कैवल्य उपनिषद्

Kaivalya upaniṣad

Commentary by Swami Paramarthananda

आत्मानमरिणंकृत्वा, प्रणवंचोत्तरारिणम्।
ज्ञाननिर्मथनाभ्यासात्, पाशंदहतिपण्डितः॥११॥

Ātmānamariṇaṁ kṛtvā, praṇavam cottarāriṇam
Jñānanirmathanābhyāsāt, pāśaṁ dahati paṇḍitaḥ II 11 II

Keeping the mind as the lower arani, and Omkara as the upper arani, (and) by the practice of churning, which is in the form of enquiry, the wise man burns down the bondage.

नकर्मणानप्रजयाधनेन, त्यागेनैकअमृतत्वमानशुः।
परेणनाकंनिहितंगुहायां, विभ्राजतेयद्यतयोविशन्ति॥ ३ ॥

Na karmaṇā na prajayā dhanena tyāgenaika
amṛtatvamānaśuḥ I
Pareṇa nākaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ vibhrājate yadyatayo
viśanti II 3 II

Neither by work (actions), nor by offspring (progeny), nor by wealth, but by renunciation alone, Immortality (eternal life) is attained.

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1. Useful References for the Study of this Upaniṣad

The Five Capsules of Vedānta

1. I am of the nature of eternal and all-pervading Consciousness
2. I am the only source of permanent peace, security and happiness
3. By my mere presence, I give life to the material body and through the body, I experience the material universe
4. I am not affected by anything that takes place in the material world and in the material body
5. By forgetting my nature, I convert life into a struggle and by remembering my nature, I convert life into a sport / entertainment

The Five Features of Consciousness

1. Consciousness is not a part, product or property of the body
2. Consciousness is an independent entity which pervades and enlivens the body
3. Consciousness is not limited by the boundaries of the body
4. Consciousness continues to exist / survive even after the death of the body
5. The surviving Consciousness is not accessible because of the absence of the body (medium)

Format Conversion

Triangular format
A karma yogi has a world view which can be presented in a triangular format of *Jīva-Jagat-Īśvara* – I, the *jīva* is the victim of the *jagat*, the victimizer and *Īśvara* is the only savior

Binary format
A jñāna yogi has a world view which can be presented in a binary format of *Ātmā - anātamā*

Objective
A karma yogi becomes a jñāna yogi by Format Conversion

2. Introduction

We have completed three Upaniṣads – Muṇḍaka, Kena and Kaṭha - and now we enter the fourth Upaniṣad namely Kaivalya Upaniṣad. I shall give a general introduction first, going through the previous introductions briefly, build up a few more points and then enter the text of this Upaniṣad.

The Vedas are our primary sources of knowledge both with regard to religious life as well as spiritual pursuit. The Vedas even guide us in the secular and worldly pursuits through the various stages of life such as the student, householder etc. The Vedas guide us in the natural instinctive pursuits such as married life, propagation of children etc. and even in the performance of mundane instinctive activities. Therefore, the Vedas are ready to guide us in all walks of life if we are willing to take the guidance.

As we have seen previously, the Vedas have been broadly divided into two portions:

Veda-pūrva bhāga known as *karma kāṇḍa*– dealing with religious life
Veda-anta bhāga known as *jñāna kāṇḍa* – dealing with spiritual life and pursuits

Veda-pūrva bhāga or *karma kāṇḍa*, as the very name reveals, deals with varieties of karmas or activities. The word karma has several meanings depending on the context. Our *punya pāpams* (fate) are also called karma. In this context, the word karma means the invisible *karmaphalam* (the fruit of action). In the context of karma kāṇḍa, karma means deliberate actions through freewill by the human beings (and not the invisible *punya pāpams*).

The innumerable activities discussed by the Vedas can be broadly classified into three categories based on the instrument with which we do the activities:

Kāyika karmāṇi – the physical activities like rituals, *namaskāram, pradakṣiṇam* etc.

Vācika karmāṇi – the oral actions like *pārāyaṇam, japa*, chanting, recitation of *nāma* (Lord's names) etc.

Mānasa karmāṇi- purely mental activities in the form of *mānasa japa, pārāyaṇam*, and *pūja*. *Mānasa* karmas are known as *dhyānam* or *upāsanā* also.

Thus, in the *Veda-pūrva*, we have *karma-trayam*- the physical oral and mental actions.

Per the Vedas, every action produces an appropriate result (*phalam*). Each action produces a visible as well as an invisible result. The Vedas do not discuss the visible results because they are visible. When I feed a poor person with food, the mental satisfaction I get is a visible result. That the other person's stomach was satisfied is also a visible result. The Vedas need not talk about these, but they do discuss the invisible results. When you give food (*annadānam*), it produces an invisible result (*adṛṣṭa phalam*) called *puṇya*, which will produce favorable circumstances in your immediate or remote future – i.e., in this birth or in the future ones.

Since infinite number of karmas are possible, the *karmaphalams* are also infinite in number. We can broadly classify the *karmaphalams* also into three categories (*karmaphala-trayam*). These are known as the *puruṣārthas* – the human goals that are sought by every human being. These three *phalams* are known as dharma, *artha* and *kāma.*

The word *kāma* means any object or any person or any circumstance that will contribute to my inner happiness. You should not translate *kāma* as a desire in this context. We are not just talking about physical comfort, but also the inner happiness. There is a difference between external physical comfort and internal happiness. There are many people who are physically comfortable and rich, but mentally distressed. There are also many people who do not have all these comforts, but are very happy. Therefore, the word *kāma* primarily refers to the things, beings and situations that will contribute to the inner comfort more than the outer. All of these are classified as *kāma puruṣārtha*.

Artha refers to all people, things and situations that contribute to my sense of security. The word *artha* does not merely mean money. Often money becomes the cause of insecurity [Tamil: மடியில் கனமிருந்தால்தான் வழியிலே பயம்). Therefore, *artha* should not be translated as money or property because they do not always give security. *Artha* should be translated as anything or any being or any condition that will contribute to my sense of security. The primary goal of human life is

security. And after security, he looks for joy. Without security you cannot look for joy. Therefore *artha* is the first universal *puruṣārtha*, followed by *kāma*, which is also a universal *puruṣārtha*. They are also *karmaphalam*.

After ensuring sufficient *artha* and *kāma* for the present, the human mind begins to think of the future. [*I get my salary now, but I will not receive any after retirement*]. I not only think of *artha-kāma* of the immediate future, I am also worried about my posthumous life – my next *janma* (birth). Therefore, I require resources that will take care of my future *janmas*. Can our resources such as insurance, gold, land etc. take care of the future *janmas*? They are only useful in this *janma*. *Arthā gṛhe nivartante śmaśānena mitra bāndhavā*. I have to drop all the wealth at home when I am carried as the dead body. I cannot carry my share certificates. What about people? In the cremation grounds, the relatives leave us (*śmaśānena mitra bāndhavā*). The local wealth does not follow me after death. Then what does? *Sukṛtam duṣkṛtam caiva gacchantam anugacchati* - the *pāpa-puṇyas* that I commit and accrue in the current life will follow me and determine the direction of my travel. Therefore, the third *puruṣārtha* is *dharmaḥ*. *Dharmaḥ* means the invisible wealth, which alone we can carry after death and not the visible wealth which will have to be left behind here helplessly.

Thus, karmas can produce *artha, kāma* and *dharma phalam* – the *phalatrayam*.

Then we discussed the three intrinsic deficiencies of the *phalatrayam* [we have seen these in the introduction of the previous three Upaniṣads. I know you have good memory. But since I have problems, I am loudly recollecting. That is all]. Just as every rose plant has the wonderful rose and the inevitable thorn, the *phalam* rose plant also has the intrinsic thorn. From a distance we see the wonderful, attractive and fragrant rose, but when we rush and embrace it, we intensely feel the thorn. *Parīkṣya lokān karmachitān brāhmaṇaḥ nirveda māyā* (Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad - 1.2.12) – an intelligent and *sāttvik* human being (*brāhmaṇaḥ*), in due course of life, after learning from life experiences, comes to the conclusion that the *phalatrayam* has three intrinsic deficiencies (*doṣatrayam*). And what are they?

Duḥkhamiśritatvam – This means that all the *karmaphalams* mixed with pain. Pain is involved in the acquisition, maintenance and inevitably in their loss despite the best maintenance. No matter how many beauty parlours you go to, you cannot maintain the beauty forever. Perhaps, you can manage till you are sixty years old; after that,

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people will start reading between the lines no matter how thick your make-up is! Thus, the acquisition, maintenance and the loss of *karmaphalam* involves pain. *Duḥkhamiśritatvam* applies to all *karmaphalams – artha, kāma* and dharma.

Atṛptikaratvam– This is the second *doṣa* (defect). Any *karmaphalam* lacks the capacity to give total fulfillment. In other words, it can give only limited fulfillment, perhaps for a few minutes, few days or weeks. When we acquire a new thing, we will take extreme good care of it for a short time, but after a while, its charm fades and we seek a new and better thing. Therefore, nothing can give total fulfillment. Therefore, the sense of dissatisfaction will continue, no matter what we acquire. It may go away temporarily, but it will come back. It is like a counter-irritant. When you have a cold, you apply some balm, but it does not cure. The balm creates more irritation or powerful smell, which makes you forget the cold. When the effect of the balm wears off, you will feel the cold again. That is why, they say: with treatment, cold will go in one week and without treatment, it will stay for 7 long days! The net result is the same. Therefore, *karmaphalam* is *atṛptikaratvam* - it is incapable of giving fulfillment.

Bandhakatvam - This is the third and last *doṣa*. The *karmaphalam* will lead me from dependence to more dependence. Previously, I was unhappy because I didn't have five things. Now I am unhappy because I lack 50 things.   So, the number of things I need to be comfortable has only increased. I have now travelled from dependence to more dependence. My aim is to travel from dependence to independence. Instead of going forward, I am going backward. This is called *bandhakatvam*.

In summary, karmaphalam has three doṣas (defects) – *atṛptikaratavam*, *duḥkhamiśritatvam* and *bandhakatvam*.

A student once told me that if you rearrange these three *doṣas*, and take the first letters in English, it is easy to remember (mnemonic) – BAD – **B**andhakatvam, **A**tṛptikaratavam and **D**uḥkhamiśritatvam. Students also come up with nice suggestions. Thus, we have discussed *karmatrayam*, *phalatrayam* and *doṣatrayam*. This is what *veda-pūrva bhāga* (*karma kāṇḍa*) brings for us.

An enterprising human being, after going through this for a length of time, will ask a question - is there some goal (*puruṣārtha*) that is free from these three intrinsic defects? *Nirdoṣa puruṣārthaḥ asti vā na vā?* All the human beings don't ask this

question because the majority is mediocre. They have resigned to the situations in life and therefore they are not enterprising enough to ask this question. They take the life as it is and they are satisfied with such a mediocre life. By the time they discover these facts, they are ready for the diamond jubilee (75 years of age). Naturally, the youthful enthusiasm is gone and therefore they are not ready for an enterprising spiritual pursuit. They only have one prayer: I should die soon and not come back (Tamil: சீக்கிரமா சாகணும், திரும்பிவரக்கூடாது). You don't have to think if there is a short cut like *śaraṇāgati*. The majority resign to their fate because the energy is not there.

That is why, in the olden days, they married early. The advantage is that you get *vairāgyam* by forty because you are a *pātti* (grandmother) by forty. Now, a person may get married for the first time at 40. By the time he or she becomes a grandfather or grandmother, he/she is 80 years old. By the time *vairāgyam* comes, it is too late. I do not know biologically whether it is right for the child to marry at 13, 14 or 15. So many questions are there. However, one advantage is that we have settled the children, and in the process we have got enough *vairāgyam* and our health is reasonably good to pursue spirituality. Our life style has changed because to get a good job, we require higher education; by the time we finish we are well into the twenties. Then, by the time a person finds a match through horoscope or dating, he/she is already 35. This is a side issue. The idea is that I should be healthy enough to ask a question- Is there a *nirdoṣa puruṣārtha*?

The Vedas themselves declare that there is another *kāṇḍa– jñāna kāṇḍa* - for those enterprising seekers. However, very few seek it because most people die in *karma kāṇḍa* itself. *Jñāna kāṇḍa* transcends vedic rituals and other religious acts in the name of *parihāra* (atonement). Bhagavan has *dharmārtha kāma* in one pocket and mokṣa in another and he doles them out to the seekers. However, one hand is overworked and the other hand is idle. Some very rare ones seek *jñāna kāṇḍa*, the superior *puruṣārtha* that the Vedas offer. Verse 7.3 of the Bhagavad Gīta declares:

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये।

manuṣyāṇāṃ sahasrēṣu kaścidyatati siddhayē

Among thousands of human beings, a rare one strives for liberation.

The Vedānta (*jñāna kāṇḍa*) says that there is a *puruṣārtha* called *parama puruṣārtha* (supreme goal) which is free of *dharmātha kāma* and therefore, is called *nirdoṣa*

puruṣārtha, (*dharma artha kāma vilakṣaṇa puruṣārtha*). *Dharmārtha kāma* and mokṣa are called *preyas* and *śreyas* respectively in verses 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 of Kaṭhopaniṣad:

अन्यच्छ्रेयोऽन्यदुतैव प्रेयः, ते उभे नानार्थे पुरुषꣳसिनीतः ।
तयोः श्रेय आददानस्य साधु भवति, हीयतेऽर्थाद्द उ प्रेयो वृणीते ।। १.२.१ ।।
Anyacchreyo'nyadutaiva preyaḥ, te ubhe nānārthe puruṣagṁsinītaḥ |
tayoḥ śreya ādadānasya sādhu bhavati, hīyate' rthādya u preyo vṛṇīte || 1.2.1 ||

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतः, तौ सम्परीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः ।
श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभि प्रेयसो वृणीते, प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमा द्वृणीते ।। १.२.२ ।।
śreyaśca preyaśca manuṣyametaḥ, tau samparītya vivinakti dhīraḥ |
śreyo hi dhīro'bhi preyaso vṛṇīte, preyo mando yogakṣemād vṛṇīte || 1.2.2 ||

The Vedas say that majority is dull (*mandāḥ*) because they are stuck in *dharmārtha-kāma*. They never seek mokṣa.

The Vedas introduce that *nirdoṣa puruṣārtha* as Brahman. It is known by various names such as Brahma, Atma etc. In Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, it is called *akṣaram* [*yayātad akṣaram adhigamyate*]. Naturally, this enterprising seeker turns his attention away from *preyas*, and turns towards Brahman asking the question: where is that blessed Brahman which is called *nirdoṣam* in verse 5.19 of the Bhagavad Gīta?

निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद् ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः
nirdoṣaṁ hi samaṁ brahma tasmād brahmaṇi te sthitāḥ

Brahman is *nirdoṣam* which means that it is free from the three intrinsic *doṣas* – remembered as BAD.

As I am curious to know that Brahman, I take out my microscope and telescope to find Him. If it is far away, I will use a telescope (Hubble telescope). Or, I will use a powerful electron microscope if Brahman is a minute thing. The Vedas ask me to drop both of them - there is no scope for those scopes. The Vedas make a shocking, unbelievable, unswallowable and mind-boggling revelation: *tat tvam asi* – you are that. Chāndogya Upaniṣad says: *etadātmyam idagṁ sarvaṁ tat satyam sa ātmā tat*

tvam asi śwetaketau. In Kaivalya Upaniṣad, it is said: *tat tvam eva tvam eva tat* (That is only you and you are only that).

When we hear for the first time, we will never believe. We may even tell the guru that there is something wrong with him. It is like story of the prime minister who visited the mental hospital. One of the inmates asked him, "Who are you?" The prime minister replied, "I am the prime minister of the country." The inmate responded, "Don't worry. I also thought the same when I first came here. You will be alright soon."

