent in its own pattern of individuality, or body-consciousness.

All this happens because the Self of the emperor is the same as the Self of the baby. There is no such distinction as the Self of one and the Self of another. There are not many infinities possible. The Self is a Universal Being which manifests itself as individuals in dream and waking. But in sleep these distinctions get abolished, or obliterated, on account of the return of all particularity into the Universal being which is the true Self of all.

Unlimited is the bliss that we experience in sleep. No pleasure of the world can be compared with the pleasure of sleep. Whatever possessions we might have, even if the possession be of the whole earth itself, cannot bring that satisfaction which one has in the state of sleep, where one becomes one's own Self. The realization of the Self is, therefore, the highest pinnacle of happiness. It is not the possession of things that brings true joy. While the possession of objects of sense and the suzerainty that one wields over others may bring about an apparent satisfaction as a reflected one through the mental being of oneself, that is not true happiness, because it comes and goes, it has a beginning and an end, it is a medium that works and not the true Self that reigns. When the true Self works, there is incomparable bliss.

"This was the sleep in which condition this person was, whom I woke up just now. Why should he wake up if I call him? He was very happy there. He had to be shaken up violently, and then he woke up. When he wakes up, he does not become conscious of what he was experiencing in sleep. Immediately he gets switched on to the old routine of mental activity." While the self withdraws itself from all manifestations when it is in sleep, it projects itself in waking through the very channels through which it withdrew itself into sleep. That means to say, the same mind begins to work, and the same senses, the same *Prana* and the same relationship with objects also obtains. Thus when we wake up we are the same old individuals, with the same memories and desires and frustrations, the same body-consciousness, same limitations, etc., absolutely oblivious of what happened in sleep. "This is an indication to you, O Balaki," says Ajatasatru "as to what the Ultimate Reality is. This is the state into which one enters in sleep, and it is not any particular form or a shape. It is Universal Existence. This is the *Atman*; this is *Brahman*."

This is the doctrine of King Ajatasatru in respect of the source of sleep, and the cause of sleep. This Mantra replies the questions raised in Mantra 16. The final reply was that the self did not exist somewhere else; so there is no question of its coming back; the self is always all-pervading.

Are there no entities, such as the organs, gods, etc., besides the self? No, they too emanate from Atman. This is explained in the next concluding Mantra of this section.

20. sa yathornanabhis tantunoccaret, yathagneh ksudra visphulinga vyuccaranti, evam evasmad atmanah sarve pranah, sarve lokah, sarve devah. sarvani bhutani vyuccaranti: tasyopanisat, satyasya satyam iti prana vai satyam, tesam esa satyam.

20. As the spider moves along the thread it produces, or as from a fire tiny sparks fly in all directions, even so from this Atman come forth all organs, all worlds, all gods, all beings. Its secret name (Upanishad) is "the Truth of truth." The vital breaths are the truth and their truth is Atman.

“This is a famous utterance often quoted in the various Vedantic writings”-Swami Ranganathananda.

Just as a spider puts out web from its own mouth and then moves about through the very structure it has projected out of its mouth, just as sparks of fire jet forth from a flaming conflagration, something like this is the analogy of creation. The universe is manifested in this manner, as it were, if at all a comparison is required. The example that the creative process is something like the spider ejecting web is to point out that the material of the universe comes from the cause itself. The cause is not merely an instrumental one, but it is also the material cause. The substance of the world is of the nature of its cause, just as the substance of the thread that comes from the mouth of the spider is the substance of the spider itself. It does not come from somewhere else. The spider does not manufacture the threads as a potter manufactures pots out of clay which comes from somewhere, or as a carpenter makes a table, or a chair, out of wood that comes from outside. Not so.

It is from the very Being which is the cause that the substance of the universe comes. This point is apparently made out by the analogy of the creative process being something like the spider manufacturing threads out of its own body. The other analogy that it is something like sparks of fire coming out of flames is to show the similarity in essence of the effect with the cause. The effect is not essentially dissimilar, in character, to the cause, just as the spark is not dissimilar in essence, from its cause, which is fire.

Ultimately, everything, even the meanest and the lowest of creation, is qualitatively identical with the Supreme Cause. In this way, creation is effected by the Absolute, which is the Supreme Reality. From the Supreme Self everything proceeds. All the energies and all the senses (*Prana*), everything that we call mentation, understanding, or intellection; all these worlds (*Loka*), the various realms of being; all the celestials (*Deva*), the angels in paradise; all the planes of existence, everything created, whatever is called a created being (*bhutani*); - all these are emanations from the Absolute Self. That appears as all this multiplicity.

Tasyopanisat satyasya satyam iti: The secret is that it is the Reality of reality. The whole of creation may be a kind of reality, no doubt, so far as it is being experienced by us, but the Absolute is the Reality behind this reality. *Prana vai satyam, tesam esa satyam:* Individual souls are realities, no doubt, but the Supreme Being is the Reality behind these souls, also. The

individual structure, the soul, the *Jiva* constituted of the senses and the mind, etc., is a relative reality, but this Ultimate cause is the Absolute Reality. It is absolutely real because it does not change itself, and is not subject to transcendence. It is not limited by the processes of time; it is not conditioned by space; it is not finitised by objects, and, therefore, it is absolutely real. In all the three periods of time, it is the same, and every point of space contains it entirely. Therefore, it is absolutely real (*satyasya satyam*), while everything else is empirically real. All things have a utilitarian value, a practical or temporary significance, not an absolute meaning.

“The world is not to be repudiated as false, but it is true only derivatively. It is sustained by the Ultimate Truth”. – Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.

If this world has come from Brahman, it is Brahman. There is no second thing. We separate ourselves from Brahman and manage to live in this world as separate beings but the truth is that the world itself is one with Brahman. *brahmaivedam visvamidam varishtham* – “This universe is that supreme Brahman alone”. – Mundaka Upanishad 2.2.11) – Swami Ranganathananda.

This is what Purushottama Yoga (Chapter 15) of the Bhagavad Gita also tells us.

Thus, Ajatasatru gives a comprehensive answer to the questions he posed before Balaki, the learned person, by a refutation of all the notions of reality held by the latter; and with the declaration that the Self is the Ultimate Reality, from which everything proceeds in various ways. The conversation between these two is concluded here, but the subject of the discussion is continued by the Upanishad in various other ways though without a direct connection with this conversation.

END OF SECTION I OF CHAPTER II

HARIH OM TAT SAT

BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD (6): MADHU-KANDA: CHAPTER II

SECTION II - SISU-BRAHMANA

Meditation on Prana - Vital force embodied in a person- Analogy of the New-born Calf

PREAMBLE

In the previous section we saw how Ajatasatru taught Gargya *Brahman* by taking him to a sleeping person and by investigating the deep sleep and the dream states. It was concluded there that *Brahman* is *satyasya satyam*. What is *satyam*? This *prana*, this energy is *satyam*. This whole universe is a play of energy. *Brahman* is the *satyam* of that *satyam* which is *prana*. This and the following sections of the Upanishad deal with *satyam*, the relative universe made of *prana*, and the five elements which form our body and organs. The world of relativity is called *satyam* and it is nothing but the expanse of energy. It has two aspects, with form and without form, gross and subtle. By studying this world of relativity, we slowly rise upto the Truth behind it. That is the purpose in view of these Mantras. These ideas are expressed in a highly symbolic and mystical language here which is very difficult to unravel.

The Universal Being manifests itself in various ways and one of the forms in which it is manifest is the Cosmic *Prana*, the universal energy which functions not only in organic beings, but also in inorganic objects. The tendency to life, the urge for self-perpetuation, is an indication of the operation of the *Prana* in everything. There is an effort exerted by everyone and everything in this world to exist. There is an incessant struggle for existence. This attempt to exist somehow, to live and to perpetuate oneself, is the action of the *Prana* in all created entities.

This *Prana* is universal; it is everywhere. What we call cosmic energy is ultimately identifiable with the creative principle, *Hiranyagarbha*. It is universally present, and is equally spread out in everything. It should be noted that life and non-life are only the manifestation or non-manifestation of it (*prana*), or the higher degree or the lower degree of manifestation of it, but not the absence of it.

Prana is not absent even in so-called inorganic things. The vibratory activity that we discover even in lifeless matter is the action of *Prana*. The gravitational pull exerted by objects, though they are inanimate, is the work of *Prana*. The cohesive force that we discover in chemical elements, or physical objects, any kind of attraction, pull, whether it is organic, inorganic or even psychological, all this is the work of the universal *Prana*. It exists in everyone. In the human individual, particularly, it is markedly manifest. The subject of this section is the nature of this *Prana* as manifest in the human individual.

MANTRAS

1. The Upanishad here is purely mystical in its approach to the subject. Its importance is more occult and practical rather than philosophical, or metaphysical. It is, principally, a method of meditation.

The *Prana* in the individual is said to be something like a baby calf, a new-born child, which has been tied to this body as a calf is tied to a peg, with a rope. The Upanishad says that one should know what this calf (i.e. *prana*) is, what its support is, what its ultimate anchor is, what is the peg to which it is tied, and what is the rope with which it is tethered. One who knows this secret destroys all opposition in the world, and particularly the seven opponents of man. This is the actual intent of this passage whose meaning, however, is unclear according to many scholars; one cannot make out what the Upanishad is saying. Hence only a gist of these mantras is given in this essay.

The Upanishad compares the *Prana* to the calf, and the subtle body in which it is lodged, which it pervades, and of which it is the life, as its abode. The physical body which it permeates by means of the subtle body is its support. The energy of the whole system which maintains it is the peg to which it is tied by means of attachment to the body. The food that one consumes, by which energy is generated, is the rope by which it is tied to the peg. If this is known, the connection of the *Prana* with the various parts of the body also is known.

What the Upanishad intends to tell us is that the entire structure of the body and the personality, whether subtle or physical, is a manifestation of the *Prana* only. What is worthwhile in us is the *Prana* working. If this secret is known, we would be able to realize the integrated nature of our personalities, rather than their complex nature, as if they are made of bits of reality. Even the different sense-organs function only due to the operation of this *Prana*.

The seven inimical brethren mentioned in this passage are the urges of the personality manifested through the two eyes, the two nostrils, the two ears and the mouth. There is an impulse to see through the two eyes, to hear through the two ears, to smell through the two nostrils, and to speak and to taste through the tongue in the mouth. These instincts tie us down to this world. Our desires are grossly manifest through the senses. The desire to see, the desire to hear, the desire to smell and the desire to speak and the desire to taste - these are our enemies. They are called the inimical brethren. They exist as your own friends, apparently related to us, as inseparable from us, but they work against us. These are the forces mentioned, the urges, the desires, the longings, or the appetites of the individual expressed through the senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and speaking.

If the secret of the integration of the *Prana* by means of its pervasive character through the entire body is realized, one would also know the reason behind these urges. It is the *Prana* seeking expression, so that it may become one with the cosmic source from where it has come. If the reason behind this expression is known, the urges are automatically subdued. If the reason is not known, the urges gain an upper hand. Many of the desires in the individual are uncontrollable on account of the absence of the knowledge of the cause of their manifestation - why they arise at all in the first instance. If the reason is known, knowledge of their expression is gained, they get controlled. So, the Upanishad says that one who knows this secret of the *Prana* which is lodged in the subtle body and the gross body, as a single force pervading the entire personality, overcomes these inimical urges.

This central creative energy in us is called *Madhyama Prana*, by the Upanishad. This is the *Sisu*, the child. It is compared to the calf or the child because it cannot go out as it likes, just as a calf

that is tied with a rope to a peg cannot go out as it likes. It can move within a certain ambit, to the extent of the length of the rope but beyond it, it cannot go. The senses can move towards the objects outside; the *Prana* cannot go, though it impels them to act. So, it is something that is struggling inside the body itself.

On account this tendency of the *Prana* to work within, as if it is a child tied to this body, the comparison is made of it with a calf, or a little baby. The subtle body and the physical body are the support and the abode of this *Prana*. It moves within these circles. It is bound with the rope of food. The food that we eat is not necessarily the physical food that is consumed through the mouth, but any kind of intake of the personality through any of the sense-organs by which one is maintained. The support and the maintenance of the whole individual through the activity of the senses is the food by which the individual is tied to this world, and that is therefore the rope which binds the individual to earthly existence.

2. This *Prana* is manifest through the sense-organs. It is actively manifest through the senses particularly because of their desire for objects. One of the senses through which it is predominantly active is the organ of sight. The eyes are supposed to be indicative, to some extent, of the entire personality of the individual. The eye is the index of the soul. "The face is the mirror of the mind and the eyes confess the secrets of the heart without speaking". Hence here it is mentioned that the eye is the abode of the gods such as Rudra, Parjanya, Sun, Fire, Indra, Earth, and Heaven.

It is on account of the action of these divinities that this body is existing at all. The cementing force which keeps the various parts of the bodily personality intact is the divinity that is presiding over us. It is God that is working through us, finally. One who knows this in deep meditation, one who realizes this secret in one's life, does not lack anything. Everything comes to that person automatically, as a food and support.

3. The Upanishad makes a mystical comparison of the head of the individual to the abode of divinities, for the purpose of meditation. This Mantra describes a bowl whose mouth is below and with its bulge at the top. The rotundity of this bowl is on the top; its opening is at the bottom.

According to the Upanishad, this head of ours, in this body, is the bowl, the cup. Its round part is on the top; its mouth is at the bottom. The entire magnificence of creation, in a sense, is present within the head of man. It is said that the seven sages of yore, also, have their abode in the head. The sages were masters who realized the cosmic reality, and were acclaimed as the seven great adepts in all creation. The different sense functions themselves are the working of these sages. And the speech in us is capable of manifesting the Vedas as knowledge. This is connected with the highest wisdom because the energy of the *Prana* that is manifest through speech is capable of the highest expression for which it is competent, and the loftiest expression of speech is the recitation of the Vedas. Every other chant, any other speech, is just secondary to it.

4. This Mantra narrates the names of the seven sages and describes their locus in the head of the physical body. The idea is that these sages can be meditated upon by invoking them in the concerned part of the body.

One who knows this secret of the presence of cosmic energies, such as the sages and the wisdom of all the Vedas as present in one's own being, becomes an embodiment of all the powers of the sages, and of the wisdom of the Vedas.

“The strength that the ancient masters had through practice of penance can be invoked in our own self by similar meditations, because all the secrets of the cosmos are hidden, as it were, in our own internal personality. They do not manifest themselves ordinarily because our individuality has taken possession of us. We have not yet become catholic enough to embrace, within our personality, the different forces which work outside the body, though it is true that even the existence and the functioning of this body is due to the operation of these forces.

Even the physical body cannot exist if the five elements do not cooperate. Little portions of the five elements - earth, water, fire, air and ether - have been put together into the formation of this body, and they are held together in union by a force that is inside. If this cementing element in it is withdrawn, the components of the body go back to their sources. But this is not the whole story.

Everything in us, inside the physical body, the subtle body, and what is in the mind, what is in the intellect and everything inside us is finally controlled by higher forces. The various realms of being, the different planes, the various degrees of manifestation of reality, are all located, in one way or other, in our own body.

So, it is rightly said that this body of ours is the *Pindanda*, and the whole universe is *Brahmanda*. It is called *Pindanda*, because it is a small universe, while the outer one is the larger universe in comparison with it. Whatever is outside in the larger universe is also within the small universe. It is a universe by itself.

The sun and the moon and the thunder and the clouds and the rain and the wind that blows, and everything that we see outside in space is also in the inside space, says the *Chhandogya Upanishad*. Thus, here is a meditation to blend the inward personality with the outer cosmos, so that the powers of the universe get realized in one's own being in meditation”. – Swami Krishnananda.

END OF SECTION II OF CHAPTER II

SECTION III - MURTA-AMURTA-BRAHMANA

The two forms of reality: Meditation on the Gross and Subtle Manifestations of Reality

PREAMBLE

Another set of meditations is being taken up in this section. The five elements, namely, Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth, are classified into the invisible and the visible aspects of *Brahman*, known as the *Amurta* and the *Murta* features. *Amurta* means formless, without any particular shape, but *Murta* is with form, and therefore visible to the eyes, or sensible in some way.

MANTRAS

1) *Verily, there are two forms of Brahman: gross and subtle, mortal and immortal, limited and unlimited, definite and indefinite.*

The *Brahman* is of two forms, or two manifestations, as it were. These two manifestations are *murtam ca, amurtam ca*, the formed and the formless, the visible and the invisible, that with shape and that without any particular shape. These are the two ways in which *Brahman* manifests itself in the five elements, *murtam caivamurtam ca*: And, likewise, that which is with form is *Martya*, or perishable. That which is without form is not perishable - it is *Amrta*. That which is with form is limited - *Sthita*. That which is without form is *Yac*, or unlimited. That which is with form is *Sat*, or perceptible. That which is without form is *Tyat*, or imperceptible.

That which is *Murta* is also *Martya*; it is also *Sthita*; it is also *Sat*. That which is *Amurta* is *Amrta*; it is *Yac* and *Tyat*. These are peculiar terms used in the Upanishad, representing the immediate and the remote forms of Reality. That which is with form is limited naturally, and, therefore, it is perishable.

Every form has a tendency to outgrow itself and transcend itself into some other form. Forms are limitations imposed upon aspects of Reality, and the limitations naturally tend to outstrip their limits in the process of growth, or evolution, because of the fact that no form can stand alone forever. Every form has a particular purpose to fulfill; it has a single mission to execute through the particular medium of that form. Hence when that particular purpose is fulfilled, the form is shed automatically.

On account of the fact that the form is for a particular purpose only, it is regarded as perishable; because it has a beginning, and so it has an end. But that which is without a form is not so limited, and, hence, it is not subject to the conditions of limitation, perishability etc., that characterize the things with forms.

So, the five elements - Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Space- are classified in these two categories. The point made out in these passages is that Space and Air are comparatively imperishable, whereas the other three elements, Fire, Water and Earth, are perishable, because they are more concrete, more tangible, more formed in their structure.

There is no destructibility in the case of Space and Air while the sense of destructibility is visible in the objects constituted of Fire, Water and Earth. The formed objects clash or can come into clash with one another and then break to pieces. They can obstruct or impede the movement of one another, whereas Space and Air do not impede the movement of each other. They work harmoniously with each other. Space cannot be broken to pieces or affected by the presence of things. So is Air.

The presence of objects does not in any way affect the movement of Air. But, the other objects which are more concrete in their nature are limitations, one upon the other. Hence it is said that the lower three elements are formed and everything that is constituted of them also is formed, while Space and Air are non-formed.

2) *The gross form is that which is other than air and akasa. It is mortal, limited and definite. The essence of that which is gross, which is mortal, which is limited and which is definite is the sun that shines, for it (the sun) is the essence of the three elements.*

Everything other than Space and Air is formed; it is *Murta. Etah martyam*: It is, therefore, perishable. *Etat sthitam*: Therefore, this is limited. *Etat sat*: Therefore, it is perceptible. Of this entire world, entire creation, which is formed, which is constituted of these three elements, Earth, Water and Fire, which are perishable in their nature, which are subject to transmutation of various kinds, of everything that is constituted of earth, fire or water, the essence is the sun, the solar orb. That which shines in front of us in the firmament above as the solar radiance, this can be regarded as the quintessence of these elements.