To avoid this problem, in Chāndogya Upaniṣad, the guru repeats it nine times, developing the teaching. It is not a brainwashing proposal but a systematic teaching. I am going to give you an equation: You are the whole. You are free from all the *doṣas*. It is an equation to be understood. To understand this equation, I have a well structured, consistent and systematic teaching: *Tvaṁ pada vicāra*, *tat pada* vicāra and *asi pada vicāra*. I can help you understand this as a fact. Therefore, the teacher repeats nine times: *etadātmyam idagṁ sarvaṁ tat satyam sa ātmā tat tvam asi śvetaketau*. And at the end of the fifth chapter of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, the student Śvetaketu understands this and thanks the guru at the end of the sixth chapter (*taddhāsya vijajñāviti vijajñāviti*). Initially, Śvetaketu did not believe, but, ultimately, it became a fact for him. Just as Karṇa who did not believe he was *Kunti putraḥ* (son of Kunti) because he was strongly entrenched in the notion that he was Rādheya, the son of a charioteer. A lot of revelations were required for acceptance.

To give a modern example: at first, many did not accept when they were told that the sun was the center of the solar system and earth revolved around it. They mocked the person who first revealed it. When I see with my own eyes, the sun rising and setting each day, how can I accept that the sun is stationary and the earth is revolving around it? It requires a lot of education to accept this as a fact. It is interesting to note that even after the knowledge, the experience continues to be the opposite. In spite of the opposite experience, I know that the reality is the other way around.

Similarly, when the Vedānta says that I am that *nirdoṣa puruṣārtha* Brahma, I will not be able to accept it until I learn and understand the teaching. It is not a matter for belief but it is for clear understanding. Many have this misconception that it is a

mystic experience. It is not even a mystic experience. It is the clear understanding which is possible to achieve, and which alone can release us.

Now the question comes: am I the defectless Brahman or the defect-ridden mortal human being? To resolve this is an intellectual challenge. My experience shows that I am a mortal human being with countless defects physically, emotionally and intellectually. However, the Vedānta says that I am defect-free Brahman. Which one is correct? Neither position can be brushed aside. I cannot dismiss the position that I am defect-free Brahman because it is coming from the Vedas, which I revere as God's own message. I am a *vaidika* who have benefitted from karmas prescribed by *karma kāṇḍa* of the Vedas. Therefore, *jñāna kāṇḍa* cannot be wrong. At the same time, I cannot brush aside my own intimate experience of my worries and woes. Then, with all my problems, how can I claim that I am *nirdoṣaḥ* and that too, *ānanda svarūpam* (bliss is my nature)?

Both are equally powerful; one is *pratyakṣa anubhava* (direct experience) and the other is *Īśvarokta śāstra vākyam* (God's word in the scriptures). Why can I not accept both the positions?. We cannot accept both because they are contradictory. If I am defect-free, I cannot accept that I am defect ridden and vice versa. The opposite attributes cannot co-exist in one locus. That is why I can say, God is defect-free and I am defect ridden. In fact, it is very convenient because there is no contradiction. I am here and God is somewhere beyond the clouds – there is no need for this class. *Karma kāṇḍa* never disturbs us intellectually because it says, God is defect-free and we are defect ridden. There is no need to challenge that statement. We shudder to enter *jñāna kāṇḍa* because of the intellectual challenge. Vedānta further says: you were, you are and you ever will be (defect-free). Clearly, one of the positions is wrong and other, right. Now I have to study and find out which one is right and acceptable.

Therefore, we have to embark upon Self enquiry to determine whether I am defect-free or defect ridden. For that, I require an appropriate instrument. If I want to enquire into the stars, remote stars and galaxies, I not only require my eyes, but also a telescope, the appropriate instrument. Without the appropriate instrument, the enquiry will end up in speculation and imagination. To arrive at the truth, I should use appropriate instruments. Therefore, the *sāstras* say: *pramāṇam vinā vicāraṁ na sambhavati* - without an (appropriate) instrument (*pramāṇam*) you

cannot do enquiry. Therefore, we say that meditation is not an appropriate method for inquiry because we do not use any instrument of enquiry.

We are only used to the instruments that enquire into the objective world, as we saw in Verse 2.1.1 of Kaṭhopaniṣad: *parāñci khāni vyatṛṇatsvayambhūḥ, tasmātparāṅ paśyati nāntarātman* - The Lord destroyed the sense organs (by making them) extrovert. Therefore, everyone perceives outside, but not the Ātmā within.

What *pramāṇam* should we use for self-enquiry?

In the introduction for the Kaṭhopaniṣad, we enumerated six *pramāṇas*: *pratyakṣa, anumāna, arthāpatti, upamāna, anupalabdhi* and *śabda*. I am not going into the details because it is given in that introduction.

The use of appropriate *pramāṇam* depends upon the field of enquiry; it is not my choice. For example, to study the stars, whether I like or not, I have to use the telescope. To study a minute object, I have to use the microscope. What is the appropriate *pramāṇam* for self-enquiry. Do not say: I will ask "Who am I?" By asking that question, nothing will happen because you are not using an appropriate instrument.

We can rule out five of the six *pramāṇams*. *Pratyakṣa* (direct perception by sense organs) is turned outwards and so, it is capable of only enquiring into the objective world and not the subject. *Pratyakṣa* is therefore ruled out. We can rule out *anumāna, arthāpatti, upamāna,* and *anupalabdhi* also because they are based on the perceptive data from *pratyakṣa*. Thus modern science can be ruled out for self-enquiry because it is based on experimentation, which in turn is based on *pratyakṣa pramāṇam*. We are now left with only the *śabda pramāṇam*. *Śabda* is classified into two:

Laukika śabda - The words in the form of books written by human beings.

Śāstrīya śabda - the words coming from *anādi parampara* (beginning-less tradition – *Nārāyaṇa padmabhuvam vaśiṣṭam* or in the short form of *Sadāśiva samārambhām*)

Laukika śabda is ruled out because it is based on human instruments of knowledge and therefore, they deal only with the objective world. *Vaidika śabda* also has two

categories: *karma kāṇḍa śabda* and *jñāna kāṇḍa śabda*. *Karma kāṇḍa śabda* is also not useful for self-enquiry because it deals with the external world of karma and *karmaphalam*. Therefore, we have now helplessly landed on *jñāna kāṇḍa pramāṇam*, also known as the *Upaniṣada pramāṇam*.

3. Introduction (continued)

Summary of the last class

In the last class we saw that the three *puruṣārthas* namely dharma, *artha* and *kāma* have inherent limitations and disadvantages. Only one *puruṣārtha,* namely, mokṣa is *nirdośam* (defect-free). Mokṣa, which is also called Brahman is not addressed in the *veda-pūrva bhāga*, which deals only with *sadoṣa dharmārtha-kāma puruṣārtha* (*sadoṣa* = with defects). The majority of the people are satisfied with *dharmārtha-kama* and only a very few seek mokṣa. Therefore, the topic of mokṣa has been exclusively dealt with in *Vedānta bhāga* for the benefit of those rare candidates.

The Vedānta drops a bombshell that mokṣa is none other than me. This is very difficult to swallow, but I cannot reject it because this vedic statement is the revelation from the Lord. On the other hand, I am also directly experiencing my deficiencies. Therefore, I am in a dilemma. To resolve this, I should make a self-enquiry to determine whether I am *sadoṣa jīvātma* or *nirdoṣa paramātma*. For this enquiry, I require an appropriate instrument; without a proper instrument, my conclusion will just be speculation or imagination. We looked at various instruments called *pramāṇam* in the last class. We ruled out five of the six *pramāṇams* – *pratyakṣa, anumāna, arthāpatti, upamāna and anupalabdhi*. All these *pramāṇams* are suitable for the study of the remote *anātmā* (the objective world) and not for the intimate Ātmā.

We are now left with *śabda pramāṇam* which is also classified into two: *laukika śabda* and *vaidika śabda*. *Laukika śabda* consists of works by human beings and since these are based on perceptive *pramāṇams*, they are only suitable for the study of the objective world and not for self-enquiry. On the other hand, *vaidika śabda* (vedic books) is not based on human enquiry and research. Even *ṛṣis* did not claim that the vedic teachings were the product of their own enquiry or analysis. They only claimed that they received this knowledge from their gurus who claimed that they got it from their gurus and so on, until traced back to the Lord (*iti suśruṇa pūrveśam* – heard before from *Īśvara*). Thus, *vaidika śabda* is *apauruṣeya pramāṇam*, which is beyond the reach of the extrovert *pramāṇams*. Therefore, we take to the Vedas for self-enquiry.

Vaidika śabda is also divided into two: *veda-pūrva śabda* and *Vedānta śabda*. The former only deals with *anātmā*. The karmas (*kāyika-vācika-mānasa*), the *karmaphalams* (*dharmārtha-kāma*) and the fourteen *lokas* are all *anātmā* which is bound by space and time (*deśa-kāla paricchinna anitya anātma sādhanas* and *sādhyas*). Thus *veda-pūrva* also is useless for self-enquiry. That is why the Vedānta says that the best rituals or *upāsanā* cannot give mokṣa (*na karmaṇā na prajayā na dhanena*). Karma and *upāsanā* are useful only to prepare the mind (gain *vairāgyam*) for the Vedānta. Therefore, we conclude that *Vedānta śabdapramāṇam* is our only saving grace. We covered up to this in the last class.

Continuing with this class

What does *Vedanta śabdapramāṇam* do to us? How does it really help?

I will give you an example that I have given before. My eyes being extrovert, can see all the objects of the world, but cannot see my own face. If I want to see my face, I have to use the mirror. The use of the mirror has turned the extrovert eyes into introvert - i.e., the mirror has given me the ability to see my own eyes (and face). Similarly, although my sense organs and mind are extrovert, I am able to turn towards myself by my intellect assisted by *Vedānta śabdapramāṇam* (*śāstra sahakṛta buddhi*). Without the *śāstras*, the *buddhi* is an inert object (*anātma viṣayaḥ*). The *śāstras*, serving as the mirror assists my *buddhi* turn towards Ātmā. Remember that the mirror is not the replacement for the eyes – without the eyes, the mirror is useless. Mirror enhances the capability of my eyes. Similarly the *śāstra* does not replace my intellect; it assists my intellect to turn inward. Therefore, it is called *Vedānta śāstra darpaṇaḥ*.

If I intelligently use the *śāstric* mirror, I will be able to "see". "Seeing" is understanding my nature. With the intelligent employment of *śāstra pramāṇam,* I discover that I am not the blessed body or mind or intellect, but I am the Consciousness component in the body-mind-intellect complex. That Consciousness component is not a part, product or property of the BMI complex. I assimilate this with the help of *śāstra darpaṇaḥ*.

The key point is that I should know how to intelligently use the *śāstras*. These days, mirrors come in many fancy ornate forms. While admiring the beauty of the frames, we tend to forget the real purpose of the mirror – that is to reflect my face. The very

same mirror can make me an extrovert or introvert. When I am carried away by the frame, the mirror keeps me an extrovert. Only when I am looking at my reflection, I am introvert. I can study Vedānta for years and still successfully miss the central message of *advaitam*. In fact, many scholars have missed it. They have come up with *dvaitam* and *viśiṣṭādvaitam* looking into the same *prasthānatrayam* – Gīta, Upaniṣad and Brahmasūtra.

Today, the Upaniṣads are used for management, health, family harmony etc. – for everything other than *advaitam*. Our tradition is intensely aware of these pitfalls and therefore have devised a key (method) called *mīmāṁsā* to arrive at the central message. *Veda-pūrva* is analyzed using the *pūrva mīmāṁsa*, a key developed by Jaimini *maharṣi*. Since *veda-pūrva* is much bigger than the Vedānta, *pūrva mīmāṁsa* is a voluminous work that is much bigger than that for the Vedānta. The Vedānta has only one topic, Brahman while *veda-pūrva* deals with infinite number of karmas. Vyāsācārya wrote the *Vedānta mīmāṁsā* called the Brahmasūtras. This is the key to open the Vedānta without getting into the pitfalls (like getting carried away by the frame of the mirror – the frame frames you).

The *Vedānta mīmāṁsā* has a methodology which uses six parameters or clues known as *tātparya nirṇaya liṅgāni* to arrive at the central message. [*liṅgāni* = signs or clues, *nirṇaya* = extract; *tātparya* = central message]. Many things such as *sṛṣṭi, pañca kośaas, avasthātrayam* etc. are discussed in the Upaniṣads and the central message (*tat tvam asi* or *ahaṁ brahmāsmi*) must be extracted from all of those. If we extract the wrong message, we will be permanently in triangular format and if we extract the right one, we can land into the binary format smoothly. The six clues are discussed here:

Upakrama upasamhārau – The summary at the beginning and the end of the Upaniṣad give the central message. For example, in the radio or television news, the headlines are given first, then the detailed news and then the summary again of the headlines. You can decide whether or not to listen to the news fully knowing the central content of the news from the headline. A good presentation or an article will also have the summary of the key points in the beginning and the end. Every Upaniṣad has a message summarized in the beginning as well as the end. For example, Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad has the mantra in the beginning (1.1.6):

यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णम्‚अचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम् ।

नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तदव्ययं, यद्भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति धीराः ॥

yattadadreśyamagrāhyamagotramavarṇam, acakṣuḥśrotraṃ tadapāṇipādam |
nityaṃ vibhuṃ sarvagataṃ susūkṣmaṃ tadavyayaṃ, yad bhūtayoniṃ paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ ||

(Brahman is) that which cannot be perceive, which cannot be grasped, which is without a source, without properties, without eyes and ears, without hands and legs, which is timeless, all-pervading, and very subtle, which becomes many, which is imperishable, which is the material cause of all the beings, and which the discriminative ones see everywhere.

It has the mantra towards the end (3.2.9):

स यो ह वै तत्परमं ब्रह्म वेद, ब्रह्मैव भवति नास्याब्रह्मवित्कुले भवति ।
तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं, गुहाग्रन्थिभ्यो विमुक्तोऽमृतो भवति ॥

sa yo ha vai tatparamaṃ brahma veda, brahmaiva bhavati nāsyābrahmavitkule bhavati |
tarati śokaṃ tarati pāpmānaṃ, guhāgranthibhyo vimukto'mṛto bhavati ||

Indeed, he who knows that supreme Brahman, becomes Brahman itself. In his family, there will not be any one ignorant of Brahman. He crosses over sorrow. He crosses over pāpa. Released from the knots of the heart, he becomes immortal.

Both of these describe the central message of *jīvātma-paramātma aikyam*. All the other Upaniṣads have the similar structure conveying the central message.

Abhyāsaḥ - The topic that is repeated often is the central message (*abhyāsaḥ* = *āvṛttiḥ* = repetition). Whenever we want to stress something, we repeat it. We saw in Muṇḍaka and Kaṭhopaniṣad, *ekastathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā* was repeated many times. In Kathopanisad, we saw the examples of oneness in *agni*, *vāyu* and *surya* in mantras 2.2.9, 2.2.10 and 2.2.11 (*agni driṣṭānta ekastathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā, vayu driṣṭānta ekastathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā* and *sūrya driṣṭānta ekastathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā*). The oneness is the central theme.

Apūrvatā – This is a technical clue and an important one. The purpose of the Vedānta is to teach us something that is not available in the other five *pramāṇams* and the *veda-pūrva*. (*Pramāṇāntara avedyam apūrvam*). The teachings in the Upaniṣad cannot be found in the other *pramāṇams*; this alone makes the Vedānta meaningful. The Vedānta is of no use to us if it is teaching the same things that are found in modern science. Why should we learn the Vedānta? Science is a better means for that study. Vedanta should have USP – a Unique Selling Proposal. When

you hire a person, you look for qualities that distinguishes him from the others. The candidate also presents his unique qualifications that are useful to you.

In fact, the very definition of the Vedānta is that it can teach us what cannot be known through other *pramāṇams– pratyakṣenānu vidyāvā yastūpāyona vidyate enam vidanti vedena tasmād vedasya vedata*. The Vedānta can never teach *dvaitam* because it is already available through the other *pramāṇams*. You don't require the Vedānta to tell you that there are 50 students (or whatever number) in this class. You will know by simply opening your eyes. *Advaitam* is not knowable through any other *pramāṇam*. The higher order of reality is not knowable through any other *pramāṇam*. The other *pramāṇams* deal with *vyāvahārika dvaitam* (lower order of reality – *dvaitam*). Only *Pārmārthika advaitam* is *apūrvam* that is not revealed by the other *pramāṇams* (*pramāṇātara avedyam*). Only the Upaniṣads teach this unique topic – therefore, *advaitam* is the central topic of the Upaniṣads.

Phalam - A new knowledge that is revealed must have some utility for me. That is why many do not pursue pure science because only a few enjoy it. Pure science should be followed by technology; only then the scientific discovery becomes useful to human beings. Human beings being utilitarian, will not be interested if the Vedanta tells him that there is something wonderful called Brahman beyond the clouds. The crucial question is what result does the study of the Vedānta give me? If Vedānta teaches *dvaitam*, it will be useless because *veda-pūrva* already deals with it and it gives deficient results. The unique benefit of *advaitam* is taught in the Vedānta.

Arthavādaḥ - Identify what is praised by the Vedānta and what is criticized. What is criticized cannot be the message of Vedanta. What is praised alone will be the message.

If the Vedānta criticizes *dvaitam*, its message can never be *dvaitam*. That is the clue. In all the previous Upaniṣads, we saw that whoever sees duality will go from death to death (*mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyum āpnoti yaiha nāneva paśyati*). Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad strongly condemns one who sees the difference between the deity and devotee (*jīva-Īśvara-bhedam*) as an animal:

अन्यस् असौ अन्योऽहमस्मीति अन्यस् अहम् अस्मि इति न स वेद । न स वेद यथा पशुरेवँ स देवानाम् ।

anyas asau anyō' hamasmīti anyas aham asmi iti na sa vēda | na sa vēda yathā paśurēvaṁ sa dēvānām |

In Kenopaniṣad, *dvaitam* is strongly criticized and *advaitam* is glorified (*nedam yadidam upāsate*). It also says that in *advaitam*, there is security (*abhayam*) and there is insecurity in *dvaitam* (*Adriśye anātmaye anirukte anilayane abhayaṁ pratiṣṭhām vindate*). *Advaitam* is praised and *dvaitam* is criticized. Therefore, *advaitam* is the message. I will give another example. Karma is criticized and jñāna is praised (*karma nindā, jñāna stuti*). Those who are stuck in karma – *laukika* or *vaidika* – are foolish (*mūdhāḥ*). You can use the rituals as the stepping stone, but not as the central message of the Vedānta. The central message of the Upaniṣads: knowledge, knowledge and knowledge.

Upapattiḥ - It is that which is supported by logic. In the name of *śraddhā*, we should never sacrifice our intellect and reasoning power. We should extract the teaching in such a way that it doesn't contradict reasoning. We may not be able to prove the teaching reasoning, but the teaching must not be contradictory to reason. We emphasize *śraddhā,* but we also permit questioning by the student. If a student sees something illogical in the teaching, he is permitted to raise any number of questions.

In Brahmasūtra, one chapter is exclusively devoted for questions. You can ask any type of questions. Brahmasūtra itself raises several questions. The Upaniṣad encourages to learn to ask questions. Convince your intellect with questions based on *tarka śāstra*, *vyākaraṇa śāstra* and the ones based on other systems of philosophy. This chapter is called *avirodha adhyāya*. The first chapter of Brahmasūtra gives the teaching on *advaita* and the second chapter is to logically prove that *advaitam* is not illogical. This is *upapattiḥ*.

In Muṇḍka Upaniṣad, Brahman is taught as *eka sāranitya satyam*. It also says that Brahman is *jagat kāraṇam*. Brahman is *eka sāranitya satyam* because it is *kāraṇam*. To understand this, we take the example of gold and ornaments. Gold is *ekam* (one) and *kāraṇam* (cause) because in and through all the various ornaments, there is only one material, that is gold (*eka svarṇa*).

Gold is the substance behind the ornament behind the ornaments. Ornaments do not have their own substantiality. Therefore, gold alone is *sāram*. When we melt the ornaments, gold still exists and therefore it is *nityam*.

Satyam means that which is independently existent. Gold alone can exist even after melting the ornaments. In the absence of ornaments also, gold can exist, but in the absence of gold, ornaments cannot exist. Using this analogy, I can clearly conclude that Brahman is Existence (*jagat kāranam*). Existence is all pervading, and therefore, it is essence (*sāram*) of everything. Existence is *nityam* and *satyam*. Perfectly logical. Vedānta challenges you to find a loophole in this logic. The challenge is still open.

It is logic compatible. We do not say that it is proved through logic, but we say that it is not against logic. If it is proved through logic, then it becomes *pramāṇāntara vedyam*; *apūrvatā* will not be there. if it is provable through logic, Vedānta is not required. When someone says *dvaitam* is eternal, i.e., a remote place like heaven or Vaikuṇṭha or Kailāsa is eternal, I have to sacrifice my intellect to believe it. Intellectually, I will not be able to accept such a place to be eternal because it contradicts my direct experience that everything in time and space is subject to six modifications (*asti, jāyate, vardhate, vipariṇamate, apakṣīyate, vinaśyate*). Then how can a particular area called Vaikuṇṭha be eternal? To believe Vaikuṇṭha to be eternal, I have to sacrifice reason. The teachers of such philosophy tell you surrender your intellect first (they will take it first). They also describe Bhagavan as a person – say Viṣṇu, the *śanka-cakra-gadā-pāṇi* is eternal. Per the Vedānta, it is also irrational to accept a particular form as eternal. The Vedānta says that we should worship Krishna (or any deity) in form for the purification of the mind (*citta śuddhi*). This objectifiable Krishna is not the truth; we have to understand Krishna as *sat cit ānandam Brahman*.

Devotion and *śraddhā* without sacrificing reasoning is Vedanta. With the help of the six clues, we will be able to extract the essence of the *Vedānta śāstra*. The *Vedānta śāstras* will serve as a mirror and help me gain the wisdom of *jīvātma-paramātma-aikyam*. This wisdom, also called *ekātma jñānam* and *ātma-ekatva-jñānam* will release me from the struggles of triangular format and help me to arrive at the binary format in which alone I am ever secure. When I say that I am secure, I discover that I am ever secure knowing that I am *sthūla sūkṣma kāraṇa śarīrād vyatiriktaḥ avasthātraya sākṣi pañca kośa vilakṣaṇaḥ satcit ānanda swarūpaḥ san yaḥ tiṣṭhati sa ātmā.*

From this we understand that extracting the message is not easy because we have to take various clues and employ them properly. Also, all the Upaniṣads do not have all the six clues in an explicit manner. In certain Upaniṣads all the clues are very clearly visible. The sixth chapter of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad gives all the six clues in an explicit manner. In the other Upaniṣads, some clues are explicit, and some others are not. Brahmasūtra has *spaṣṭa liṅga vākyāni* as well as *aspaṣṭa liṅga vākyāni*. Since it is not easy to extract the knowledge even though we have the key, our tradition urges us to take the help of a qualified *ācārya*. The *ācārya* knows how to extract with the help of the six clues. He will also show the clues as and when he is teaching the Upaniṣad appropriately.

Therefore, the tradition never asks us to go directly to the Upaniṣad *pramāṇam*. It asks us to use the Upaniṣadic *pramāṇam* with the help of a guru. The Vedānta or the guru alone is not the mirror; *guru-śāstra* mixture is. The knowledge is obtained through the consistent and systematic study of the Vedāntic scriptures for a length of time under the guidance of a competent and live *ācārya*.

4. Introduction (cont'd), Śāntipāṭhaḥ , and Mantra 1

In the last two introductory sessions, we saw that the Vedanta serves as a unique *pramāṇam* to discover our real nature. Just as we use a mirror to look at our own face, we use the *Vedānta pramāṇam* to know our real nature. The exact message of the Vedantic teaching can be clearly extracted only with the special key called *uttara mīmāṁsā śāstra*. This key employs six clues in arriving at the central or the main message of Vedanta:

Upakrama upasaṁhāra – summary at the beginning and end
Abhyāsaḥ – repetition
Apūrvatā – uniqueness
Phalam - the result
Arthavādaḥ – glorification and criticism
Upapattiḥ - logic or reasoning.

We use the following verse to remember these clues: *Upakramaupasamhārau abhyāsaupūrvatā phalam arthavādopapattī ca liṅgaṁ tātparya nirṇayet.*

I also said that initially an untrained student will not know how to employ these six clues properly because they are not explicitly available in all the Upaniṣads. Therefore, no student can independently study the Upaniṣad and extract the message. Therefore, the scriptures discourage us from studying the Upaniṣads independently. Study at least a few Upaniṣads under the guidance of an *ācāryā*. One should go through apprenticeship under a guru, just as a doctor works as an intern (house surgeon) under senior doctors [same with a lawyer or a chartered accountant]. After learning a few Upaniṣads properly, i.e., after learning to extract the meaning properly, one can study any number of Upaniṣads thereafter. Thus, the *Vedānta vicāra* is only in the form of *guru-śastra upadeśa*. In our language, self-enquiry can occur only with the consistent and systematic study of the Vedantic scriptures for a length of time, under the guidance of a competent and live *ācārya*.

Continuing with this class

This teaching is also called Vedānta (*Veda + anta*) because it comes at the end of the Vedas. No human being is born with a desire for mokṣa. Initially we are

interested only in dharma, *artha* and *kāma*. Even many who engage in the study of the Vedānta, do it for intellectual stimulation or to pass time. Verse 1.2.7 of Kaṭhopaniṣad says:

श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः, शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यं न विद्युः ।

śravaṇāyāpi bahubhiryo na labhyaḥ, śṛṇvanto' pi bahavo yaṃ na vidyuḥ |

This Ātmā is not available even for listening to many. In spite of listening, many do not understand this (Ātmā).

Therefore the Vedas cannot start with mokṣa; it has to start with *dharmārtha-kāma*. Only those who are tired of pursuing *dharmārtha-kāma* will consider mokṣa. Therefore mokṣa is discussed in the end and not in the beginning of the Vedas.

This teaching is also called *jñāna kāṇḍa* because here this knowledge itself will give the benefit. There is no need for any action after this knowledge because mokṣa is not a *karmaphalam*. Mokṣa is *jñānaphalam*. On the other hand, *veda-pūrva jñānam* alone will not give any benefit; it must be followed by karma. For example, the knowledge of a ritual alone will not give benefit; only the performance of that ritual will.

The third name of the Vedānta is Upaniṣad. The word *upani* means clear self knowledge. *Upa* means the closest entity (*samīpatara varti*). The closest entity to me is the self or Ātmā. *Ni* means *niścaya jñānam* (clear knowledge).

Clear knowledge means two things:

It should be doubt-free (*sarvavidha saṃśaya abhāvaḥ*). Not an iota of doubt should be present. It is *saṃśaya-rahita jñānam*.

It should be free from the habitual identification with the body-mind complex (*deha abhimāna*), which is otherwise called the triangular format. The triangular format is the notion that I am the victimized *jīva*, the world is the victimizer and God is my savior. This mind set is a misconception born of ignorance (*viparīta bhavanā*). As long as this mindset exists even in small traces, and even in the subconscious mind, the self-knowledge will be unclear. Therefore, this triangular format must be replaced by the binary format: I am the Ātma that can never be victimized and the

world is *anātmā*, which can never be the victimizer. Since I cannot be victimized by the world, I do not require an external savior to rescue me. This is called *samyag jñānam* which is the same as *upani*.

The term *ṣad* means destroyer (not of *upani*). It is the destroyer of *samsāra,* which is the notion that I am insecure. Life is *samsāra* when it is **MBBS** - **M**eaningless **B**urdensome **B**oring **S**truggle; it becomes a liability. *Upani* destroys *samsāra* by removing the notion of insecurity. Secondly, it is also the giver of mokṣa. Mokṣa is converting the life from a liability to an asset. Life is a blessing. Life is the rarest opportunity to claim my glory as Brahman. The Upaniṣads convey the same message. Taittīrīya Upaniṣad says:

Aham annam aham annādaḥ aham śloka kṛt – I am the food; I am the food-eater and I am the combiner.

We are going to see beautiful mantras in Kaivalya Upaniṣad:

मय्येव सकलं जातं, मयिसर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
मयि सर्वं लयंयाति, तद ब्रह्माद्वयमस्म्यहम् ॥ १९ ॥

Mayyeva sakalaṁ jātaṁ, mayi sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam |
Mayi sarvaṁ layaṁ yāti, tad brahmādvayamasmyaham || 19 ||

Everything is born in me alone; everything is based on me alone; everything resolves into me alone. I am that non-dual Brahman.

अणोरणीयानहमेव तद्वद्, महानहं विश्वमहं विचित्रम् ।
पुरातनोऽहं पुरुषोऽहमीशः, हिरण्मयोऽहं शिवरूपमस्मि ॥ २० ॥

Aṇoraṇīyānahameva tadvad, mahānahaṁ viśvamahaṁ vicitram |
Purātano'haṁ puruṣo'hamīśaḥ, hiraṇmayo'haṁ śivarūpamasmi || 20 ||

I am subtler than the subtle. Equally, I am big also. I am the manifold universe. I am the ancient one. I am the all-pervasive one. (I am) the ruler. I am the effulgent one. I am the very auspiciousness.

अपाणिपादोऽहमचिन्त्यशक्तिः, पश्याम्यचक्षुः स शृणोम्यकर्णः ।
अहं विजानामि विविक्तरूपः, न चास्ति वेत्ता मम चित्सदाहम् ॥ २१ ॥

Apāṇipādo'hamacintyaśaktiḥ, paśyāmyacakṣuḥ sa śṛṇomyakarṇaḥ |
Ahaṁ vijānāmi vivikatrūpaḥ, na cāsti vettā mama citsadāham || 21 ||

I am without hands and legs; (yet) I am endowed with incomprehensible power. I see without eyes. I hear without ears. Endowed with a distinct nature, I know (everything). But there is no one who is the knower of me. I am ever the pure consciousness.

We do not say that Bhagavan is *aṇoraṇīyān* – we say that I am *aṇoraṇīyān*. What a fantastic teaching! Therefore *ṣad* means remover of *saṁsāra* (*saṁsāram avasādayati*) and giver of mokṣa (*Brahman gamayati*). Therefore, the Vedānta is known as Upaniṣad.

It is said that the four Vedas have a total of 1,180 Upaniṣads, of which many have been lost because of our negligence. We have lost many of them even between Śaṅkarācārya's period and now. We now roughly have about 200, of which 10 are popular because Śaṅkarācārya wrote pioneering commentaries on these. Although all the Upaniṣads are great, these ten are considered the principal Upaniṣads – *daśopaniṣad*, which can be remembered through a śloka:

Īśa kena kaṭha praśna muṇḍa māṇḍukya titriḥ. Aitareyaṁ ca chāndogyam bṛhadāraṇyaka tathā.

In this course, we will study five major Upaniṣads plus Kaivalya Upaniṣad for which Śaṅkarācārya did not write a commentary. Although it is not in the list of the *daśopaniṣad*, we will discover that Kaivalya Upaniṣad is a *mahā* major one. The same message is presented in all the Upaniṣads in different ways.