Everything that is formed, everything that is physical is ultimately reducible to the elements in the sun from the point of view of energy. The sun here is looked upon in two aspects - the physical orb and the inner divinity. Just as the physical body of ours cannot be identified with the soul in us, yet the one is not separable from the other, so is the solar orb that shines as the physical quintessence of all visible objects, the glory internally presided over by a divinity that is regarded in this Upanishad as the essence of the immortal elements. While the mortal features are all condensed in the physical form of the sun as the shining light before us, the non-formed, or the more ethereal aspects of creation, namely, space and air, are transcendent to the physical feature of the sun, and the Upanishad identifies the essence of these two ethereal principles with the *Purusa* in the sun.

3) *Now the subtle: It is air and akasa. It is immortal, it is unlimited and it is indefinite. The essence of that which is subtle, which is immortal, which is unlimited and which is indefinite is the Person (Purusha) in the solar orb, for that Person is the essence of the two elements. This is with reference to the gods.*

What is the formless? Air and Space - these are *Amurta*, or formless. They are not limited. They are imperceptible. Of these immortal aspects of manifestation in the form of these two elements, the quintessence is that which is inside the sun. There is something inside the sun apart from what we see with our eyes, on account of which there is a living force present in the sun apart from its being merely a hot or boiling mass of circling energy. It is a divinity; therefore, the Vedas regard *Surya*, the sun, as the eye, as it were, of the world. It is the soul, as it were, of all created things - *surya atma jagatas tasthusasca*. Of all that is visible, of all that is moving or non-moving, *Surya Bhagawan*, the sun, is the essence.

The divinity aspect of the sun is called the *Purusa*. He is considered as the deity of even these immortal aspects of the five elements, namely, Space and Air. So much about the macrocosmic aspects of these five elements called the *Adhibhuta* (physical) and the *Adhidaiva* (divine). The physical macrocosmic aspect is called *Adhibhuta* and the spiritual macrocosmic aspect is the *Adhidaiva*.

4) *Now with reference to the body: The gross form is that which is other than the air and the akasa that is in the body. It is mortal, it is limited and it is definite. The essence of that which is*

gross, which is mortal, which is limited and which is definite is the eye; for it (the eye) is the essence of the three elements.

Now, the microcosmic aspect of the very same truth is being described, as *Adhyatma*. In the same way as the five elements are present in the outer world, they are also present in the inner world, this individual body. The five elements constitute our own being. We have earth, water, fire and also air and space inside our body and the body is made up of these five elements only. Even as the three elements are mortal and two are not comparatively in the outer world, so is the case with these elements in the inner world also.

Now the same truth is described in respect of the individual. This is the perishable aspect of this individual. What is that? That which is other than the vital-principle and other than the space-principle in us. The concrete and solid parts of our bodies are the perishable aspects.

The subtle part of the physical body is supposed to be the eye. It is also believed that when the embryo develops into a physical formation, the first manifestation the form of a limb is the eye. The eye protrudes itself first; every other organ comes afterwards. It is the subtlest and the most sensitive part of our body. It is therefore regarded as the quintessential part or the physical essences of the entire system. So, of all these perishable aspects in this body, which are constituted of earth, water and fire, the quintessence is the eye. Everything that is in the eye is the subtlest aspect of these three elements.

5) Now the subtle: It is the air and the akasa that is in the body. It is immortal, it is unlimited and it is indefinite. The essence of that which is subtle, which is immortal, which is unlimited and which is indefinite is the person (purusha) that is in the right eye, for that person is the essence of the two elements.

Likewise, there is the subtle aspect of the other two elements which are compared to the immortal, namely, air and space. Now the immortal side which is formless. The ether in the heart, the space within us and the air that is inside, form the immortal aspect in us which cannot be destroyed even if the body is destroyed. The subtle body inside us is the quintessence of these two elements.

However, the point made out is that there is some aspect of subtlety comparable with the subtlety of our own subtle body in these two subtle elements, namely, space and air. The subtle essence, immortal, is the *Purusa* within the eye, Consciousness beaming forth in perception, comparable to the divinity in the sun, above. There is, therefore, a correspondence between the outer universe and the inner world, the macrocosm, or the *Brahmanda* and the inner world or the *Pindanda*.

6) The form of that person is like a cloth dyed with turmeric, or like grey sheep's wool, or like the scarlet insect called Indragopa, or like a tongue of fire, or like a white lotus, or like a flash of lightning. He who knows this—his splendour is like a flash of lightning. Now, therefore, the description of Brahman: "Not this, not this" (Neti, Neti); for there is no other and more appropriate description than this "Not this." Now the designation of Brahman: "The Truth of truth." The vital breath is truth and It (Brahman) is the Truth of that.

This *Purusha* within us manifests himself in the subtle body as various colors. Now, these colors mentioned here actually represent the various types of impressions out of which the subtle body is made. It is difficult to distinguish between the impressions of the mind and the constitution of the subtle body. Well, something like the threads and the cloth which are related to each other, the mental impressions and the subtle body are related. The whole range of activity of the mind is what is called the subtle body, like the magnet field of an electro-magnetic installation. It is not a substance in the ordinary sense; it is a limitation set upon the mind by its own activities in the form of impressions of experience.

They are compared to colors because they are constituted of the three *Gunas* of *Prakrti* - *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. *Sattva* is generally said to be white, *Rajas* reddish, and *Tamas* is black. And by mutual permutation and combination of these three properties, we can have other colors also. So, the subtle body is a mixture of these three *Gunas* in various intensities or degrees, on account of the difference in the intensity of the thoughts of the mind, the feelings of the mind and the impressions created by mental activity.

Of this internal *Purusha* which is the subtle body, there are various colors as if it is turmeric. What is the color of cloth dipped in turmeric water? Sometimes it looks as if it is yellowish. Sometimes it looks grayish like grey wool cut from sheep's body. Sometimes it looks reddish like an insect. Indragopa is a peculiar kind of insect which has a reddish body. Sometimes it is like luminous flame of fire. Sometimes it is apparently very tender looking and whitish like the lotus flower. Sometimes it flashes forth like lightening.

One who meditates on the inner constitution of the subtle body, internally in one's own self and externally in the cosmos in this manner as constituted of the five elements outwardly and presided over by a divinity internally; one who practices this *Upasana*, or meditation in this manner by bringing about a harmony between the outer and the inner, to such a person his glory becomes lustrous like the flash lightning. The magnificence of this meditator becomes glorious and luminous, lustrous, shining like lightning itself.

What can we say about this glory? What can we speak of in respect of this great Reality which appears outwardly as that and inwardly this, which manifests itself as the five elements grossly as well as subtly, except that it is not anything that is conceivable to the mind or visible to the senses - *neti, neti*. It is not anything that is graspable either by the understanding or by the sense apparatus. Therefore, it is '*not this*', '*not anything*' that one can think of. It has no other definition except in this manner as has been put forth in this passage of the Upanishad.

Its name is a secret. What is its name? It is the Truth of truth, Reality of reality, Being of being. It is the Soul of soul; *satyasya satyam*. It is the Self transcendent to the self.

Prana vai satyam, tesam esa satyam: The individual self, of course, is real; anything connected with the individual self also is real. But, this is more real than the individual selves, more real than the mind and the understanding and the *Pranas* and the senses. It is the ultimate Reality; it is the Supreme Being; it is absolutely Real, while others are only tentatively real, workably real and real only from a utilitarian point of view. So, this is a meditation, a means of spiritual atonement.

RECAP

The proposition enunciated by the Upanishad in these two sections is that “Self is pure awareness – one and non-dual”. The veracity of this statement is understandable by studying the relative world of manifestation and calling it truth, provisionally. We will then find that in none of the things of this universe there is consciousness and on the basis of the principle of elimination (*neti, neti*), we finally conclude that self within us is alone of the nature of pure consciousness. The Cosmic Self energizes all these apparently conscious entities here in the body and the cosmos outside. That is *Brahman*. That is *Brahman’s* secret name – The Truth of truth, *satyasya satyam*. The *prana* is truth and Brahman is the Truth of that. Hence Brahman is called the Truth of all truths, *satyasya satyam*.

END OF SECTION III OF CHAPTER II

HARIH OM TAT SAT

BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD (7): MADHU-KANDA: CHAPTER II

SECTION IV - MAITREYI-BRAHMANA

The conversation between Sage Yajnavalkya and his wife Maitreyi on the absolute Self; Instruction on the Supreme by Yajnavalkya to Maitreyi - All Love rooted in the Self; The Universe is Non-different from the Self before its Manifestation, during its Existence and after its Disappearance.

PREAMBLE

If the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is the crown of all the Upanishads, the conversation between the learned, wise and great philosopher Sage Yajnavalkya and his vastly spiritual and intelligent consort Maitreyi contained in this section and elsewhere of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is its crest jewel, *chudamani*.

It explains with many analogies and metaphors the concept of Self, *atman*, as the ultimate reality, emphasizing the value of renunciation without which none can go from truth to The Truth of the truth. It tells us that unless we get detached from the world of truth, the world of desires, we cannot understand the world of the Truth of truth. These conversations are very famous philosophical expositions containing the essence of *atmajnana* gifted to the world by this Upanishad. These teachings bear not only the testimony of conviction but also rationality.

If the mind is detached from its pre-occupation with the world of truth, it can understand the reality better and better – this is the supreme emphasis made in this section. The control and discipline of the outgoing sensory impulses of the human being is necessary to take his life to a higher level, to make him realize the *atman*. In the first chapter of this Upanishad this idea was merely a proposition (1.4.7) – *atma iti eva upasita* – meditate upon the *atman* as your own self. Then the Upanishad gave the reason as to why the self alone should be meditated upon. It said that everything is united in It and one knows everything through It. Finally it said that Self is dearer than everything we hold dear in this world (1.4.8) and then it gave a brief idea about the Self by the principle of *neti neti*. In this section this subject is further elaborated.

As is well known, in the Hindu spiritual literature the message is given more importance than the messenger. Accordingly not much is known about the life of sage Yajnavalkya. Just inkling is known that Yajnavalkya had a wife known as Maitreyi and that he had another wife called Katyayani.

Let us begin the study of this section which begins with a story the purpose of which is to show the importance of renunciation of the world as a discipline for the knowledge of the Self.

MANTRAS

1) "Maitreyi, my dear," said Yajnavalkya, "I am going to renounce this life (of a householder – grihasta ashrama). Let me make a final settlement between you and Katyayani (his other wife)."

The great Master Yajnavalkya speaks to Maitreyi - "I am going to retire from the life of a householder and enter into the next order of life (*vanaprastha ashrama*), and therefore am now intending to settle the family affairs between you and Katyayani, my other wife. These family affairs arose because of the relationship that existed between Maitreyi and Katyayani through their common husband, Yajnavalkya. The sage wanted to put an end to this relationship so that the two ladies can lead independent lives.

Sage Yajnavalkya told Maitreyi. "Between Maitreyi and Katayani, two consorts, I shall make the division of property (like land, cows, horses etc.) and then take up the life of a renunciate".

2) *Thereupon Maitreyi said: "Venerable Sir, if indeed the whole earth, full of wealth, belonged to me, would I be immortal through that?" "No," replied Yajnavalkya, "your life would be just like that of people who have plenty. Of Immortality, however, there is no hope through wealth."*

When the idea of property arose, immediately it appeared to have stirred up a brain wave in the mind of the wise Maitreyi. She queries; you speak of entering the next order of life, embracing a new perspective of living, altogether, and therefore you propose to divide the property between the two of us here, so that we may be comfortable and happy. Is it possible for us to be happy, - ultimately, through property? Is it possible to be perpetually happy by possession of material comfort and property?"

"If I am the owner of the entire earth, the wealth of the whole world is mine, will I be perpetually happy, or will there be some other factor which will intrude upon my happiness in spite of my possession of the wealth of the entire world?" This is Maitreyi's question.

The intention of Yajnavalkya to leave secular property to his wives naturally means that he proposed to leave them in a state of satisfaction and immense comfort. But can this be practicable? Can we be eternally happy, unbrokenly satisfied? Would there be a cessation of our happiness at any time? The question simply put is: Is it possible to lead a life of immortality through wealth and possessions?

This is a million dollar question. Let us proceed further to know what had happened.

No; replies Yajnavalkya. "You cannot be happy. You will be very comfortable, as is the case with people who own a lot of wealth, but you would be in the same state in other respects, as is the condition of well-placed people in society. Immortality is not possible through possessions. It is a different status, altogether, which has no connection with any kind of relativistic association. There is no hope of immortality through wealth."

Impossibility of immortality through wealth is the focal point of this story.

3) *Then Maitreyi replied: "What should I do with that which would not make me immortal? Tell me, venerable Sir, of that alone which you know to be the only means of attaining Immortality."*

"Then, what is the good of all this? If one day, death is to swallow me up, if all that you regard as worthwhile is after all going to be a phantom, a dream; if this is the uncertainty of all existence, what good can accrue to me from this that you are bestowing upon me, as if it is of a great value?"

What am I to do with that thing which is not going to make me perpetually happy, immortal, and satisfied?"

"Whatever you know in this context, O Lord, tell me that. Let me be cured of this nagging doubt in my mind, so that I may know what it is that I have to engage myself in if I am to be eternally happy; so that there can be no fear from any source. Is it possible? If so, what is the method that I have to adopt for the acquisition of this Supreme final satisfaction – the way to immortality (*kevalam amrutatva sadhanam*)?"

Very wonderful question! Yajnavalkya was highly pleased with this query. "I never expected that you will put this question to me when I am leaving you immense property and bestowing upon you a lot of wealth."

4) Yajnavalkya replied: "My dear, you have been my beloved even before and now you speak what is dear to my heart. Come, sit down; I will explain it to you. As I explain it, meditate on what I say."

"So, I shall speak to you, the secret of all these things. Listen to me with rapt attention. I shall uncover the mystery of this great predicament that you have expressed to me".

Now, the whole subject is a discourse on the relationship that obtains between eternal and transient. What we call immortality, is the life eternal; and that which is temporal, is what we see with our eyes. Wealth is a general term which signifies any kind of value, any possession. It may be a physical possession; it may be a psychological condition; or it may be a social status - all these come under wealth, because anything that gives you comfort, physical and social, can be regarded as a property. This is what is known as temporal value. It is temporal because it is bound by the limitations imposed by time. That which is temporal is that which is conditioned by time. Time has a say in the matter of our possessions. We cannot completely defy the law of time and take hold of possessions that we regard as ours for ever. Time is an inscrutable force which is a peculiar arrangement of things in the world. That arrangement is known as temporality.

The arrangement of things is such, in the temporal realm, that things cannot be possessed by anyone. The idea of possession is a peculiar notion in the mind. You know very well, how false the idea of possession is. You cannot possess anything except in thought. So, what we call ownership of property is a condition of the mind.

For example: There is a piece of land.. Today you say, it is owned by 'A', and tomorrow it is owned by 'B', by a legal transfer of property.

Now, what do you mean by this transfer of property? The land as such has never been transferred. It is there in its own place. It has been transferred in the ideas of people in their minds. One person called 'A' imagined that it was his, yesterday, and today, another called 'B' thinks in his mind that it is his. Now both ideas, whether it is the idea of 'A' or the idea of 'B', are peculiar, inscrutable conditions which have no bearing on the physical existence of the property known as land. Thus the whole question of ownership is a condition of the mind.

This being the case, how can that bring you permanent satisfaction? If a thing can be permanently possessed, you cannot be dispossessed of it. The very fact that one can be dispossessed of a property shows that permanent acquisition is not possible. It is conditionally connected with you in a psychological manner upto a certain point of time. And, what you call permanent happiness is unconditional existence independent of temporal relationship. That unconditional existence is not possible, if it is an effect of a conditional arrangement.

So, eternity or what we know as immortality, is something not conditioned by the process of time, and it has nothing to do with the ownership of property. You may possess or you may not possess, it is absolutely immaterial as far as the question of immortality is concerned. Because immortality is not dependent upon connection of values external. It is a state of being as such.

In order to hammer the meaning of this great passage in us, Yajnavalkya tells Maitreyi to meditate upon what he is going to say. This passage is explained by scholars by comparing those who recite the Vedas without understanding their meaning to the lifeless pillars which bear the weight of a roof. Or, just as a donkey bearing a bundle of sandalwood knows its weight but not its fragrance or like a Brahmana who knows the texts of the scriptures but not their significance. The hand carries food to the mouth but only the tongue knows the flavors. Hence meditation on this subject has been insisted upon by Yajnavalkya.

5) Then Yajnavalkya said: "Verily, not for the sake of the husband, my dear, is the husband loved, but he is loved for the sake of the self which, in its true nature, is one with the Supreme Self." Verily, not for the sake of the wife, my dear, is the wife loved, but she is loved for the sake of the self. "Verily, not for the sake of the sons, my dear, are the sons loved, but they are loved for the sake of the self." Verily, not for the sake of wealth, my dear, is wealth loved, but it is loved for the sake of the self. "Verily, not for the sake of the brahmin, my dear, is the brahmin loved, but he is loved for the sake of the self." Verily, not for the sake of the kshatriya, my dear, is the kshatriya loved, but he is loved for the sake of the self. "Verily, not for the sake of the worlds, my dear, are the worlds loved, but they are loved for the sake of the self." Verily, not for the sake of the gods, my dear, are the gods loved, but they are loved for the sake of the self. "Verily, not for the sake of the beings, my dear, are the beings loved, but they are loved for the sake of the self." Verily, not for the sake of the All, my dear, is the All loved, but it is loved for the sake of the self. "Verily, my dear Maitreyi, it is the Self that should be realized—should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon. By the realization of the Self, my dear—through hearing, reflection and meditation—all this is known.

This Mantra is one of the most popular and oft-quoted quotations of this Upanishad. It answers the fundamental question – why do we love others or wealth or objects and so on? To put it more precisely - what is love? why do we love? (the objects of love may be anything – persons, things, wealth, fame, name, position etc).

We love anything and everything for our own sake. But what do we understand by our own sake? We have to know that correctly. Let us therefore see what is meant by love. The love that we feel in respect of an object is in fact the love that we feel towards that which is called perfection, fullness or completeness of our own being. It is not really a love for the object. We misunderstand the point, when we are attached to a particular object as if it is the source of

satisfaction. But the actual fact is that the mind does not want an object for its sake; it wants completeness of being. That is what the mind is searching for.

Thus, when there is a promise of the fulfillment that it seeks, through the perception of an object that appears to be its source, there is a sudden feeling that fullness is going to come, and there is a satisfaction even on the perception of that object; and there is an apparent satisfaction, just by the imagined possession of it together with the yearning for actual possession. So, what is it that we are asking for? We are not asking for any object or thing; we are asking for a condition of completeness in our being. So, Yajnavalkya says nobody is dear. No object can be regarded as lovable or desirable. It is something else that we love and are asking for, but by a notion that is completely misconstrued, we believe that the object is loved. This is the mechanics of love as put forth in this Mantra.

So, what we love is a completeness of being which is reflected in the condition felt to exist between ourself and the object concerned. We must mark this point. *What we love is only the condition that we imagine to be present in the state of the possession of the object.* But that state can never be reached, for the reasons mentioned earlier. So, nothing is dear in this world. What is dear is the condition which we intend to create, or project in our own being by an imagined contact with the object. So, not one person is dear in this world, but what is dear is that condition which is imagined to be present after the possession of that object or that relationship. Now, what are these objects? Every blessed thing mentioned in this Mantra.

Noticing that Maitreyi is greatly interested to know about the means of attaining immortality Yajnavalkya goes on with his exposition to Maitreyi about the Supreme Self who is of the nature of immortality.