Kaivalya Upaniṣad is a short Upaniṣad of 25 mantras. It is a discussion (*samvāda*) between Brahmāji, the guru and Āṣvalāyana Maharṣi, the disciple [*Brahmāśvalāyana samvāda*). This Upaniṣad is called Kaivalyam because it reveals Ātmā which is *kevalaḥ*, which in Sanskrit means *advaitam* - non-dual, without a second, or matchless. It is *ekātma vādaḥ* - the *jīvātma* and *Paramātmā* are merged into one – *ekātmā*. We also see *anātmā* as *mithyā*; *anātmā* is just set of names and forms (*nāma-rūpa*) which does not have existence separate from Ātmā. Therefore, we merge *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā* into one and then merge *anātmā* into it also. Thus, at the end of the study, there is only *ekātmā* after all the adjectives to the Ātmā are removed. This state of *kevala Ātmā* is called *kaivalyam*. *Kaivalyam* (oneness) is the abstract noun of *kevalaḥ* (one). Thus, non-duality called *kaivalyam* is mokṣa.

This *kaivalyam* is extended to *abhayam* (fearless), *asaṅgam* (without attachment) etc. The Upaniṣad points out that fear is caused by a second entity other than me. As long as there is a second entity other than me, it can cause fear. How does a second entity cause fear? If it is an object of attachment, the fear comes by the thought of its loss. I am afraid of losing my spouse, parents, wealth, body etc. This fear is due to the thought of sepataion from an object of attachment (*rāga-viṣayaḥ viyogaḥ*) There is also fear of union with something we have aversion for. For example, we are afraid of acquiring diseases like cancer (*dveṣa viṣayaḥ saṁyogaḥ.* In *advaitam*, there is no question of arrival or loss of a second thing because there is nothing other than me. [*Adriśye anāmiye anirukte anilayen, abhayam pratiṣṭāṁ vindate*]. Many Vedāntic ideas can be derived from this one word *kaivalyam*. Since this Upaniṣad talks about *kevala Ātmā* and *kaivalya mokṣa*, it is titled Kaivalya Upaniṣad. Just as the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, Kaivalya Upaniṣad also belongs to the Atharvaṇa Veda. Therefore, it begins with a *śāntipāṭh* corresponding to this Veda.

शान्तिपाठः
Śāntipāṭhaḥ

ॐ भद्रंकर्णेभिः शृणुयामदेवाः | भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः | स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाꣳ सस्तनूभिः | व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः | स्वस्तिन इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः | स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः | स्वस्ति नस्ताक्ष्यों अरिष्टनेमिः | स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु | ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ||

Oṁ bhadraṁ karṇebhiḥ śṛṇuyāma devāḥ / bhadraṁ paśyemākṣabhiryajatrāḥ / sthiraitaṅgaistūṣtuvāgṁ sastanūbhiḥ / vyaśema devahitaṁ yadāyuḥ / svasti na indro vṛddhaśravāḥ / svasti naḥ pūṣā viśvavedāḥ / svasti nastārkṣyo ariṣṭanemiḥ / svasti no bṛhaspatirdadhātu / Oṁ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

देवाः – **dēvāḥ** - Oh gods!; शृणुयाम – **śṛṇuyāma** - May we hear; भद्रम्– **bhadram** - auspicious things; कर्णेभिः– **karṇebhiḥ** - with the ears; यजत्राः – **yajatrāḥ** - Oh gods!; पश्येम – **paśyema** - May we see; भद्रम् – **bhadram** - auspicious things; अक्षिभिः – **akṣibhiḥ** - with the eyes; तुष्टुवांसः – **tuṣtuvāṁsaḥ** - Glorifying (You); तनूभिः – **tanūbhiḥ** - through the Vedas; स्थिरैः अङ्गैः – **sthiraiḥ aṅgaiḥ** - with healthy limbs; व्यशेम – **vyaśema** - may we enjoy: आयुः – **āyuḥ** - our full life; यद्देवहितम् – **yad devahitam** - as allotted by the Lord; इन्द्रः – **Indraḥ** - May Indra; वृद्धश्रवाः – **vṛddhaśrāḥ** - of great fame; दधातु नः स्वस्ति – **dadhātu naḥ svasti** - bless us with auspiciousness; विश्ववेदाः पूषा – **viśvavedāḥ pūṣā** - May the omniscient Sun; नः स्वस्ति – **naḥ svasti** - (bless) us with auspiciousness; ताक्ष्यः – **tārkṣyaḥ** - May Garuda; अरिष्टनेमिः – **ariṣtanemiḥ** - of unobstructed movement; नः स्वस्ति – **naḥ svasti** - (bless) us with

auspiciousness; बृहस्पतिः – **Bṛhaspatiḥ** - May Bṛhaspati (of great intelligence); नः स्वस्ति – **naḥ svasti** - (bless) us with auspiciousness. ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः – **Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ**- Om! Peace! Peace! Peace!

Oh Gods! May we hear auspicious things with our ears. Oh gods! May we see auspicious things with our eyes. Glorifying (You) through the Vedas with healthy limbs, may we enjoy our full life as allotted by the Lord. May Indra, of great fame, bless us with auspiciousness. May Garuda, of unobstructed movement, bless us with auspiciousness. May Bṛhaspati (of great intelligence) bless us with auspiciousness. Om! Peace! Peace! Peace!

Since we have already studied this *śānti pāṭha* in Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, I am not going to give the word by word explanation. I will only give you the gist. Through this prayer, the student is asking for three favors from the Lord.

Fitness of the body mind sense complex (BMS) : Physical fitness is extremely important to be able to sit for an hour in the class without any disturbance (*sthiraiḥ angaiḥ* – they often say *ārogya dṛḍha gātrāhā ityartham*). Our sense organs should also be fit (*indriya śaucatvam*). For example, if we have a hearing problem we may hear the words wrongly – the word "immortal" may be heard as "immoral". The we ask for is mental fitness. Emotional disturbances and mental pre-occupations should not be obstacles to my hearing. Let me not have filtered hearing. If certain sentences are heard and some others missed, I will not have total vision. For example, the criticism of karma is only to highlight its limitation and not to advise giving up rituals completely.

The Vedānta says that rituals are important (*cittasya śuddhaye karma*). We do require physical, verbal and mental *(kāyika, vācika* and *mānasa)* karmas for the purification of the mind (*citta śuddhi*). Many register the limitation of karma, but not its importance.Some others register the importance of rituals, but do not understand their limitation. This is filtered listening. Therefore, we find the Vedāntic students in the two extremes: rejection or stagnation. An ideal student is one who understands both the value and the limitations of karma. Therefore, follow a religious life, but also allocate time for *Vedānta śravaṇam*. Therefore, we pray for emotionally tranquil mind that can absorb both *karma stuti* and *nindā*.

I should also have the intellectual fitness. I should think rationally and be intellectually honest. I should give my long-held prejudices. For example, most of us have this wrong notion that there multiple paths to mokṣa. I have often talked about this and I will repeat it because it is important. There are two types of goals in life:

eka sādhana sādhyam– a goal that can be accomplished by one means
aneka sādhana sādhyam – a goal that can be accomplished by various means

Reaching a place is *aneka sādhana sādhyam* because there may be multiple routes, but to remove the darkness in a room, there is only one method, that is to bring the light. There may be different types of light, candle light, electric light etc; but only light can remove darkness.

Similarly, we must understand that *citta śuddhi* is *aneka sādhana sādhyam*. You can purify the mind by various methods, but mokṣa is an *eka sādhana sādhyam* – only through *jñāna* (*jñānam eva*). Initially, many are disturbed when they hear this because they have been conditioned by various sources with the notion that many paths such as karma, bhakti, jñāna, yoga etc. can all lead to mokṣa. We should drop these misconceptions that karma, bhakti and yoga *mārgas* are only for *citta śuddhi*. Jñāna *mārga* alone lead to mokṣa.

Thus, in summary, we ask the Lord for physical, sensory, emotional and intellectual fitness as the first favor.

Avoidance of premature death – As the second favor, we ask for is avoidance of unnatural and premature death - *vyaśema devahitaṁ yadāyuḥ*. We cannot avoid natural dealth, which is dictated by our *prārabdha*. This prayer is only for the avoidance of unnatural and premature death - *apamṛtyuḥnivṛtti* or *apamṛtyu abhāvaḥ*.

Freedom from obstacles (*pratibandha abhāvaḥ*) - *svasti nastārkṣyo ariṣtanemiḥ svasti no bṛhaspatirdadhātu* - We also ask for freedom from obstacles that come from three sources:

Adhyātmikam– this is the obstacle arising from myself – for example, in the form of health problems

Adhibautikam- Family members or other factors can present obstacles. There was a good student who stopped attending the classes because his wife protested.

Adhidaivikam – This is an act of nature in the form of natural disaster like cyclone, earthquake etc. Since we view nature as *devatās*, it is *adhidaivaikam*.

We chant *Om śāntiḥ* three times to avoid these three obstacles.

Mantra 1

अथाश्वलायनो भगवन्तं परिमेष्ठिनमुपसमेत्योवाच –

अधीहि भगवोब्र ह्मविद्यां वरिष्ठां,
        सदा सद्भिः सेव्यमानां निगूढाम् |
ययाचिरात्सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य,
        परात्परं पुरुषं याति विद्वान् || १ ||

Athāśvanālano bhagavantaṁ parameṣṭhinamupasametyovāca -

Adhīhi bhagavo brahmavidyāṁ variṣṭāṁ,
Sadā sadbhiḥ sevyamānāṁ nigūḍhām |
Yayācirātsarvapāpaṁ vyapohya,
Parātparaṁ puruṣaṁ yāti vidvān || 1 ||

अथ – **atha** - Thereafter, आश्वलायनः – **Āśvalāyanaḥ** - the sage Āśvalāyana उपसमेत्य – **upasametya** - approached भगवन्तं परिमेष्ठिनम् – **bhagavantaṁ parameṣṭhinam** - Lord Brahmā उवाच – **uvāca** - and requested (thus) –भगवः – **bhagavaḥ** - "Oh Lord! अधीहि – **adhīhi** - Teach (me) वरिष्ठाम् – **variṣṭhām** - the noblest निगूढाम् – **nigūḍhām** - and the most secret ब्रह्मविद्याम् – **Brahmavidyām** - knowledge of Brahman सेव्यमानांसदा– **sevyamānaṁsadā** - which is pursued constantly सद्भिः – **sadbhiḥ** - by the noble ones यया – **yayā** - and by which (knowledge) विद्वान् – **vidvān** - the wise man व्यपोह्य – **vyapohya** - destroys सर्वपापम् – **sarvapāpam** - all the evils अचिरात् – **acirāt** - before long याति – **yāti** - and attains पुरुषम् – **puruṣam** - Brahman परंपरात् – **paraṁ parāt** - which is beyond māyā.

Thereafter, the sage Āśvalāyana approached Lord Brahmā and requested (thus) – "Oh Lord! Teach (me) the noblest and the most secret knowledge of Brahman which is pursued constantly by the noble ones and by which

(knowledge) the wise man destroys all the evils before long and attains Brahman which is beyond māyā.

The Upaniṣad introduces Brahmāji as the guru and Āśvalāyana ṛṣi as the śiṣya. *Parameṣṭhi* is another name for Brahmāji or Prajāpati. In certain Upaniṣads, the introduction of the guru and *śiṣya* is in the form of a long story as in Kathopanishad. In the Bhgavad Gīta, the entire first chapter gives the background the story. These stories are meant to indirectly reveal the qualifications of the guru and *śiṣya*. In this Upaniṣad, there is no such story and so, we assume that a qualified student approached a qualified teacher.

The four qualifications of the student are:

Viveka - Discrimination
Vairāgyam - Dispassion
Ṣaṭka sampatti – Discipline
Mumukṣutvam – Desire (for mokṣa)

The teacher must have two qualifications as we saw in Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad:

Śrotriyatvam – knowledge communication skill that gives the teacher the ability to communicate the uncommunicable Brahman. Brahman cannot be communicated for various reasons that we will see later.

Brahmaniṣṭhatvam – This means that the teacher must abide in Brahman as himself. To him, Brahman is no longer an object in the creation. For him, the Vedānta is talking about himself. Is it not arrogance? It must be understood clearly that the guru is not talking about his own glory, but about the student's glory. When the teacher says *tat tvam asi* (you are That), the student convert it to *ahaṁ brahmāsmi* (I am Brahman). Therefore,there is no arrogance involved. It is learning of a fact.

अथ – *atha* - means after acquiring the four-fold qualification (*sādhana catuṣṭaya sampatti prāpti anantaram*). The Upaniṣad does not say how to acquire the four-fold qualification. *Veda-pūrva bhāga* has two *sādhanas* to acquire this – *karma yoga* and *upāsana yoga*. The Bhagavad Gīta is the complete scripture, which gives the essence of both the *veda-pūrva* and Vedānta. One must first study the Bhagavad Gīta and

then the Upaniṣad in that sequence so that the required qualifications are understood properly.

5. Mantras 1 (continued), 2 and 3

अथाश्वलायनो भगवन्तं परिमेष्ठिनमुपसमेत्योवाच –

अधीहि भगवोऽब्र ह्मविद्यां वरिष्ठां,
        सदा सद्भिः सेव्यमानां निगूढाम् |
ययाचिरात्सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य,
        परात्परं पुरुषं याति विद्वान् || १ ||

Athāśvanālano bhagavantaṁ parameṣṭhinamupasametyovāca -

Adhīhi bhagavo brahmavidyāṁ variṣṭāṁ,
Sadā sadbhiḥ sevyamānāṁ nigūḍhām |
Yayācirātsarvapāpaṁ vyapohya,
Parātparaṁ puruṣaṁ yāti vidvān || 1 ||

The Upaniṣad begins with the introduction of the guru and disciple so that the teaching can be presented as a dialogue between them. An indirect message is conveyed through this format: self enquiry should be conducted only with the help of a competent spiritual guide. Also, with this method of presentation, the qualifications of the student and teacher are also indicated.

अथ– *atha* - after acquiring *sādhana catuṣṭaya sampatti* through karma yoga and upāsana yoga. How does one know that he has acquired the qualification? The indication is that the the subject of the Vedānta appeals to that person and he finds it practicable. Even if one is not completely convinced, *śravaṇam* of the teaching prepares his mind. Thus, *śravaṇam* becomes karma yoga for the unprepared mind and jñāna yoga for the prepared.

आश्वलायनः - *āśvalāyanaḥ* - the student is Āśvalāyana, was a great Ṛg Veda *ṛṣi*, who revealed many mantras in Ṛg Veda. He is already a *sādhana catuṣṭaya sampannaḥ*. He has the clear knowledge that mokṣa is the ultimate *puruṣārtha*. He knows of his self-ignorance and therefore, he is seeking *Brahmavidyā* to attain mokṣa. He did not go to any local guru, but went to Brahmāji himself.

भगवन्तं परमेष्ठिनम्–*bhagavantaṁ parameṣṭhinam* – Brahmāji is *bhagavantaṁ parameṣṭhinam* – the lord of creation.

उपसमेत्य– *upasametya* - approached in proper manner. It is very important to approach   a guru in a proper manner. The second line of mantra 1.2.12 Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad says:

तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत्, समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ||
Tadvijñānārthaṁ sa gurumevābhigacchet, samitpāṇiḥ śrotriyaṁ brahmaniṣṭham

Therefore, to attain knowledge, he must necessarily approach, with samit in hand, a teacher who is learned in scriptures and established in Brahman.

Samit pāṇih above means reverential attitude.

Verse 4.34 of the Bhagavad Gītā says:

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया |
tadviddhi praṇipātēna paripraśnēna sēvayā

May you gain that (knowledge) by prostration, by service, and by proper enquiry.

All these are indicated by this one word *upasametya*.