This Mantra says that we love our husband, wife or children not because they are our husband, wife or children but because we see their Self and our Self as one. When a couple regards each other as one, it is happy and it is not when husband and wife think of themselves as two separate entities. The same applies to wealth, social status or anything one can think of. When we harmonize other persons or objects with our own Inner Self, there is happiness. But when we chase other persons or objects as something external, which we must possess, there is tension and misery. So Yajnavalkya suggests to Maitreyi that she should reflect on Self.

After enumerating many things that are usually conceived as dear and desirable in this world such as son, wealth, gods, things etc., but which are actually not the source of real satisfaction to a person, Yajnavalkya says, nothing external can give us happiness, because it is not the thing alone that is the source of happiness but something else which gives happiness but which always remains unrecognized due to a confusion of thought.

Yajnavalkya emphasizes that *atmanas-tu kamaya sarvam priyam bhavati*: for the desire of the Infinite, which is the Self, everything appears to be desirable. If that Infinite (Self) is perceived in all external objects and persons, there is no division between the perceiver and the perceived or the subject and the object. Husband, wife, son, wealth etc., enumerated in this Mantra are the objects of love for the subject due their mere mutual oneness and identity. In such love the subject – object distinction vanishes and the essential unity of the Self is comprehended.

The real attraction of things for a man is the attraction of the Spirit or Brahman, for the Spirit is the indwelling essence of all. Ignorant persons do not know the source of attraction and turn it into selfish love.

Therefore Yajnavalkya says “*Atma va are drastavyah srotavyo mantavyo nididhyasitavyo*: O, Maitreyi, it is the *Atman* that is to be beheld; it is the *atman* that is to be known; it is the *atman* that is to be searched for; it is the *atman* which is to be heard about; it is the *atman* which is to be thought in the mind; it is the *atman* which is to be meditated upon. There is nothing else worthwhile thinking, nothing else worthwhile possessing, because nothing worthwhile exists, other than This. Maitreyi *atmano va are darsanena sravanena matya vijnanenedam sarvam viditam*: If we can grasp the significance of what this *atman* is, we have known everything; and then, we have possessed everything; we have become all things. There is nothing left to desire afterwards”. How the Self is everything is answered in the next Mantra.

All objects of the world, earthly possessions, and romantic delights provide opportunities for realization of Self (to love the Self alone). Contemplation is not a mere philosophical thought. It is higher stage of spiritual consciousness. It secures direct connection of reality. While a teacher can help, personal effort alone can take us to the goal of realization. – Dr.S.Radhakrishnan.

We have to particularly note Yajnavalkya’s threefold division of time into 1. hearing the scriptures 2. reflection of their meaning and 3. the practice of meditation. Through meditation the conviction of the Self’s reality is obtained in direct experience.

6) *"The brahmin rejects one who knows him as different from the Self. The kshatriya rejects one who knows him as different from the Self. The worlds reject one who knows them as different from the Self. The gods reject one who knows them as different from the Self. The beings reject one who knows them as different from the Self. The All rejects one who knows it as different from the Self. This brahmin, this kshatriya, these worlds, these gods, these beings and this All—are that Self.*

Finally the Upanishad says; *sarvam tam paradad yo'anyatratmano sarvam veda*: Everything shall leave you if you regard anything as other than you. It is a metaphysical point, a psychological theme, and a practical truth. You cannot forget this. Anything that is outside you cannot belong to you and cannot satisfy you, and it will leave you. So, it shall bring you sorrow. It is a point which is eternally true. All things shall desert you, one day or the other. Even those things which you regard as dearest and nearest, most desirable and valuable, shall desert you and leave you bringing sorrow, because they do not belong to you.

Yo'anyatratmano sarvam veda, idam brahma, idam ksatram, ime lokah, ime devah, imani bhutani, idam sarvam, yad ayam atma: So, Maitreyi, says Yajnavalkya; it is the *Atman* that appears as all these things. This is the point that is never grasped by the mind which looks upon objects as independent entities. The *Atman* is the one Reality that masquerades in various forms and names, but this point is not understood. The mind that is finite, located and lodged in the body, does not understand the fact that finite objects that are outside are only appearances of a single indivisible Reality. So, the finite tries to cling to the finite, not knowing this fact of infinitude that is at the background of these finite forms. If this infinitude that is at the base of

these finite forms is to be understood, realized and made part of one's own being, then the realization accrues: This *Atman* is all - *idam sarvam, yad ayam atma*.

7—9) *"As the various particular kinds of notes of a drum, when it is beaten, cannot be grasped by themselves, but are grasped only when the general note of the drum or the general sound produced by different kinds of strokes is grasped; "And as the various particular notes of a conch, when it is blown, cannot be grasped by themselves, but are grasped only when the general note of the conch or the general sound produced by different kinds of blowing is grasped; "And as the various particular notes of a vina, when it is played, cannot be grasped by themselves, but are grasped Only when the general note of the vina or the general sound produced by different kinds of playing is grasped; Similarly, no particular objects are perceived in the waking and dream states apart from Pure Intelligence.*

By these three illustrations, sage Yajnavalkya tells us that the effect cannot be known unless the cause is known, because the effect is a manifestation of the cause in some proportion. We cannot understand the nature of any object in this world unless we know wherefrom it has come. Unless the cause behind the form that is visible is perceived, the form cannot be really known or understood.

If we are intent upon knowing the nature of any object, we must know its relation to something else. And that something else is connected to another thing, and so on and so on, until we will be surprised to realize that everything is connected to everything else in such a way that nothing can be known unless everything is known. So, it is not possible to have complete knowledge of any finite object unless the Infinite itself is known.

To understand this, the great Master Yajnavalkya gives us three illustrations. Just as the sound that is made by a percussion instrument cannot be properly identified if the instrument itself is far away and not visible to the eyes, but whose sound is heard by us from a distance, unless we catch the source thereof; just as we cannot identify the rhythm produced by the blowing of a conch unless we have the capacity to grasp the totality of the sound by actually perceiving the conch that is being blown at any particular time; just as we cannot understand the symphony produced by a Veena or a stringed instrument, for instance, merely by hearing one note unless we are able to connect all the notes in a harmonious symphony, so is the case with all these things in this world. The particular notes or tunes from a musical instrument are modifications of the general note emanating from it; they cannot be perceived because they have no existence apart from the general note.

All things in the universe are each like one note in the symphony. How can we know the beauty of the music by merely hearing one note? That note is connected to many other notes. And when every note is harmoniously related to all other notes to which it is related, and all the notes are grasped at one stroke in one single harmonious symphony, that becomes music; it is melodious. But if only a twang is heard or one tick is heard, it makes no sense; it is not music.

So is the case with any object in this world. It is one twang, one tick, one sound which is really connected to a vast arena of a symphony that is universally expansive. Unless that total expanse or continuity is grasped by the mind at one stroke, which means that unless the infinite Being behind the finite objects is grasped by the consciousness, no finite object can be known fully,

nothing can be understood perfectly. Therefore, nothing can give us satisfaction. During the continuance of the universe, all diverse entities are unified in Brahman or Pure Intelligence, because the varieties or diversities are not different from It. Thus there is no hope of immortality through any possession in this world, is the conclusion of Sage Yajnavalkya.

What Yajnavalkya says is that the nature of effects cannot be known unless their cause is known. It is futile on our part to investigate into the nature of any finite object without correlating its form and context with the causes which gave rise to its present form.

But, the incapacity of the senses to perceive the causes behind the visible forms creates a false impression in the mind that the causes are completely isolated from the existence of the effect. This is why we make independent notional judgments about things, distancing them from the conditions from which they are evolved, which are ultimately cosmic conditions. The point made out in the Upanishad, in this passage, is that without the knowledge of the Absolute, not even the smallest of things can be understood and that nothing exists apart from Brahman, Pure Intelligence.

10) "As from a fire kindled with wet fuel various kinds of smoke issue forth, even so, my dear, the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, the Atharvangirasa, history (itihasa), mythology (purana), the arts (vidya), the Upanishads, verses (slokas), aphorisms (sutras), elucidations (anuvyakhyanas) and explanations (vyakhyanas) are like the breath of this infinite Reality. From this Supreme Self are all these, indeed, breathed forth.

Now, this passage tells us that everything proceeds from that Pure Intelligence, the Absolute. How does it come?

We cannot understand how anything can come from the Absolute. We can only give some illustrations, and the Upanishad employs here the comparison of smoke arising from fire. Just as when wet fuel is burnt smoke may arise from its burning process, everything may be said to proceed in this manner, as it were, from the Supreme Being - a continuous emanation. As before the separation of the sparks, embers, and flames, all these are nothing but fire and therefore there is but one substance, fire, so too, this universe before it differentiated itself into names and forms, is nothing but Pure Intelligence.

Evam va are asya mahato bhutasya nihsvasitam: From the breathing, as it were, of this eternal, infinite Reality, all the knowledge of this world has come. Just as when you breathe out there is a breath coming from your nostrils, the Absolute breathes, as it were, this wisdom of all His creation. And, all this wisdom of the world put together cannot be equated with a fraction of It.

The wisdom of the Vedas and everything that is capable of being connected with Vedic knowledge, such as the Itihasas, Puranas, Vidya, all arts and all branches of learning, secret teachings, verses and poetic compositions, aphorisms, commentaries, anything that can be called knowledge, in whatever way, whatever manner, whatever form, everything has come out from Brahman as a man's breath comes out without any effort.