उवाच – *uvāca* - means *paripraśna* – *pari* indicates that reverential attitude. *Upasametya* refers to *praṇipāta* and *seva.*

भगवः – *bhagavaḥ* - The *ṛṣi* addresses his guru as Bhagavan. He views his guru as the Lord Himself [*gurur brahma gurur viṣṇuḥ gurur devo maheśvaraḥ*]. The knowledge contained in the physical body of the guru comes from Bhagavan Himself. The *namaskāra* to the guru is to that *Brahmavidyā* in guru's body. The prostration is to *sākṣāt* Sarasvati Devi.

अधीहि - *adhīhi* – May you loudly recollect what you have learned from your guru. In fact, the very word *adhīhi* does not mean teaching; it means *smaraṇam* (remembering). The student wants the guru to teach him what he learned from his guru and not his personal philosophy.

ब्रह्मविद्यां वरिष्ठाम् – *brahmavidyāṁ variṣṭhām* - *Brahmavidyā* means the knowledge of Brahman and it is described as *variṣṭhām*, which means the greatest and glorious knowledge in the creation. In verse 10.32 of the Bhagavad Gīta, Lord Krishna, when describing his glories, calls it – *adhyātma vidyā vidyānām* – among all types of knowledge, I am *Ātmavidyā* or *Brahmavidyā*. This implies every other knowledge is *aparāvidyā* (material or inferior knowledge). *Brahmavidyā* alone is the liberating *parāvidyā*.

सदासद्भिः सेव्यमानाम् – a knowledge which is pursued consistently and systematically with dedication by the spiritual seekers. *Sadbhiḥ* means those who have the spiritual hunger (*sādhana catuṣṭaya sampanna adhikāribhiḥ* or *tīvra mumukṣubhiḥ*) Dedication is directly proportional to the intensity of hunger. Greater the hunger (*mumukṣā*), the more will be the dedication. *Sevyamānām* means that it is pursued reverentially always (*sadā*) in the form of *śravaṇam, mananam* or *nididhyāsanam.*

निगूढाम् – *nigūḍhām* – (This knowledge) is the greatest secret in the creation. In verse 9.2 or the Gīta, Lord Krishna calls it *rajavidyā rājaguhyam* – the greatest knowledge and the greatest secret. It is a secret because of its hidden wisdom – hidden by our own notions. The availability of this knowledge is not a problem because the gurus are ready to share this knowledge freely with anyone who is interested. As I often say, 33% of the people consider that *aham brahma asmi* is illogical and unacceptable: I may not know what Brahman is but I know that I am not Brahman. Another 33% has concluded that although *Brahmavidyā* may be logical but it doesn't have any practical value because the personal and family problems continue to rise. Declaring *aham brahma asmi* becomes only a lip service. The third group of 33% says that it may be logical and practical, but they are not ready for that. They find it unreachable and therefore, look for other remedies in life.

Therefore, verse 1.2.7 of Kaṭhopaniṣad says:

श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः, शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यं न विद्युः |
आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा, आश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ||
śravaṇāyāpi bahubhiryo na labhyaḥ, śṛṇvanto'pi bahavo yaṁ na vidyuḥ |
āścaryo vaktā kuśalo'sya labdhā, āścaryo jñātā kuśalānuśiṣṭaḥ ||

This Ātmā is not available even for listening to many. In spite of listening, many do not understand this (Ātmā). The one who reveals (the Ātmā) is a wonder. The one who discovers this (Ātmā) is a wonder. Instructed by a (spiritual) master, the one who knows (this Ātmā) is a wonder.

Only a rare set of people claim that the Vedanta is logical, practical and reachable. Therefore this knowledge remains a secret.

यया –*yayā* – with this knowledge. If I gain this knowledge with self-confidence, I can derive benefit from this knowledge. As I have said in the Bhagavad Gītā lectures, Īśvara, guru and *śāstra śraddhā* are only useful if they culminate in *Ātma śraddhā* or self-confidence. When I receive this *Brahmavidyā* with self confidence,

सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य- *sarva pāpam vyapohya* – I will destroy all the *pāpam* indirectly. Knowledge will directly destroy only ignorance . Therefore, the actions caused by ignorance (*ajñāna karma*) are also indirectly destroyed. *Pāpams* are nothing but *ajñānakarmas – sañcita, āgāmi and prārabdha karmas*. Lord Krishna said in verse 4.37 of the Bhagavad Gīta:

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात् कुरुते तथा॥
jñānāgniḥ sarvakarmāṇi bhasmasāt kurutē tathā

The fire of knowledge will destroy all the karmas – both puṇya and pāpa karmas.

Then the question comes – how do you that all the karmas are destroyed? We have learned that only *sañcita* and *āgāmi* are destroyed and that even the *jñānī* experiences *prārabdha karma*. Here *prārabdha* is destroyed means that it is as good as destroyed because the *jñānī* sees it as only *mithyā* – just an event with a name and form (nāma-rūpa). The presence or absence of *prārabdha* is the same for him.

विद्वान् –*vidvān* – the wise person (*aparokṣa jñānī*), who, having destroyed *sañcita* and *āgāmi* and falsified *prārabdha*, claims with self-confidence: I am Brahman,

परात्परंपुरुषंयाति – *parāt param puruṣam yāti* - becomes one with *puruṣaḥ*. The word *puruṣaḥ* means Brahman. It has two derivations:

pūrayati sarvam iti puruṣaḥ - The one who pervades or fills up everything. The all pervading Brahman (*Paramātmā*) is called *puruṣaḥ*.

pure śarīre ṣete iti puruṣaḥ - That Brahman who is the in-dweller of the body – in this context, Brahman is the *jīvātmā* or *sākṣi caitanyam*.

Thus, *puruṣaḥ* is the *jīvātmā* residing in the body as well as the all-pervading *Paramātmā*. *Puruṣaḥ*, the *Paramātmā* is *puruṣaḥ*, the *jīvātmā* – this is a *mahāvākyam*. Dayananda Swamiji nicely says: you repeat the word *puruṣaḥ*, it is *mahāvakyam*. So, after self-knowledge, we use the word *ekātma puruṣam* after removing the adjectives *parama* and *jīva*.

The nature of that *puruṣaḥ* is *parāt param*. The first *parā* in *parāt* refers to *māyā*. The entire empirical universe that exists within time and space is *parā* (*māyā*). And the second *parā* means beyond. Therefore *parāt param* means that which is beyond *māyā* (*māyātītam*).This does not mean that Brahman is located remotely beyond *māyā*. Remembering the fourth capsule of the Vedānta - this means that Brahman is untouched or unaffected by whatever happens in the creation. As verses 5.8 and 5.9 of the Gītā say: *paśyan śṛṇvan spraśan jighran, ahaṁ naiva kiñcit karomi* - seeing, hearing, touching and smelling, I do not do anything at all. Also, in verse 5.15 of the Gītā, it is said:

नादत्तेकस्यचित्पापंनचैवसुकृतंविभुः।
अज्ञानेनावृतंज्ञानंतेनमुह्यन्तिजन्तवः॥ ५.१५ ॥

nādattē kasyacit pāpaṃ na caiva sukṛtaṃ vibhuḥ |
ajñānēnā"vṛtaṃ jñānaṃ tēna muhyanti jantavaḥ || 5.15 ||

The Ātma takes neither the pāpaṁ nor the puṇyaṁ of anyone. Discrimination is veiled by ignorance. Hence the beings are deluded.

I am never touched by all these events. I am the screen and the universe is the movie that plays on the screen.

याति – (The *jñānī*) attains (Brahman). What is the meaning of the word "attains"? You should not take it literally because Brahman is not an object to be attained. Attaining means that he reclaims Brahman as his identity that he had lost because of disowning it due to ignorance.

All these words are of the student, which shows how informed *Āśvalāyana ṛṣi* was.

[*Brahmāji must have been extremely happy. In Chapter 8 of Chāndogya Upaniṣad, Brahmāji taught two disciples – Indra and Virocana. The former successfully absorbed the teachings and the latter failed. Now he has another qualified student to teach*].

Mantra 2

तस्मै स होवाच पितामहश्च श्रद्धाभक्तिध्यानयोगादवेहि || २ ||

Tasmai sa hovāca pitāmahaśca śraddhābhaktidhyānayogādavehi || 2 ||

सः पितामहः च– **saḥ pitāmahaḥ ca** - That Brahmā also ह उवाच तस्मै– **ha uvāca tasmai** - duly replied to him – अवेहि– **avehi** - "May you know (that Brahman) श्रद्धाभक्तिध्यानयोगात् – **śraddhābhaktidhyānayogāt** - by resorting to faith, devotion and meditation."

That Brahmā also duly replied to him – "May you know (that Brahman) by resorting to faith, devotion and meditation.

Generally the guru first tests the student to see if he is qualified. The four qualifications are:

Viveka- Discrimination
Vairāgyam- Dispassion
Ṣadga sampattiḥ - Discipline
Mumukṣutvam – Desire

If you remember, in Kaṭhopaniṣad, Yamadharmarāja tested Naciketas on these. Here, Brahmāji does not, probably because he is somehow convinced that Āśvalāyana *ṛṣi* is a qualified student. Therefore, he directly engages him in jñāna yoga. If the student is not qualified, the teacher will ask him to focus on karma yoga and *upāsanā*. If the student is ready, these preparatory steps are downplayed and the focus is on jñāna. Here the teacher implies that the student is ready for jñāna yoga consisting of *śravaṇam, mananam* and *nididhyāsanam*.

सः पितामहः ह उवाच – *saḥ pitāmahaḥ ha uvāca* – The word *pitāmahaḥ* means the universal father *caturmukha* Brahmā. He is the *śrotriya brahmaniṣṭhā ācārya*.

तस्मै – *tasmai* – he is addressing the *sādhana catuṣṭaya sampannaya* Āśvalāyana *ṛṣi*.

अवेहि – *avehi* - may you know that Brahman by following the three disciplines – *śravaṇam, mananam* and *nididhyāsanam*. The Upaniṣad calls these with different words - *śraddhā, bhakti* and *dhyānam* respectively.

श्रद्धा – *śraddhā* - The word *śraddhā* means *śravaṇa yoga*. It is called *śraddhā* because we should approach the Vedas as the primary *pramāṇam* without demanding proof with scientific experiment or mystic experience. These are the two big blocks – one set of people demand scientific proof because of lack of *śraddhā* and another group meditate to experience *advaitam* in *samādhi*. The latter do not want to accept the understanding of the Vedānta as the liberating knowledge, dismissing it as only intellectual while trying to confirm it through mystic experience. This is also due to lack of *śraddhā* because they do not have the trust in *veda vākyām*. When the Vedas, as the primary *pramāṇam*, clearly reveal *ahaṁ brahma asmi,* why should I go in for further validation? Furthermore, there is no method to validate this knowledge because all the other methods deal only with *anātmā*.

भक्ति – *bhakti* - Bhakti here refers to *mananam*. In bhakti, one constantly dwells upon the object of devotion. Krishna defines bhakti in verse 10.9 of the Bhagavad Gīta:

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणाः बोधयन्तः परस्परम्।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च॥
maccittā madgataprāṇāḥ bōdhayantaḥ parasparam|
kathayantaśca māṁ nityaṁ tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca ||

Fixing the mind and senses on Me, mutually sharing the knowledge (about Me) and speaking of Me, they are always contended and delighted.

In *mananam* also, one dwells upon Ātmā, the object of devotion and the meaning of *jivātma-paamātma-aikyam* until his doubts are completely cleared. The doubts, whether the Vedānta is logical or practical, should completely disappear.

ध्यानम् – *dhyānam* – This means *nididhyāsanam*, the process by which I transform from the triangular format to the binary format. The triangular format is the notion: I am victimized *jīva*, the world is the victimizer through the *prārabdh*a whip and *Īśvara* is my only savior. The binary format is the understanding that I am that Brahman who cannot be victimized by the world because I am the creator and sustainer of everything in this creation - *mayi eva sakalaṁ jātaṁ mayi sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam*. I am *satyam* and the entire creation including *prārabdha* is *mithyā*. [*Brahman satyam, jagan mithyā; ahaṁ satyaṁ jagan mithyā; Ātmā satyaḥ anātmā mithyā*].

Anātmā includes possessions, profession, family, body and mind. Although it is very difficult to swallow, these five *anātmās* (*pañca anātmā*) are just dancing names and forms (*nāma-rūpa*). Therefore, the world cannot be the victimizer. *Mithyā* cannot victimize *satyam*. Śaṅkarācārya casually says this in his Brahmasūtra introduction, *Adhyāsa bhāṣyam*: How can mirage water wet the sand in summer? He also says in Viveka Cūḍāmaṇi that the whole creation is *maru marīcikā kalpam*:

माया मायाकार्यं सर्वं महदादिदेहपर्यन्तम् |
असदिदमनात्मतत्त्वं विद्धि त्वं मरुमरीचिकाकल्पम् || १२३ ||
māyā māyākāryam sarvam mahatātitēhaparyantam |
asatitamanātmatattvam vitti tvam marumarīcikākalpam || 123 ||

Therefore, since the world is not a victimizer and I am not the victimized, I don't require an external savior. I am Brahman and the world is *mithyā*. I should initially practice this mindset sitting in meditation and then make this available when my *prārabdha* brings situations in life. This is *nididhyāsanam*.

योगात् – *yogāt* – the word yoga must be added to every word – *śraddhā* yoga, bhakti yoga and *dhyāna* yoga.

Naturally, our question will be how long it will take for us to reach the goal? I left out a word in the first mantra – *acirāt*. The means before long. No specific prediction can be made because the time it takes will depend upon one's spiritual level.

Mantra 3

न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन, त्यागेनैक अमृतत्वमानशुः |
परेण नाकं निहितं गुहायां, विभ्राजते यद्यतयो विशन्ति || ३ ||

Na karmaṇā na prajayā dhanena tyāgenaika amṛtatvamānaśuḥ |
Parēṇa nākaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ vibhrājate yadyatayo viśanti || 3 ||

त्यागेन– **tyāgena** - It is through renunciation एके – **eke** - that a few seekers आनुशः – **ānuśaḥ** - have attained अमृतत्वम् – **amṛtatvam** - immortality – न कर्मणा – **na karmaṇā** - not through ritual, न प्रजया – **na prajayā** - not through progeny, धनेन – **dhanena** - (not) through wealth. यतयः विशन्ति – **yatayaḥ viśanti** - Sannyāsīs attain (the immortal Self) यद्विभ्राजते – **yadvibhrājate** - which shines परेण नाकम् – **pareṇa nākam** - beyond the heaven निहितं गुहायाम् – **nihitaṁ guhāyām** - (and) which resides in the heart.

It is through renunciation that a few seekers have attained immortality – not through ritual, not through progeny, (not) through wealth. Sannyāsīs attain (the immortal Self) which shines beyond the heaven (and) which resides in the heart.

This is a famous mantra that is generally chanted when a *sannyāsī* is formally welcomed with *pūrṇa kumba*. This mantra is also in Mahanārāyaṇa Upaniṣad. Here, Brahmāji, the *ācārya* emphasizes the role of *sannyāsa* as a supporting *sādhana* to the primary *sādhanas* - *śravaṇam*, *mananam* and *nididhyāsanam*.

When I say *sannyāsa*, the students are disturbed whether it is mandatory. We should take the spirit of the word *sannyāsa* and not in its literal sense. *Sannyāsa* indicates a mind free of pre-occupation with **PORT** (**P**ossessions, **O**bligatory duties, **R**elationships and **T**ransactions) so that it is available for the study of the Vedānta. These pre-occupations create noise in mind and obstruct *śravaṇam*.

We may not be able to eliminate PORT entirely, but can try to reduce them. In our tradition, *sannyāsa āśrama* is a specially designed infrastructure where PORT is minimized. The elimination of PORT is not strictly attempted by the modern day *sannyāsis*. They live in modern housing as opposed to the Vedic tradition of living under a tree near a temple as described by Bhajagovindam (*Suramandiratalu mūla nivāsaḥ, śayyā bhūtana akhilam vāsaḥ, sarva parigraha bhoga tyāgaḥ*). Modern

sannyāsa is only a modified version of *gṛhasthāśrama*. Therefore, it is more important to the understand and observe the spirit of *sannyāsa* than to bother about external things. Even if you are a *gṛhastha*, try to reduce PORT whenever the opportunity arises. After you have fulfilled your responsibilities, do not unnecessarily take new ones. Hand them over to the next generation.

न कर्मणा अमृतत्वं आनशुः- *na karmaṇā amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ* - Karma or rituals cannot give jñāna or mokṣa. You may perform rituals for sometime to get *citta śuddhi*. At some point in life, you should gradually reduce the rituals and increase *śravaṇam, mananam* and *nididhyāsanam*. A *gṛhastha* cannot totally renounce the rituals because he has to teach the next generation. One may perform daily prayers and skeletal rituals so that more time can be spent on acquiring jñāna. In summary, reduce transactions. Karma refers to the **T** of PORT.

न प्रजया- *na prajayā* – It should be made clear that the children do not really belong to you. Actually, nothing belongs to you because Bhagavan is the only owner of everything. Bhagavan has given the children as a temporary opportunity for *citta śuddhi*. Raising children will inevitably give *vairagyam!* Do your best to raise them well and hand them over to Bhagavan. He will take care of them better if we do not interfere. They must learn their own lessons in life and grow and be independent. We cannot permanently support them financially and emotionally. Children cannot give liberation even by performing *śrāddham* and *tarpaṇam* after you are gone. Only knowledge can give liberation.

6. Mantras 3 (continued), 4 and 5

न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन, त्यागेनैक अमृतत्वमानशुः |
परेण नाकं निहितं गुहायां, विभ्राजते यद्यतयो विशन्ति || ३ ||

Na karmaṇā na prajayā dhanena tyāgenaika amṛtatvamānaśuḥ |
Parēṇa nākaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ vibhrājate yadyatayo viśanti || 3 ||

Summary of the last class

Parameṣṭhi Brahma begins his teaching to his student Āśvalāyana *ṛṣi* in Mantra 2 per the latter's humble request. He discusses two *sādhanas* for *Brahmavidyā* – the direct (*sākṣāt*) *sādhana* and the supporting (*sahakāri*) *sādhana*. To raise a plant, planting the seed is the *sākṣāt sādhana* and the supporting activities are preparing the ground, and watering the plant etc. Similarly, to cure a disease, medicine (*auṣadham*)is the *sākṣāt sādhana* and the prescribed disciplines *(patyam)* for the medicine to be effective are *sahakāri sādhanas.* For the *Brahmavidyā* plant to grow, the *sākṣāt sādhana* consisting of *śraddhā*, *bhakti* and *dhyāna yogas* are prescribed in Mantra 2, which are nothing but the Vedātna *śravaṇam*, *mananam* and *nididhyāsanam* respectively

Sannyāsa or *tyāga* is prescribed as the *sahakāri sādhana* in Mantra 3, which we are discussing now. As I said, *sannyāsa* need not be physical renunciation with *kāṣāya vastram* (ochre robe). In this context, the word *sannyāsa* indicates an infrastructure that is conducive to practice *śravaṇam*, *mananam* and *nididhyāsanam*.

It is worth mentioning here that the nature of the infrastructure for karma (*pravṛtti mārga*) is diagonally opposite to that of jñāna (*nivṛtti mārga*). To succeed in karma, whether *laukika* or *vaidika*, resources such as people, relationships and money are required. The success is directly proportional to the resources you have. In the last class I condensed this into PORT (**P**ossessions, **O**bligatory duties, **R**elationships and **T**ransactions).

PORT is the infrastructure for the success of karma, but it is also an obstacle for jñāna. Taking the *pravṛtti mārga* implies increase in PORT, but *nivṛtti mārga* requires decrease in PORT. *Veda-pūrva* (*karma kāṇḍa*) requires increase in PORT, while the

Vedānta (*jñāna kāṇḍa*) requires you to decrease PORT. In summary, reduction in PORT is more important than formally taking up *sannyāsa*.

The summary of what was discussed in the last class on this mantra:

न कर्मणा अमृतत्वं आनशुः– *na karmaṇā amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ* – Karma should be performed until *citta śuddhi* is achieved. The indicator for this is that Vedānta appears meaningful and practical. Once you reach this stage, reduce karma, whether *laukika* or *vaidika* and increase the time spent on Vedānta *śravaṇa-manana-nididhyāsanam*. Even in *sannyāsa*, there are two stages:

Vivdha sannyāsa - during *śravaṇam* and *mananam*, the *sannyāsa āśrama karmas* must be followed. This status is indicated by the *daṇḍa* that the *sannyāsī* carries.

Vidvat sannyāsa – the *sannyāsī* focuses on *nididhyāsanam*. In this stage, he even renounces the *daṇḍa* and the associated rituals.

न प्रजया– *na prajayā* - *prajā* represents the infrastructure for karma. Literally *prajā* means children and children represent all the other people who assist in getting things done.

Continuing with this class

(न) धनेन –The infrastructure includes money, which is required to do anything. We have to add the word "na" (in parantheses) to make it meaningful. This means money will not give mokṣa

त्यागेन एके अमृतत्वम् आनशुः – *tyāgena eke amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ* - *Tyāga* means reduction of PORT. We insist on this for two reasons:

PORT consumes our time. The building and maintenance of infrastructure is called yoga and *kṣema* respectively. An object that we acquire may require another object to maintain (like a car) and that may require another object and so on. Every relationship requires time to acquire and maintain. All these require tremendous time which leaves no time for self-enquiry.

PORT also leads to mental pre-occupation.

Therefore, *sannyāsa* is required to get time and to avoid mental pre-occupation. With the available time, we can study deeper subjects like *tvaṁ pada*, *tat pada* and *asi pada*. Therefore, *sannyāsa* along with *śravaṇam, mananam* and *nididhyāsanam* mentioned in Mantra 2, one can attain mokṣa (*amṛtatvam*)

यतयः विशन्ति –*yatayḥ viśanti* – *yatayaḥ*, the *sannyāsīs*, who have reduced PORT, whether they are in *gṛhasthāśrama* or *sannyāsāśrama*, merge into, they enter into or they attain

यत् –*yat* - means that *brahmātma-tattvam* or *ekātma- tattvam*,

नाकं परेण –*nākaṁ pareṇa* - which is superior to even *svarga* and *Brahma lokas*. *Kam* means pleasure and *akam* means pain. *Nākam = na + akam*= no pain, which means pure pleasure that represents *svarga loka*. If *svarga* is pure pleasure, why is *brahmātmā* superior? *Svarga* is bound by time – when the *puṇyas* are exhausted, the individual returns to the earth again into the karma cycle. *Brahmātmā* is superior because it is infinite (*nitya sukham*) – there is no more cycle of birth and death. *Brahmātmā* is *nitya ānanda svrūpam.*

If *Brahmātmā* is superior even to *svarga loka*, one may naturally ask the question: how much farther is it? (We may think *Vaikuṇṭha* is even farther away). The Upaniṣad says that *Brahmātmā* is not far away. it is close by. How close is it?

गुहायां निहितम् – *guhayāṁ nihitam* - It is present within our own heart. According to the Vedānta, *Vaikuṇṭham* is our *hṛdayam* (heart) and Bhagavan Viṣṇu is none other than our own Ātmā (*guhuāyām hṛdayasthāne nihitam*). That *Brahmātmā* is available in the form of the observer Consciousness principle (*sākṣi caitanya rūpeṇa*).

विभ्राजते – *vibhrājate* – Brahmātmā is self-effulgent and shines always (*svayaṁ prakāśa caitanya rūpeṇa vibhrājate*).

Thus, *Brahmātmā* which is superior to heaven, abides in the *hṛdayam* shining as our own Ātmā. We saw in Kaṭhopanishad when we learned the *pañca kośa viveka* in

Mantras 1.3.10 and 1.3.11, and then again in 2.3.7 and 2.3.8. we come to Ātmā after travelling inwards beyond the *pañca kośas*.

Kaṭhopsaniṣad also calls Ātmā as *tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam*. Therefore, Ātmā is the *svarūpam* (nature) of Viṣṇu . Do not think that Viṣṇu is a person sitting in some place. Until we understand the Ātmā, it must be given a temporary form of Viṣṇu . In Algebra, to solve a problem, we start with x. This does not mean that x is the final answer; it is the provisional value assigned so that we can find the final value. Similarly Viṣṇu with a particular form given by the *śāstra* as the provisional value (x) until we discover Ātmā, our final answer. We should not mistakenly take the provisional answer as the final one.

Mantra 4

वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चतार्थाः संयासयोगाद्यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः |
तेब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले, परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे || ४ ||

Vedāntavijñānasuniścitārthāḥ sannyāsayogādyatayaḥ śuddhasattvāḥ |
Te brahmalokeṣu parāntakāle, parāmṛtāḥ parimucyati sarve || 4 ||

संन्यासयोगात् – **sannyāsayogāt** - Through renunciation, शुद्धसत्त्वाः यतयः – **śuddhasattvāḥ yatayaḥ** - the pure-minded sannyāsīs वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः – **vedāntavijñānasunścitārthāḥ** - have ascertained Brahman which is beyond the object of vedantic knowledge. परामृताः– **parāmṛtāḥ** - Having become one with the infinite Brahman (while living), ते सर्वे – **te sarve** - they all परिमुच्यन्ति – **parimucyanti** - resolve completely ब्रह्मलोकेषु – **brahmalokeṣu** - into Brahman परान्तकाले – **parāntakāle** - at the time of death.

Through renunciation, the pure-minded sannyāsīs have ascertained Brahman which is beyond the object of vedantic knowledge. Having become one with the infinite Brahman (while living), they all resolve completely into Brahman at the time of death.

This mantra is the consolidation of the second and third mantras. The entire range of *sādhanas* is beautifully presented in this important and very often quoted mantra. This mantra is also chanted when a sanyasi is welcomed. This mantra is in Muṇḍaka

Upaniṣad also and we have already studied it. To brush up our memory, I will give you the meaning of this mantra.

In the previous mantra, the Upaniṣad said that karma cannot give mokṣa. So, there is a tendency in the Vedāntic circles to criticize the rituals as totally useless. The Upaniṣad only says that karma cannot give mokṣa; it does not say that karma is useless. If I say that by regularly eating food you will not pass the examination, you should not stop eating. Eating should be supplemented by proper study also. Just as eating is required, but not sufficient to pass the examination, karma is required for *citta śuddhi*, but not sufficient to get you mokṣa by itself; jñāna is required. On the other hand, without *citta śuddhi*, the Vēdāntic study will just be an academic exercise – true jñāna will not be acquired.

शुद्धसत्त्वाः – *śuddhasattvāḥ - Sattvam* means mind. The first stage in spirituality is not *Vedānta vicāra*; it is the purification of the mind through karma yoga lifestyle. The Upaniṣad does not explain karma yoga here because it assumes that we have already studied Bhagavad Gītā in which Lord Krishna elaborately discussed karma yoga. We will get karma yoga discussion in two chapters of the next Upaniṣad – Taittarīya.

The purification of the mind involves the neutralization of *rāga-dveṣas* (attachments and aversions). There are three steps to handle this:

- Refinement of *rāga-dveṣas* by keeping it in alignment with dharma. Develop attachment (*rāga*) towards dharma and aversion (*dveṣa*) towards adharma – this is refinement of *rāga-dveṣa*. With refinement, I develop natural liking to do whatever the *śastras* encourage (and dislike to what the *śastras* discourage). For example, *satyaṁ vada* – I speak the truth because I want and not because the *śāstras* dictate. I get up early in the morning, not because the *śāstras* ask me to, but because I love to do so. Similarly, I do not like alcohol or meat, which is in alignment with the *śāstras*.

- Disempowerment of *rāga-dveṣa*– This implies that I take control of them through my freewill. Initially, I do things with my freewill controlling the likes and dislikes, but as the habit forms, the *rāga-dveṣas* begin to control my freewill. For example, initially, I choose to take coffee in morning using my freewill. After some time, it becomes an addiction and my habit of drinking

coffee is no longer controlled by my freewill; the attachment (*rāga*) to coffee takes me hostage and controls my freewill. Now I must disempower the my *rāga* for coffee. My body and mind should the command of my freewill i.e., drink coffee only when the freewill commands it to drink.

- Disarmament of *rāga-dveṣa* - Disempowerment is retaining my freewill with regard to my actions as a *kartā*. Disarmament of *rāga-dveṣa* is to deal with various situations as a *bhoktā*. Generally, we react to situations in life according to *rāga-dveṣa*. When a situation is in agreement with my *rāga-dveṣa*, I like it as favorable and accept it. When the situation is not in alignment with my *rāga-dveṣa*, I resent it. Instead of me controlling my reactions towards situations in life, my *rāga-dveṣas* control them. Therefore, I must disarm the *rāga-dveṣa* of its ability to emotionally upset me when situations arise. For this, I should learn to accept that I do not have control over the occurrence of situations, but I can control my emotional reaction to them.

As a *kartā*, I disempower the *rāga-dveṣas* by doing all actions with *Īśvara-arpana-bhāvanā* whether it is pleasant or unpleasant as long as it is *dhārmic*. I disarm the *rāga-dveṣas* of their ability to emotionally upset me by accepting all situations with *Īśvara-prāsada-bhāvanā*. The final result is: as a *kartā* I keep my freewill and as a *bhoktā* I keep my equanimity.

I have a coined a word REDD for the steps to handle *rāga-dveṣa*:

REfinement
Disempowerment
Disarmament.

यतयः– *yatayaḥ* – This means commitment to graduate from the *karma yoga pradhāna* life to jñāna yoga. Literally, it means becoming a *sannyāsī*. Becoming a *sannyāsī* means showing commitment to jñāna yoga. Even *karma-pradhāna pārāyaṇams* like *sahasranāma, rudra kāṇḍa* etc. is now replaced by Bhagavad Gīta, Upaniṣads etc. Kaivalya Upaniṣad is wonderful for *pārāyaṇam*. At the end of this Upaniṣad, it is said that regular reading of Kaivalya Upaniṣad will give *cītta śuddhi* also. *Yatayaḥ* therefore represents change in direction.

संन्यासयोगात् – *sannyāsa yogāt* - The increase of jñāna yoga means decrease of karma yoga because we cannot find time for both. That is why we should switch over. It is not a *pāpam*. Bhagavan will congratulate you because He wants you to grow from the triangular format to the binary format. How many days are you going to squeak like a rat? When are you going to roar like a lion? Therefore, *aham Brahma asmi* is not a *pāpam*. Krishna says in verse 7.17, that among the four types of *bhaktas*, *advaita jñānī* is the greatest one. Krishna embraces the *jñāna kāṇḍi*; therefore, you should not feel uncomfortable about it.

वेदान्त विज्ञान सुनिश्चितार्थाः – *vedānta vijñāna suniścitārthāh* – they practice *śravaṇam* and *mananam* of the Vedānta. *Vedānta-vijñāna* means *Vedānta śāstra*. *Arthaḥ* means the central message of the Vedanta. The central message of the Vedānta is that Brahman alone is *satyam* and *anātmā* is *mithyā* (*brahma satyam jagan mithyā jīvo Brahmaiva na paraḥ*). What is Ātmā? I am Ātmā (*ahameva ātmā*). We say that it is the central message because this should be clearly understood to implement. It requires a tremendous courage to say this and practice. There are other supportive messages such as *annamaya kośa* etc., but these are only to assist us in understanding the central message; they are not the primary message. These *sannyāsis* have understood this with certainty.