11) *"As the ocean is the one goal of all waters (i.e. the place where they merge), so the skin is the one goal of all kinds of touch, the nostrils are the one goal of all smells, the tongue is the one goal of all tastes, the ear is the one goal of all sounds, the mind is the one goal of all deliberations, the intellect is the one goal of all forms of knowledge, the hands are the one goal of all actions, the organ of generation is the one goal of all kinds of enjoyment, the excretory organ is the one goal of all excretions, the feet are the one goal of all kinds of walking, the organ of speech is the one goal of all the Vedas.*

The ocean is the repository of all waters on the earth. The touch-sense and everything that we regard as meaningful from the point of view of tangibility is located in the skin. Every kind of taste can be located ultimately in the structural pattern of the tongue, or the palate. Every smell, every odor, every type of fragrance is located in the structure of the nostrils. Every color, every form, everything that is visible, is located in the structure of the eyes. Every sound, whatever it is, is located in the structure of the ears. Every thought, every feeling, anything that is cogitated is ultimately located in the mind. Every feeling, every kind of intimation, connected with the knowledge of things, is in the heart of a person. Every action, the capacity to grasp things, is located in the energy of the hands of a person.

Other organs also are mentioned in this manner, making out that all activities of the senses are capable of being traced back to the structure of the senses, so that if we know the nature of the sense-organs concerned in any particular action, whether it is the action of knowledge or merely of locomotion, enjoyment etc., we can know everything connected with that particular organ. Likewise, we can know all things if we can locate their origin, from where they proceed.

All these different examples signify the idea of one common goal, one common centre where all merge. Similarly the whole universe is ultimately centered in this one Reality which is the source of all.

12) *"As a lump of salt dropped into water becomes dissolved in water and cannot be taken out again, but wherever we taste the water it tastes salt, even so, my dear, this great, endless, infinite Reality is Pure Intelligence alone. This self comes out as a separate entity from these elements and with their destruction this separate existence also is destroyed. After attaining oneness it has no more consciousness. This is what I say, my dear." So said Yajnavalkya.*

Another illustration is given here to make out the nature of the Supreme Being from whom all knowledge proceeds. If we dissolve a little piece of salt in water, what happens? The salt becomes one with the water. We may take any part of that water, it will taste salty, and we cannot find out where the salt is. It has become one with the water; it is everywhere in the water.

Just as any part of that water in which salt is dissolved will taste of salt only, because of the pervasive character of the salt that has got dissolved into the water, so is the Infinite Being. How? It is a mass of knowledge; it is a treasure house of wisdom; it is a substantiality of what we regard as the highest Consciousness; that is this ultimate Reality. Wherever we touch, it is that which is touched, and wherever we taste we are tasting that only, and anything that is seen anywhere is naturally that only. Whatever be the corresponding object of a particular sense-

organ, it is the form of That which is seen. And the mind thinks nothing but That, not knowing it is so doing.

This consciousness which is solid Reality ultimately, the substantiality of the whole universe, appears to localize itself in the body of individuals by entering into the process of permutation and combination of the elements like earth, water, fire, air, ether, etc. A particular combination in some percentage of these five elements becomes a body, an embodiment. When consciousness enters this particular formation of the elements, it is what we call the individual, the Jiva, or a particular finite body. It arises in this form and dissolves itself in this form, as it were, as long as it is connected to this formation of the elements.

The birth of the individual and the death of the individual are described here, as being the consequence of the association and dissolution of consciousness within the formation of the five elements in a certain proportion. It is the five elements which combine in certain ways and conditions that are responsible for the objects of sense, as we call them.

Animate or inanimate, whatever may be - all the objects, all the bodies are really the elements in some shape, color and tangibility. They appear to have a value, a worth, and meaning, because of the entry of consciousness into them. And when the formations change, when there is a different type of formation of the elements that is called the death of the individual.

It is not a death really; it is a transformation, a reformation of the particular form into which these elements have been cast by the need of that unit of consciousness which is called the Jiva. When this consciousness gets entangled in the forms of the elements, it is called birth. When it is freed from them, it is called death. When it is freed from the elements, it will not be conscious of any particular thing.

Yajnavalkya tells Maitreyi that when there is total isolation of consciousness from all its associations in the form of these permutations and combinations of elements called the body, there would be no particular consciousness. There would be no feeling, hearing, touching, smelling, - nothing particular whatsoever, no consciousness at all. So says Yajnavalkya, "after dissolution, there is no awareness". This is what is meant by this pithy statement - *na pretya samjnasti*. "Maitreyi; this I tell you. Try to understand it."

13) Then Maitreyi said: "Just here you have bewildered me, venerable Sir, by saying that after attaining oneness the self has no more consciousness." Yajnavalkya replied: "Certainly I am not saying anything bewildering, my dear. This Reality is enough for knowledge, O Maitreyi."

Maitreyi is surprised: "How is it? You are saying that It is an ocean of wisdom, a mass of knowledge, substantiality of everything that is consciousness, and now you say, there is no consciousness! When there is absorption of consciousness into itself and freedom from its entanglement with the elements, you say, It knows nothing. How is it possible that It knows nothing, while It is All-knowledge?"

The statement that after attainment of Brahman or Pure consciousness one loses particular consciousness confused Maitreyi.

The point to note here is that Yajnavalkya did not attribute Pure Consciousness and absence of consciousness to one and the same entity. Particular consciousness belongs to the individual self who is connected with the body and organs. This self is destroyed by knowledge of Brahman, which results in the destruction of particular consciousness. It is like the destruction of the reflection of the moon and its light when the water in which the moon is reflected is disturbed or emptied out. The moon, the reality behind the reflection, however, remains as it is. Likewise, Pure Consciousness remains unchanged when the particular consciousness which is ignorance is destroyed by Knowledge. The confusion of Maitreyi is because what Yajnavalkya referred to as particular consciousness was mistaken by her as Pure consciousness.

"You do not understand what I say," tells Yajnavalkya to Maitreyi. "I have not confused you by saying this, nor have I mystified you in this contradictory statement. Your idea of knowledge is misconstrued. You have your own definition of knowledge, and from that point of view, from that standard of judgment of knowledge, you seem to perceive a contradiction in my statement that after freedom from entanglement there is no consciousness in spite of the fact that it is an ocean of Consciousness."

Our concept of knowledge is well-known. It is not real knowledge; it is the perception that we usually call knowledge. The contact of the mind with objects in particular manner, under given conditions is called knowledge. But, this knowledge comes and goes according to the circumstances of the objects of particular knowledge of the senses. So, to us, knowledge means knowledge *of* something. This connecting link '*of*' is very important.

Whenever we speak of knowing, we always say "knowing what?" So, there must be something which is known, and we speak of knowledge of something, studying something, awareness of something, illumination of something. Everything is '*of*' something. Thus, we are always accustomed to connect knowledge with a content or object which is apparently external to knowledge.

So, Yajnavalkya tells us: Your notion of knowledge is involved in the concept of the isolation of the object of knowledge from knowledge, so that there cannot be knowledge unless there is an object; but what I tell you is that there is no such thing as knowledge of an object where consciousness is absolved completely from all contacts with the objects. So, you are not able to understand what I am saying. Why?

14) "For when there is duality, as it were, then one smells another, one sees another, one hears another, one speaks to another, one thinks of another, one knows another. But when everything has become the Self, then what should one smell and through what, what should one see and through what, what should one hear and through what, what should one speak and through what, what should one think and through what, what should one know and through what? Through what should One know That owing to which all this is known—through what, my dear, should one know the Knower?"

Where there is an object of knowledge, well, naturally it can be known. Where there is something other than the eye, the eye can see. Where there is something outside the nose, the nose can smell. Where the sound is outside the ear, the ear can hear the sound. Where the spoken word is outside the speech itself, one can speak about something. Where the thought is different from the object that is thought, it is possible to think. Where the object of understanding is different from understanding, it is possible to understand that object.

But where understanding only is, and the object of understanding is not there, what is it that you understand? If this situation could be envisaged for the time being, if a condition can be conceived of where the object of knowledge has melted into the knowledge itself, what could be the knowledge which one can be endowed with? That which is to be known has melted into the knowledge itself; it has become part of the knowledge, so knowledge is filled with the substance of the object which it knows, so much so, there is no more an object as such, how can you then say that there is the knowing of anything?

Because that 'anything' which you speak of as the object of the knowledge has become knowledge itself, so there is then no such thing as knowing 'anything'. Therefore, O, Maitreyi, I said no such thing as knowing exists there and it does not know anything. *Sarvam atmaivabhut:* Where everything is the Self of knowledge, what does that Self know, except its own Self? Who is to see what, where the object of perception has become a part and parcel of the process of perception itself?

Everything is known by the knower, but who is to know the knower? If the knower is to be known, there must be a second knower to that knower, and the second knower can be known by a third knower, the third by a fourth, the fourth by a fifth, and so on without any end. You go on scratching your head, you cannot know the knower. How can the knower be known? We have already designated the knower as the 'Knower' and you cannot now call it the 'known'. Therefore there is no such thing as knowing of Knowing, or knowing of Knower.

Knowing of objects only is there, before liberation. With liberation, that object has become part of knowing itself; It has become one with the Knower. The Knower alone is; there is no such thing then as 'knowing'. Therefore, as I told you, Maitreyi, it is not possible to have cognition, perception and understanding, in the usual sense, in that Absolute, and non-dual subject. Through what instrument should one know that Knower or Subject?

Where there is duality, we can communicate with each other. In that state we are all separate. But when the non-dual knowledge dawns, when everything is realized as the *atman*, who would speak to whom and how and what to speak? Everything is one in that grand experience. How can the Knower be known? In Self, there is no distinction between the subject and the object, the observer and the observed, the experiencer and the experienced. All dualities merge into One Self - this is the crux of this great passage. This subject is continued later on in the Yajnavalkya Kanda of this Upanishad.

END OF SECTION IV OF CHAPTER II

HARIH OM TAT SAT

**BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD (8):
MADHU-KANDA: CHAPTER II**

SECTION V - MADHU-BRAHMANA

The Interdependence of Created Objects - Mutual Relationship of Everything with Everything Else - Story of Sage Dadhyan Atharvana.