The Vedānta doesn't ask us to hurry up. It asks us to take our own time, but in the end, everyone will have to achieve the binary format. This alone leads to mokṣa. It may take one or ten or ten million *janmas*.

परामृताः (भवन्ति) – *parāmṛtāh bhavanti* - They all become one with Brahman, which is *param*, the absolute reality. They become immortal (*amṛtam*). This means they attain *jīvanmukti* – liberation while still living. Immortality is not attained by travel to some *loka* posthumously. Their body will continue until the *prārbdha* is exhausted by the body. We do not say that *prārabdha* is exhausted by the jñānī because he does not identify with the body; *prārbdha* belongs to the body.

परान्तकाले – *parāntakāle* – the time of the death of the jñānī's body is called *parāntakāla*, which means final death. Naturally, the question arises: why is it the final death? Death it itself is final, isn't it? The *śāstras* say that the death of an *ajñānī* is not the final death because he will be born again (*punarapi jananam punarapi*

maraṇam). On the other hand, the *jñānī* does not have *punarjanma* (rebirth) and therefore, his death is final.

ते सर्वे परिमुच्यन्ति – *te sarve parimucyanti* - (At final death), those *jīvanmuktas* become *videha muktas*, merging into

ब्रह्मलोकेषु – *paraṁ brahma*. Here, the word *Brahma loka* does not refer to one of the 14 *lokas*. Śaṅkarācārya specifically indicates in his commentary that *Brahma loka* means *brahma caitanyam*. They merge into *brahma caitanyam* which is otherwise called *videha mukti*.

So with this the entire range of *sādhanas* have been discussed:

Karma yoga + upāsana yoga + jñāna yoga →mokṣa.

What is bhakti? In Chapter 12 of the Bhagavad Gītā, we have discussed that bhakti is the name of the group of these three *sādhanas*. There is no bhakti separate from karma yoga. There is no bhakti separate from *upāsana yoga*, and there is no *bhakti* separate from jñāna yoga.

The teaching of the Upaniṣad starts from Mantra 5.

Mantra 5

विविक्तदेशे च सुखासनस्थः, शुचिः समग्रीव शिरःशरीरः |
अत्याश्रमस्थः सकलेन्द्रियाणि, निरुध्य भक्त्या स्वगुरुं प्रणम्य || ५ ||

Viviktadeśe ca sukhāsanasthaḥ, śuciḥ samagrīva śiraḥśarīraḥ |
Atyāśramasthaḥ sakalendriyāṇi, nirudhya bhaktyā svaguruṁ praṇamya || 5 ||

अथ्याश्रमस्थः – **athyāśramasthaḥ** - Remaining in the highest order (of sannyāsa) सुखासनस्थः - **sukhāsanasthaḥ** - (one should be) seated in a comfortable posture शुचिः– **śuciḥ** - with purity विविक्तदेशे – **viviktadeśe** - in a secluded place. समग्रीवशिरःशरीरः - **samagrīvaśiraḥśarīraḥ** - Keeping the body, neck and head erect, निरुध्य– **nirudhya** - one should restrain सकलेन्द्रियाणि– **sakalendriyāṇi** - all the sense organs प्रणम्य– **praṇamya** - (and mentally) salute स्वगुरुम्– **svagurum** - one's own guru भक्त्या– **bhaktyā** - with devotion.

Remaining in the highest order (of sannyāsa, one should be) seated in a comfortable posture with purity in a secluded place. Keeping the body, neck and head erect, one should restrain all the sense organs (and mentally) salute one's own guru with devotion.

Peculiarly, in this Upaniṣad, the teaching begins with the topic of meditation (*dhyānam*). Generally, *dhyānam* is discussed later in the teaching. In the Bhagavad Gīta, *dhyānam* is discussed only in the 6th chapter – only after discussing karma and jñāna yogas elaborately in chapters 2, 3 and 4.

Even in the *aṣṭāṅga yoga*, *dhyānam* is not the first step; it is the seventh step in the sequence: *yama, niyama, āsanā, prāṇāyāma, prathyāhāra, dhāraṇa, dhyānam and samādhi*. *Dhyānam* is discussed in mantras 5,6 and 7.

Dhyānam is of two types:

Upāsana dhyānam – meditation before Vedānta.
Nididhyāsana dhyānam – meditation after *śravaṇam* and *mananam*.

Both types of *dhyānam* are discussed here. In both the types of meditation, the object of meditation is only Brahman or *Īśvara*, but our concept of *Īśvara* gets gradually refined.

We have already seen this in the Bhagavad Gīta that the understanding of *Īśvara* gets refined in three stages:

Eka-rūpa Īśvara – Initially, God is presented as a person because the intellect can only grasp this initially. When children ask where God is, we always a give a name and form such as Śiva, Viṣṇu etc. We also give his location somewhere beyond the clouds (safely so that no one will look for Him!). Gods also come alive in various stories in the *purāṇas*.

We are also taught to relate to the Lord through bhakti expressed in different ways (*nava vidhi bhakti*) – such as father, mother, child etc. Name, form and relationship are initially required for several reasons. Physically, it is useful for *pūja*. Psychologically, we all want some solid relationship, especially to tell our problems.

The others in relationship do not have time for our problems. The idol in the puja room will never walk away! Thus, *eka-rūpa-dhyānam* makes the Lord more and more real for me because I give him life through *āvāhanam* (invocation) – *āvāhitobhāvā sthāpito bhava*. Thus, even though it is a form and an idol, I give it life and talk to it and benefit from it. In our religion, Bhagavan has thousands of forms. You can choose any *iṣṭa devatā*. The other religions have to manage with one. We are also inventing new ones – such as a *Pillaiyār* (Lord Ganesha) with a computer mouse instead of shrew (his *vāhanā*). Kaivalya Upaniṣad talks about upāsanā with Lord Śiva and Parvathi – *Umāsahāyam Parameśvaram*. That is why Lord Śiva is called *Somaḥ* (*saḥ* + *Umā*).

We must gradually change. Bhagavan is not a person situated in a particular place. The entire universe is the manifestation of that Lord (Chapters 10 and 11 of the Gītā). This is very important because only then *rāga-dveṣa* will be reduced. If I am attached to this creation, I do not want to leave; I do not want to die. Another group of people, do not want to be born again – this means *dveṣa.* Neither should I be afraid of leaving the world, nor should I be afraid of coming again. There should be no attachment or aversion towards birth or death. I should have only reverential appreciation of everything.

This is possible only when I see the universe and everything in it – mosquitoes and cockroaches – as *Īśvara svarūpam*. In *eka-rūpa Īśvara bhakti*, we get attached to the *iṣṭa devatā* and other *devatās* become *aniṣṭam*. The staunch vaishnavites or saivites dislike deities other than their *iṣṭa-devatās* (Tamil: அவனை அல்லால் யாரையும் தொழேல்) and so, will not worship them; they will not even visit those temples. So, to transcend *rāga-dveṣa*, *eka-rūpa Īśvara dhyānam* should evolve into *viśvarūpa Īśvara dhyānam*. This is also said Kaivalya Upaniṣad.

Ananta rūpam – *Umāsahāyam* means *eka-rūpa*. *Ananta rūpam* means *aneka-rūpa*. Therefore, I do not dislike anything, including *punarjanma*. Once we understand the Vedanta, where is the question of birth or death? I am the *adiṣṭhānam* (substratum) in which everything is born and gone. This is *aneka-rūpa Īśvara dhyānam*, the details of which we will see in the next class.

7. Mantras 5 (continued) and 6

विविक्तदेशे च सुखासनस्थः, शुचिः समग्रीव शिरःशरीरः |
अत्याश्रमस्थः सकलेन्द्रियाणि, निरुध्य भक्त्या स्वगुरुं प्रणम्य || ५ ||

Viviktadeśe ca sukhāsanasthaḥ, śuciḥ samagrīva śiraḥśarīraḥ |
Atyāśramasthaḥ sakalendriyāṇi, nirudhya bhaktyā svaguruṁ praṇamya || 5 ||

In verses 5, 6 and 7, the teacher discusses three types of meditation.

As I said in the last class, the first type of meditation *eka-rūpa Īśvara dhyānam*, otherwise known as *iṣṭa-devatā dhyānam*, which is meditating upon the chosen form of the Lord. This meditation is meant for *citta śuddhi* as well as *citta ekāgrata* - purity of mind and its focusing capacity.

Thereafter, one should gradually understand God or *Īśvara* as the entire universe because He is the cause (*kāraṇam*) and the world is the product (*kāryam*). We know that *kāraṇam* alone expresses in the form of *kāryam*. Therefore, the entire universe is the manifestation of my *iṣṭa devatā*. If I am a *Śiva bhakta*, I see the entire universe as Śiva (*sarvam śivamayam jagat*). If I am a Viṣṇu or Devi bhakta, I see the universe as *sarvam viṣṇumayam jagat* or *sarvam devimayam jagat*. Practicing this *viśvarūpa dhyānam* will help in the expansion of the mind (*citta viśālata*). With this expansion, I see everything as *Īśvara* and so, I no longer claim anything uniquely as my own; I lose the sense of possessiveness. Thus, my attachment to people and objects reduce and the *ahaṅkāra* and *mamakāra* get diluted. Thus, it helps in the reduction of *rāga* and *dveṣa*. As I practice *viśvarūpa dhyānam*, I have the attitude that I do not belong to anyone, no one belongs to me, and all of us belong to one *Viśvarūpa Īśvara*.

In this unique mantra, all three *dhyānams* are mentioned. Normally in the scriptures, each of these is treated separately. *Eka-rūpa* and *viśvarūpa dhyānams*, together known as *upāsanā*, will help in preparing the mind (*sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti*) for jñāna yoga, but not directly give liberation. After practicing these meditations, one has to necessarily go through *Vedānta vicāra* (*śravaṇam* and *mananam*). After *Vedānta vicāra*, one should practice the third type of meditation called *arūpa*

dhyānam, also known as *advaita dhyānam* and *nididhyāsanam*. In summary, the sequence of *sādhanas* is

Eka-rūpa dhyānam→Aneka-rūpa dhyānam→ Vedānta vicāra→Arūpa dhyānam.

The preparatory steps for all the three types of meditation are the same. These steps are elaborately discussed in Chapter 6 of the Bhagavad Gītā. In this Upaniṣad, these are briefly mentioned. The following steps were mentioned in Chapter 6 of the Gītā:

Deśa – a proper place – we should choose a secluded, quiet and spiritually inspiring place for meditation. A dining hall will only inspire food *dhyānam* and not *Īśvara dhyānam*.

Kāla - a proper time – It is when the mind is least or not pre-occupied with worldly thoughts. There is no strict rule for the time – it can be morning or evening. We are given the freedom choose the time that suits us. Generally, early morning after restful sleep is suitable because the mind is least likely to be pre-occupied.

Āsanā – a proper seat – It is not advisable to sit on the ground and meditate. We should use a comfortable seat that is neither too soft nor too hard.

Annamaya kośa posture – An ideal posture is one in which the meditator is comfortable. If a person cannot sit on the ground (because of knee-replacement surgery), he can sit comfortably on a chair. When seated, the body, neck and head should be perpendicular and in line, with the face looking straight.

Prāṇamaya kośa preparation – This consists of slow, smooth and regular inhalation and exhalation of breath. Lord Krishna describes thin verse 5.27 of the Gītā:

स्पर्शान्कृत्वाबहिर्बाह्यान्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरेभ्रुवोः।
प्राणापानौसमौकृत्वानासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ॥
sparśān kṛtvā bahirbāhyāṃścakṣuścaivāntarē bhruvōḥ
prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā nāsābhyantaracāriṇau

Having kept outside the external sense-objects and (having fixed) the sight between the eye brows one should regulate the inhalation and exhalation moving inside the nostrils.

Manomaya kośa preparation - Kaivalya Upaniṣad uses a beautiful expression: May you become a temporary *sannyāsī* freeing your mind of PORT. The mind is ever pre-occupied by one relationship, possession, duty or the other. Become a temporary *sannyāsī* declaring that I am not a father, mother, husband or wife. The sense organs are also withdrawn from the external world so that the mind is not disturbed by the latter.

Vijñānamaya kośa preparation - Temporarily forget all the material knowledge (*aparā vidyā*) you have and bring the scriptural teaching at the time of meditation. No other thought must be there except the scriptural teachings. If it is *eka-rūpa Īśvara dhyānam*, remember the glory of *iṣṭa devatā* in the *purāṇas* (for example, Krishna in *Bhāgavata purāṇam, Śiva in Tiruvilayādal purāṇam* and Devi in *Devi bhāgavatam).* All these *purāṇas* give teachings in *iṣṭa devatā* as *eka-rūpa* as well as *viśvarūpa* and so they are suitable for both *eka-rūpa* and *viśvarūpa dhyānam*.

For the advanced students who have studied *mahāvākyam* for a length of time, the meditation is: *brahma satyam jagan mithyā ahaṁ brahmaiva na paraḥ*. We move from the triangular format to the binary format meditation. This is *nididhyāsanam*. All these are discussed in these three verses (5,6 and 7).

In verse 5, the preparatory steps are given.

विविक्त देशे – *vivikta deśe* – Choose a secluded place where there the distractions are minimum or none. It is difficult to find it in a city, especially in clustered flats (apartments) where the conversations, TV noise from the neighbors are constantly distracting. Try to find a place reasonably quiet.

The time of meditation (*kāla*) is not mentioned in this verse, but we can supply from the Gītā.

सुखासनस्थः– *sukhāsanasthaḥ* - One should be seated in a comfortable posture; this takes some practice also. Generally the sitting posture is considered to be ideal. If one cannot sit because physical problems, a reclining posture or lying down is also acceptable as long as one does not get too comfortable and go to sleep. The main idea is that a comfortable posture is important for meditation.

शुचिः– *śuciḥ* - You should be clean at all levels. The place of meditation should be clean; the surroundings should be clean free of insects, flies and mosquitoes etc. Your body and clothing should be clean. Your mind also should be free of the impurities such as *rāga*, *dveṣa*, *kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada* and *mātsarya*. That is why the Upaniṣad asks you to become a *sannyāsī*, because most of the disturbances are caused by human relationships. Human relationship is very sensitive and subtle and therefore, difficult to handle. We are ever worried about the well-being of the people we are attached to and therefore, our mind is disturbed. We also have bitterness, hatred and anger towards people we have aversion to. Therefore, at the time of meditation, cut off all the relationships.

A *brahmacāri* shaves his head and keeps a tuft, symbolically removing all relationships except three (minimum hair represents these three relationships): guru*, śāstra* and *Īśvara*.

In *sannyāsa āśrama* also, a person renounces all relationships and possessions (*na karmaṇā na prajayā na dhanena*) and retains only three relationships: guru, *śāstra* and *Īśvara*. Even a *gṛhastha* must temporarily become a *sannyāsī* dropping all these relationships and handing them over to *viśvarūpa Īśvara* (Hindi: *Tan man dhan sab kuch hai tera* – must come from our heart, at least for 20 minutes during the meditation). You can pick up your own worries after meditation. Attachment or association with the external world (*saṅga*) is the worst form of impurity that one should give up. Therefore, *śuciḥ* means *sarva saṅga parityāgaḥ*.

समग्रीवशिरःशरीरः– *samagrivaśiraḥśarīraḥ* - let the neck (*grīva*), head (*śiraḥ*)and the torso (*śarīram*) be in a straight line perpendicular to the ground (*samam*).

सकल इन्द्रियाणि निरुध्य – *sakala indriyāṇi nirudhya* - Withdraw all the sense organs from the external world. Lord Krishna uses the expression *nāsikāgram* which means to look at the tip of the nose to indicate that the eyes should be partially or gently closed.