PREAMBLE

We cannot look upon something and judge a thing independently in the real life situation where everything is connected with and related to everything else. We hardly ever have a standard conclusion in conditions where that which is judged has become one with the measuring rod of judgment itself. This inter-dependence of things and inter-connectedness of values is discussed in this section of the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad called the Madhu-Vidya or The Honey Doctrine.

Madhu literally means honey, but it is used here in the sense of helpfulness. In this world, everything is mutually helpful (honey) to everything else. There is mutual supporting system in this world. This is expressed through a series of passages containing the same theme quoting different examples. The first passage is explained in this essay in detail to understand what is meant by mutuality and inter-connectedness while the rest is dealt with briefly as they contain the same idea through different illustrations.

What is the relationship between living beings and various objects or phenomena of the universe? They support each other and nourish each other, each being like honey for the other. This relationship of mutual support arises because of the One Self which is common to all. As an example, the same Self pervades the earth, the living beings, the consciousness in earth and the consciousness in living beings. This applies to all gross elements or abstract principles. The Upanishad considers the examples of 1. five primeval elements – earth, water, fire, air and space 2. five cosmic phenomena – sun, moon, directions, lightening and clouds 3. Law – *dharma*, 4. Truth 5. Mankind and 6. Mind to explain this idea.

The conclusion drawn is that Self is the ultimate cause of all beings; it is the support of everything like a hub in a wheel. Everything in the universe is interconnected – vitally and organically through Consciousness. Nothing exists in isolation. Everything in the universe is an effect of the Ultimate Cause, variously called as Brahman, Self or Atman. Every effect tends to gravitate towards its Ultimate Causeless Cause and eventually merge into It.

Self dwells in all beings. There is nothing that is not pervaded by It. The Upanishadic Mantras say that everything, including the ten organs of perception and action, are yoked to Self. Self is without cause or effect, without interior or exterior. Self, the Absolute reveals itself through the relative universe. To say that the world veils Self is ignorance; to recognize that the world reveals Self is Knowledge. The repeated emphasis is that Self is immortal; It is Brahman; It is all.

MANTRAS

1) This Earth is (like) the honey (effect) for all beings and all beings are (like) the honey (effect) for this earth. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this earth and the bright, immortal, being who is in the body – indeed, these four are just this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.

The word *madhu* or honey here denotes the causal relationship and mutual dependence of the earth and all beings; the one cannot exist without the other. Bees make honey and the honey makes or supports the bees. Bees and honey are both cause and effect and are mutually dependent. They are conducive to each other's welfare. So too, the earth is created from the actions of all beings from Hiranyagarbha to the blade of grass and the beings are dependent on earth.

The four entities referred to in the Mantra are the earth, all beings, the immortal being in the earth and the immortal being in the body. These four are the composite effect of all beings and all beings are the effect of these four. They are mutually dependent and conducive to one another's welfare. Hence they all have originated from the same cause; they all belong to the same genus, and in the end they will all merge in the same substance. That cause which is the support, origin etc of all is Brahman. Brahman alone is real. Everything else is an effect, a modification, a mere name, an effort of speech.

The previous section stated that Immortality can be attained only by means of knowledge, through the practice of renunciation. It was stated further that the Self should be heard of, reflected upon and meditated upon. The reflection is to be on the reasoning that the universe has sprung from the Self, has the Self alone for its genus and dissolves into the Self. The present section gives this idea a spiritual authority.

2) This water is like the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are like the honey (effect) of this water. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this water and the bright, immortal being existing as the semen in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.

The water-principle is the honey of all beings, and all beings are the honey of the water-principle as the cause thereof, and the cause which is the water-principle is not independent of the part which proceeds from the whole.

The seed in the individual, the vital force in the individual is the representation of the water-principle in the cosmos. Both these are co-related to each other, and they are animated by a single Being, the Immortal Atman, the Self of all which is, veritably, everything, the Absolute Brahman.

3) This fire is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this fire. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this fire and the bright, immortal being identified

with the organ of speech in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.

This fire-principle is the honey of all beings, and everything that is a part thereof is naturally included in the whole. This fire-principle is manifest in the speech of the individual. The speech is an action, an activity which is superintended by the fire-principle. If there is no fire in the system, you cannot speak. So, these are co-related with each other as part and whole, cause and effect. But this causal relationship between fire and the speech-principle is made possible by the presence of the immanence of the Cosmic Being who is the Supreme Purusha.

4) This air is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this air. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this air and the bright, immortal being identified with the vital breath in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.

This air is of the same nature. The breath that we breathe, the vital energy in us, that is the co-relate in the individual aspects, of the cosmic Hiranyagarbha; Prana and Vayu, and they are co-related, so that when the part is conceived, the whole is automatically conceived.

To make clear the point that this co-relationship is not mechanical or artificial, but vital, living and organic, it is stated that the Purusha is the connecting principle. Consciousness is equally present in the cause as well as the effect. It is in the outside world and also in the inner individual. So, when any particular function of the individual is taken into consideration for the purpose of effecting or producing anything, the cause has to be taken into consideration at the same time. If the cause is forgotten and the individual alone is emphasized in a particular action, it would be the source of bondage. The bondage of the individual is due to the emphasis of the individual, independently of the cause which is organically connected by the very same Atman that is present in both. So, the essence of the Madhu-Vidya is the cosmic contemplation of Reality. Prana within and Vayu outside, they are both co-related and connected by a single immortal essence.

5) This sun is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this sun. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this sun and the bright, immortal being identified with the eye in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.

Now, the sun is connected with the eye. We are able to see things on account of the principle of the sun that is present in our eyes and the connecting link between the sun and the eyes is again the same Purusha. Wherever we see the connecting link between the macrocosmic and the microcosmic we find the same Purusha. So, the one Being is the active, energizing Reality of any aspect of the cosmos as well as the corresponding aspect of the individual. The luminous power that controls the sun is the same as that which controls the eye. So, here the sun and the eye are co-related.

6) *These quarters are the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of these quarters. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in these quarters and the bright, immortal being identified with the ear in the body and with the time of hearing are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.*

7) *This moon is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this moon. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this moon and the bright, immortal being identified with the mind in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.*

8) *This lightning is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this lightning. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this lightning and the bright, immortal being identified with the light in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying Unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.*

9) *This thunder—cloud is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this thunder—cloud. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this thunder—cloud and the bright, immortal being identified with sound and with the voice in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.*

10) *This akasa is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this akasa. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this akasa and the bright, immortal being identified with the akasa in the heart in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.*

Likewise, the quarters of the heavens and the ears are co-related. The mind and the moon are co-related, and the Upanishad goes on to co-relate the light that is flashed forth by the lightning above and the light that is projected by the body by its own energy. The sounds that are made outside in the world are also causally connected with the effect as the sounds made in our own bodies by various functions. The space that is outside is not independent of the space in our own bodies. It is the same space that is operating inside also. The space in the heart within is the space that is outside. Both are internally connected.

11) *This dharma (righteousness) is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this dharma. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this dharma and the bright, immortal being identified with the dharma in the body are both honey. These four are but this self. This knowledge of this self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.*

The law that operates outside is the law of the cosmos. There are no two laws - God's law and man's law; universal law and individual law. No such thing is there. Such thing as 'my law' or your law' does not exist. There is only one law operating everywhere, in all creation, visible or

invisible, in all realms of being. The same law is there for the celestials, the humans and the sub-human creatures. Everyone is controlled by a single principle of ordinance. That is called Dharma.

It operates as gravitation in the physical level; it operates as love in the psychological level; it operates as chemicals in the chemical level and it operates as integration of thought in our mental level, the level of cognition and thinking. It ultimately operates as the connecting link between the subject and the object, on account of which there is knowledge of anything at all. That is called Dharma.

Dharma is an integrating force of anything that is even apparently in disparity. Anything that is disconnected, apparently isolated, not visibly connected, is actually connected, and that connecting principle is called Dharma. And Dharma becomes an integrating principle because of the presence of the Atman that is behind it. There is no such thing as Dharma independent of the operation of the Atman. What we call Dharma or law is the Atman working. Its own law is its Being; its Being is its law; they are not two different things.

12) This truth is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this truth. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in this truth and the bright, immortal being identified with truth in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.

What we call truth is one. There cannot be two truths or three truths, etc. There is only *one* truth - *Satyameva jayate*. The truth that succeeds is that co-relative, integrating principle, Satya, which is, again, a manifestation of the Atman. Atman is truth, and Atman is Dharma. So, Satya and Dharma are identical.

13) This mankind is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this mankind. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in mankind and the bright, immortal being identified with mankind in the body are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.

The word mankind here includes all species, human and non-human which are endowed with an aggregate of body and organs controlled by *dharma*. All living beings belonging to different species are conducive to one another's welfare and this co-relation is possible on account of the Self, the Atman.

14) This cosmic body (atman) is the honey (effect) of all beings and all beings are the honey (effect) of this cosmic body. Likewise, the bright, immortal being who is in the cosmic body and the bright, immortal being identified with the individual self are both honey. These four are but this Self. The Knowledge of this Self is the means to Immortality; this underlying unity is Brahman; this Knowledge of Brahman is the means of becoming all.

The Cosmic Being is feeding upon the individual and the individual is feeding upon the Cosmic. They are inter-related like the mother and the child and co-related with each other in an organic unity. The Atman that we are speaking of is the Atman of all beings. Rather it is not the Atman of all beings; but it is the Atman, which is all beings, ultimately. It is the Lord of all beings.

15) And verily this Self is the Ruler of all beings, the King of all beings. Just as all the spokes are held together in the hub and rim of a wheel of a chariot, so are all beings, all gods, all worlds, all organs and all these individual creatures held together in this Self.

Everything is controlled by the very existence and presence of the Atman, without any movement on Its part. It is the Emperor of all. As the spokes are connected to the hub of a wheel, everything visible or invisible is connected to this Atman. All beings, whatever can be conceived of or not conceived of, all celestials, gods, all the worlds that can be conceived of in any level of manifestation, everything that is vital and real, everything, all beings, whatever is, in any form, are located in this Atman, in the same way as every spoke is located in the hub of the wheel.

This is the Madhu-Vidya in essence - the contemplation of all things by the contemplation of anything.

16) This, verily, is the honey (madhu—doctrine) which Dadhyach, versed in the Atharva—Veda, taught the Asvins. The Mantra (the rishi) perceived this and said: "O Asvins in human form, I will disclose that terrible deed of yours, called damsra, which you performed out of greed, as the thunder—cloud discloses the approaching rain. I will disclose the honey (madhu—doctrine), which Dadhyach, versed in the Atharva—Veda, taught you through the head of a horse."

17) This, verily, is the honey (madhu—doctrine) which Dadhyach, versed in the Atharva—Veda, taught the Asvins. The Mantra (the rishi) perceived this and said: "O Asvins, you fixed a horse's head on Dadhyach, versed in the Atharva—Veda, who, O terrible ones, wishing to be true to his promise, taught you the ritualistic meditation on the honey (madhu—doctrine) connected with the sun and also the secret (spiritual) meditation on it."

There is an interesting story behind this knowledge. It is supposed to be a very secret knowledge which is not to be imparted to all people. And Indra got this knowledge from Sage Dadhyach. Greedy that he was, he did not want others to know this. He wanted to have this knowledge only for himself. He had told his Guru - 'if you tell this to anybody else, I will cut off your head.' He was a very strange disciple, and the Guru said nothing. He kept quiet. Indra desired to be the only knower of it. Such a great secret it is!

Then two other gods known as the Asvins - the twin celestial physicians, wanted to have this knowledge. They knew that this Guru knows this - the Madhu-Vidya. So they came and said: "Will you teach us Madhu-Vidya?"

The Guru Dadhyach Atharvana Rishi said: "You know the danger behind my telling what I know? I will lose my head." "Why?" they asked. He told them: "This is what happened. That foolish Indra, I taught him something, and this threat is the gratitude he gave me. He says: "If I tell this to anybody else, he will sever my head. So, if I tell you, my head will go." "Oh, you do not

bother about it," the twins said, "We shall look to it. We shall take care of this matter. You do not be afraid of losing your head."

"How are you going to save me?"

"You start teaching. Then, we cut off your head. Then, we will bring the head of a horse and place it on the trunk of your body, and you speak through the horse's mouth. Then Indra will get angry and cut off your head. But what he will cut off is the horse's head only. Afterwards he will go away and we will replace your real head and join it so that you become all right. Thereby you would not have lost anything."

That was a very good idea. Then Sage Dadhyan began to speak and the Asvins cut off his head and kept it safe somewhere in secret. Then they brought the head of a horse from somewhere, fixed it on the sage's trunk and gave it life. Immediately the horse started speaking the Madhu-Vidya, and through the mouth of the horse this wisdom has come.

Indra got enraged on seeing that the sage had started imparting the Madhu-Vidya. He went and cut off that head he found on the sage's neck - the horse's head. Then the Asvinis came and put back the original head on the sage and made him whole again.

So, this is the interesting story behind the Vidya called Madhu-Vidya. But whatever the story is behind this enunciation of the Vidya, it is a brilliant statement of the Upanishad telling us that everything is organically related to everything else. The purpose of the story is to praise the Knowledge of Brahman, which enabled the Asvins, who committed a terrible deed, to escape its harmful consequence.

18) This, verily, is the honey (madhu—doctrine) which Dadhyach, versed in the Atharva—Veda, taught the Asvins. The Mantra (rishi) perceived this and said: "He (the Lord) made bodies with two feet; He made bodies with four feet. Having first become a bird (the subtle body), He, the Supreme Person, entered the bodies. On account of His dwelling in all bodies (pur), He is called the Person (Purusha). There is nothing that is not covered by Him, nothing that is not pervaded by Him."

This, the Dhadhyan Atharvana Rishi spoke, and in conclusion, he said: "This Being which is responsible for the inter-connectedness of things has become, what you call, the living and the non-living; the visible and the invisible; the creatures which are two-footed and those that are four-footed. He became the subtle body and then the gross body by means of a subtle instrument known as the Linga Sarira or Sukshma Sarira. The very Being became the vital consciousness of all physical bodies, and He is present in everybody. The Body that is Universal and the body that is particularized - there is nothing that it is not enveloping. Everything is covered up by That - *idam sarvam*" implying the non-duality of the Self.

19) This, verily, is the honey (madhu—doctrine) which Dadhyach, versed in the Atharva—Veda, taught the Asvins. The Mantra (the rishi) perceived this and said: "He (the Lord) transformed Himself in accordance with each form and each form of His was for the sake of making Him known. The Lord (Indra), through His mayas, appears manifold; for to Him are yoked ten

horses, nay, hundreds. "This Atman is the organs; It is ten and thousands—many and infinite. This Brahman is without antecedent or consequent, without interior or exterior. This self, the all—perceiving, is Brahman. This is the teaching of the Upanishads."

This is the knowledge which Dadhyan Atharvana taught to the Asvins. He said like this: *Rupam rupam pratirupo babhuva, tad asya rupam praticaksanaya*: "In every form He assumed the likeness of each form. The Lord in the process of manifesting name and form transformed Himself in accordance with name and form". This is a very important passage in the Upanishad. He casts Himself into the mould of every creature and becomes formulated into the structure of that particular creature. He can be conveniently made to assume any shape under any condition. When he casts Himself into the mould of a bird's body, it looks as if He is a bird. When He casts Himself into the mould of a human body, it looks as if He is a human being. When He shines as a celestial, it looks as if He is an angel. He is, then, that which we visualize with our eyes.

These forms, these bodies, these visible individualities of things, are really intended for the recognition of His presence in all things. He has not created this world merely for nothing, as if for fun. It is intended to give an indication of His presence; an indication of the variety which He can comprise within Himself; an indication of the contradictions that can be reconciled in His Being; an indication of the Majesty which is in His own stature, and an indication of the inscrutability of His nature. Were name and form not manifested, the transcendental nature of the Self would not be known just as to know the light there should be darkness or to perceive beauty we must know what is ugliness.

All these forms are visualized by us directly with our own eyes, a contradictory world where nothing is clear; everything is enigmatic, if considered in isolation. However, everything is reconcilable if it is connected in its proper context in the manner which we have just described in the Madhu-Vidya. So, there is no contradiction in the world; everything is harmonious. We unfortunately find it impossible to see the harmony as we are not in a position to harmonize ourselves with the harmony that is His. But His intention is something different. His intention is to make it possible for us to visualize the harmony and the interconnectedness through every finite form.

Due to the magnificence of His nature and the variety of His manifestation we are unable to see the truth of things. We visualize only one particular form and are not able to connect this form with other forms. We see the universe only in parts and not as a whole. So we are not able to see things as they ought to be seen. We are not supposed to see one thing only, or a few things only, or a hundred things only. We are supposed to see anything in its connection with other things, in its relation with others. If this connection is lost, it is as if we see nothing and know nothing, and one day we will be full of sorrow.

"So, let it be understood," says the great Rishi, "that the Master magician who can be called great Mayavi, the Supreme Being who is designated here as Indra - the Lord of all beings, appears in such manifold forms that it is impossible for the physical eyes to connect the forms with the circumstances in which they are really placed."

All the sense-organs are He only. They are not outside Him. It is He that appears as the senses; He appears as the forms and He appears as the perception of the objects, and in His Masterly variety, He has cast Himself into the mould of even the senses. He is Hari. Hari means the Lord Supreme, or it may mean the senses which drag you away to the objects. Harayah Hari: He may take away the ignorance of a person, and then He will be called Hari; or He may take away our consciousness towards the objects outside; that is also another function of His, and so He is called Hari. He is tens and hundreds and thousands, not one, two or three merely. Any number is He, and all these numbers are capable of reconciliation in the One that He really is.

Ayam vai harayah, ayam vai dasa ca sahasrani, bahuni canantani ca, tad etad brahmaparvam, anaparam, anantaram, abahyam ayam atma brahma sarvdnubhuh, ity anusasanam: This Supreme is tens and hundreds and thousands and manifold and variety and what not. Everything is that glorious resplendence which appears as these colors and forms that move in various directions, in many ways. It is manifold and it is infinite in Its variety; It is the Supreme Brahman, the Absolute - *tad-etad brahma*.

He has neither a beginning nor an end. We do not know what is before It; we do not know what is after It; we do not know what is inside It. It is all things - *anantaram. abahyam ayam atma Brahma*: This is, verily, our own Self. This manifold Majesty, which is regarded as inscrutable, is seated in our own heart, not outside us. It is the experiencer of everything. Sorrows and joys, varieties, differences, apparent irreconcilabilities, confusions - everything is Its experience. It is experiencing everything in Its own totality, and if we could experience through Its eyes and through Its forms, through Its Being, then we would not see the variety in the world. We would not see any contradiction or any irreconcilability. It is a One single inter-connectedness that is Cosmic Being.

This is the subject of the great Madhu-Vidya instructed by Dadhyan Atharvana to the gods, Asvins, through the mouth of the horse.

END OF SECTION V OF CHAPTER II

SECTION VI - VAMSA-BRAHMANA

Line of Teachers and Disciples of this Knowledge contained in the First Two Chapters

In ancient times important texts were passed on from one generation to the next through a succession of teachers and the taught through the media of human memory. This section of the Upanishad gives a long list of the names of such teachers. Everyone received knowledge from someone else. God is the only one who does not receive knowledge from someone else. Until we reach that state of Self, complete knowledge, we are in a state of movement; in a process of aspiration.

END OF SECTION VI OF CHAPTER II

END OF CHAPTER II

END OF PART 1: MADHU-KANDA OF THE BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD

HARIH OM TAT SAT