अत्याश्रमस्थः – *athyāśramasthaḥ* - This means *sannyāsa āśramasthaḥ* - be a *sannyāsī* – at least mentally renounce all the relationships and possessions.

स्वगुरुं प्रणम्य– *svagurum praṇamya* – The Upaniṣad is careful to point out that the relationship with the guru should not be renounced. Therefore, it asks you to mentally offer *namaskāra* to the guru, and by extension to the *śāstra* and *Īśvara*. In the *Bhagavad Gītā dhyāna śloka*, the first sloka is offering *namaskāra* to *Gīta śāstra*: *Amba tvāmanu sandadhāmi bhagavadgīte bhavadveṣiṇīm*. We offer *namaskāra* to the *śāstra* so that *śāstric* words come to us during meditation and not the others (such as the ones the husband or the wife or the mother-in-law used in 1977). Only the words of the guru that I heard during *śravaṇam* should come. *Svagurum* means one's own guru, which clearly indicates that one should have a guru.

The two ideas – becoming a mental *sannyasī* and guru *namskāra* – are unique to Kaivalya Upaniṣad; these are not in the Bhagavad Gītā which only lists the other three preparatory steps namely, *vivikta deśa*, *sarvendriyāṇi nirudhya* and *sukhāsanasthaḥ*.

Grammatically, this mantra is incomplete and therefore, we have to supply- with all these preparations, practice meditation (*dhyānam kuryāt*).

Mantra 6

हृत्पुण्डरीकं विरजं विशुद्धं, विचिन्त्य मध्ये विशदं विशोकम् |
अचिन्तमव्यक्तमनन्तरूपं, शिवं प्रशातममृतं ब्रह्मयोनिम् |
तथादिमध्यान्तविहीनमेकं, विभुं चिदानन्दमरूपमद्भुतम् || ६ ||

Hṛtpuṇḍarīkaṁ virajaṁ viśuddhaṁ, vicintya madhye viśadaṁ viśokam |
Acintyamavyaktamanantarūpaṁ, śivaṁ praśāntamamṛtaṁ brahmayonim |
Tathādimadhyāntavihīnamekaṁ, vibhuṁ cidānandamarūpamadbhutam || 6 ||

विचिन्त्य – **vicintya** - Having turned one's attention विरजं विशुद्धम्– **virajaṁ viśuddham** - to the steady, pure, विशदम् – **viśadam** - clear, विशोकम् – **viśokam** - (and) pleasant हृत्पुण्डरीकम्– **hṛtyapuṇḍarīkam** - lotus (-like) heart, मध्ये – **madhye** - (one should meditate) there ब्रह्मयोनिम् – **brahmayonim** - on Brahman which is the source of all, अचिन्त्यम् – **acintyam** - incomprehensible, अव्यक्तम् – **avyaktam** - unmanifest, अनन्तरूपम् – **anantarūpam** - many-formed, शिवम् – **śivam** - auspicious, प्रशान्तम्– **praśāntam** - tranquil, अमृतम् – **amṛtam** - immortal, आदिमध्यान्तविहीनम् – **ādimadhyāntavihīnam** - beginningless, middleless, endless, एकम् – **ekam** - nondual,

विभुम् – **vibhum** - all-pervasive, चिदानन्दम् – **cidānandam** - consciousness, ānanda, अरूपम् – **arūpam** - formless, तथा अद्भुतम् – **tathā adbhutam** - and wonderful.

Having turned one's attention to the steady, pure, clear, (and) pleasant lotus (-like) heart, (one should meditate) there on Brahman which is the source of all, incomprehensible, unmanifest, many-formed, auspicious, tranquil, immortal, beginningless, middleless, endless, nondual, all-pervasive, consciousness, ānanda, formless, and wonderful.

One more stage of preparation is discussed in the first line – that is, visualizing our own heart. During the waking state, the mind pervades all over the body because it is interacting with the external world. The *śāstras* say that the mind resolves into the heart when not functioning, such as in deep sleep state. Heart is the location of the mind. Even though Bhagavan is all pervading, at the time of meditation, heart is the location of *Īśvara*. Thus, the Lord is invoked only in the mind because Bhagavan is in the mind as the *sākṣi caitanyam* witnessing the presence and absence of thoughts (*yoveda nihitaṁ guhāyām*). Therefore the Lord is the *sākṣi*, which is in the mind; the mind is in the heart and therefore, the heart is the sanctum sanctorum where we have to invoke the Lord. *Deho devālaya proktaḥ* – the whole body is a temple, the *kośas* are like the various *prākārams* and the heart is the sanctum sanctorum where the lord is the *sākṣi caitanyam*, the witness consciousness.

Therefore, at the start of the meditation, we should invoke our heart which is the *garbha gṛham*.

मध्ये – *madhye* - in the center of the body,

विचिन्त्य – *vicintya* - invoke or turn your attention towards

हृत्पुण्डरीकम् – the heart which is shaped like a lotus bud that is hanging upside down. In this context, the heart should be understood as the mind because the latter is resident in the former. One should also ensure that the mind is in *sāttvik* condition. The *rajoguṇa* predominant mind is highly active, restless and wandering. At the time of meditation, all unwanted thoughts will arrive. This mind will not be able to meditate on what need to be meditated on. The *tamoguṇa* mind inactive and so, the meditator with this mind may go to sleep. Only the mind that enjoys the

sāttvik condition is bright and awake and is available for any of the three types of meditation.

विरजम् – *virajam* – Keep *rajoguṇa* under control (*rajoguṇa rahitam*). This means bringing the wandering mind back to your own heart. One should avoid meditating after heated exchange with someone because the mind will be agitated and overactive.

विशुद्धम् – *viśuddham* – This means that the mind should not be overpowered by *tamoguṇa* (*tamoguṇa rahitam*). That is why we should choose an appropriate time when we are alert.

विशदम् – *viśadam* – This means *sattva guṇa pradhānam*. All these are adjectives to *pundarīkam*, the lotus heart, which represents the mind. The mind should be *sāttvik* in nature. Infact, the general rule is that only a karma yogi will find meditation possible because the mind can become equanimous only through karma yoga. As Krishna says in verse 2.38 of the Gītā – *sukhaduḥkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābhau jayājayau; tatō yuddhāya yujyasva* - regarding happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat alike, prepare for war.

As a *kartā* and *bhoktā*, I am calm because of *Īśvara arpaṇa buddhi* and *Īśvara prasāda buddhi* respectively. With *Īśvara arpaṇa buddhi*, I do all the required actions cheerfully without complaining. Then, as a *bhoktā*, I receive all the results of my actions as well as any favorable and unfavorable situations thrown at me by the world, I accept with *Īśvara prasāda buddhi* without complaining. Thus, I am calm all the time. When I sit in meditation, the calmness persists and meditation becomes effortless. Krishna declares in Chapter 6 of the Gītā that Karma Yoga is compulsory for meditation.

Lord Krishna defines this (in *śāstric* language) verse 2.45 of the Gītā as *nityasattvasthaḥ niryogakṣema ātmavān* – "be ever established in sattva guṇa, be free from the concerns of acquisition and preservation and be mindful".

विशोकम् – *viśokam* – This means a cheerful mind which will be evident from the face. A contorted face represents a disturbed mind and a pleasant face implies a cheerful

one. Try to look cheerful and keep a smiling face during meditation –with the outward smile, hopefully the mind also calms down.

The above describe the preparatory steps for meditation. From now on, we get the description of Lord Śiva. The discussion is on *Śivadhyānam* – meditation on Śiva in three forms.

In Śrī Rudram, we get all three descriptions of Śiva – *eka-rūpa, aneka-rūpa* and *arūpa Īśvara*. In Kaivalya Upaniṣad also, Śiva is described in the three forms – *eka, aneka* and *arūpa*. They are not organized or categorized and therefore, we will categorize them appropriately.

अचिन्त्यम्– *acintyam* – Lord Śiva is not an object of recognition by the sense organs and the mind. Meditate upon the unobjectifiable and incomprehensible Śiva (*aprameya śivaḥ*). Meditate on Lord Śiva as the very Ātmā which is the observer discussed in Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad (*śāntam śivam advaitam, chaturtham manyante sa ātmā*). *Acintyam* is *arūpa Īśvara* and therefore, the meditation is *nididhyāsanam*.

Even though one verse talks about all these three meditations, the meditator should focus on only one in a session. We cannot practice all three simultaneously.

अव्यक्तम् – *avyaktam* – This means that Lord Śiva is not available to the sense organs (*indriya agocaram*) – *aśabdam, asparśam, arūpam, arasam* and *agandham*. This represents *ananta rūpam*, which means Śiva with infinite number of forms. So, this word represents *viśvarūpa Īśvara*. This is how a person should visit different temples – if my *iṣṭa devatā* is Śiva, when I go to a Rama or Devi temple, I see Śiva in the form of Rama or Devi (*veṣam*). If this is not understood properly, we will end up as fanatic devotees like certain *śaivas* and *vaiṣṇavas*. This is the type of narrow-mindedness we should avoid; our objective is to expand the mind (*viśālata*). We should remember that Rama and Krishna are also Śiva. Thus, this description is *ananta-rūpa śivaḥ*.

शिवम् – *śivam* – By the mention of this word, we know that it is *śiva-dhyānam*. Per the Sanskrit grammar, *śiva* means *sarva duḥkha nāśakaḥ* - the destroyer of all sorrows – derived from the root *śau.* [In Sanskrit *śau - śyati* – fourth conjugation, *parasmai pada – śyati sarva duḥkhamsarva amangalam nāśayati – mangala svaraūpi*]. Śiva is one who is the most auspicious Lord. Even though he resides in the cremation ground, he is *sarva mangala svarūpaḥ.*

8. Mantras 6 and 7

हृत्पुण्डरीकं विरजं विशुद्धं, विचिन्त्य मध्ये विशदं विशोकम् |
अचिन्तमव्यक्तमनन्तरूपं, शिवं प्रशातममृतं ब्रह्मयोनिम् |
तथादिमध्यान्तविहीनमेकं, विभुं चिदानन्दमरूपमद्भुतम् || ६ ||

Hṛtpuṇḍarīkaṁ virajaṁ viśuddhaṁ, vicintya madhye viśadaṁ viśokam |
Acintyamavyaktamanantarūpaṁ, śivaṁ praśāntamamṛtaṁ brahmayonim |
Tathādimadhyāntavihīnamekaṁ, vibhuṁ cidānandamarūpamadbhutam || 6 ||

Summary of the last class

Brahmaji is describing *dhyānam* as an important *sādhana*, specifically, *śivadhyānam*, which is meditation upon Lord Śiva. The three stages of meditation are: on *eka-rūpa Śivaḥ*, *viśvarūpa Śivaḥ* and *Ātma-rūpa Śivaḥ*. One cannot simultaneously follow all of them; one should go gradually from one stage to the next: *eka-rūpa→ viśvarūpa→ Ātmarūpa*. Also, one cannot directly meditate on *Ātmarūpa*. Between *viśvarūpa* and *Ātmarūpa dhyānam*, there is a very important intermediary *sādhana*:*Vedānta śravaṇa-mananam*. Without knowing the definition and nature of Ātmā through *śravaṇam* and *mananam*, it is impossible to meditate on Ātmā. All three meditations are combined in one verse and we will identify each description of Lord Śiva with the type of meditation.

Continuing with this class

अनन्तरूपम् – *anantarūpam* – This describes Lord Śiva as *viśvarūpa Īśvara*. The word *śiva* means the auspicious one and therefore, this description is applicable to all the three forms.

शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥ ७॥
śāntaṁ śivamadvaitaṁ caturthaṁ manyantē sa ātmā sa vijñēyaḥ || 7||

Ātmarūpa Śiva is brilliantly dealt with in the 7th mantra of Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad – a very important mantra. In fact, it is the central mantra of Mandukya Upaniṣad. Thus *śivam* means all the three forms of Śiva- The auspicious one.

प्रशान्तम् – *praśāntam* – this means totally tranquil, which is also applicable to all the three forms.

अमृतम् – *amṛtam* – this means the immortal one. This description is also applicable to all three, but primarily to the *Ātmarūpa Śivah*.

ब्रह्मयोनिम् – *brahmayonim* – the word *Brahma* means *Hiraṇyagarbha* and *yoni* means the cause (*kāraṇam*). *Brahmayoni* is the creator of even *Hiraṇyagarbha* . Thus, Brahmaji, the teacher indirectly says that he, the creator, is also born out of that Brahman – this implies Brahman is his father (*Hiraṇyagarbha kāraṇam*). The word *yoni* is generally used to mean material cause. Brahman is both intelligent and material cause – *nimitta-upādāna-kāraṇam* of *Hiraṇyagarbha*. When I say that Brahman is *kāraṇam*, you have to assume that it means *māya sahitaṁ Brahman* (Brahman accompanied by *Māyā*) because Brahman alone (*kevalam* Brahman) is neither the cause (*kāraṇam*) or effect (*kāryam*). Pure Brahman is *kārya-kāraṇa vilakṣaṇam*. *Hiraṇyagarbha* is the first child of Brahman. (Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad – *brahma devānām prathamaḥ sambhabhūva*).

तथा आदि मध्य अन्त विहीनम् – *tathā ādi Madhya anta vihīnam* – Moreover, Lord Śiva is free from the beginning, middle and the end. This is applicable to both *viśvarūpa* and *Ātmarūpa Īśvara*. In Chapter 11 of the Gītā, Arjuna uses this expression: *ādi madhyāntarahitam* to describe *viśvarūpa Īśvara* (Krishna). However, it is not applicable for *eka-rūpa Śiva*, because in this form, Śiva is finite or limited . We should read this twice to imply that He is free both spatially and timewise - *deśa pariccheda rahitam* (spatial) and *kālataḥaparicchinnam* (time). This, in summary means all-pervading and eternal (*nityaḥ sarvagataḥ ca*). This idea is conveyed in the *purāṇic* stories also. There is a story that is given as the basis for *Śivarātri* celebrations where Brahma and Viṣṇu seek to find the beginning and the end of Śiva – Brahma flew up to find the head and Viṣṇu took the form of the boar and went down into the earth to find the feet. Neither of them succeeded. This illustrates the *viśvarūpa Śiva – sarvaṁ Śivayam jagat*.

If everything is Śiva, there cannot be a second lord (He is *ekam*). Therefore, *viśvarūpa* Śiva and *viśvarūpa* Viṣṇu will have to be one and the same. If this is understood the *śaivas* and *vaiṣṇavas* (for that matter any religion) will never quarrel.

विभुम् – vibhum – This means the one who manifests as everything - *vividham bhāti iti vibhuḥ* (*bhāti* means appears and *vi* means in manifold forms - *ākāśa rūpeṇa Śivah eva bhāti; Vāyu rūpeṇa Śivah eva bhāti; vividha rūpeṇa ekaḥ Śivaḥ eva bhāti*). Just as gold alone appears as manifold ornaments and wood alone appears as manifold furniture, Śiva alone is in the form of the five elements (*pañca bhūtas*). That is why we have *pañca bhūta liṅga kṣetrams*:

Ākāśa liṅga in Chidambaram

Vāyu liṅga in Kalahasthi

Agni liṅga in Thiruvannamalai

Jala liṅga in Thiruvanaikoil (*Jambukeśvara kśetram*)

Pṛthivī liṅga in Kanchipuram

If Bhagavan is in the form of the *pañca bhūtas*, he is everywhere. Instead of expanding our perception of the Lord, we manage to shrink him and place Him in a small *garba gṛha*. Ultimately we should learn to see - *sarvam Śivamayam jagat*. Thus, the term *vibhum* decribes Śiva as *viśvarūpa Īśvara*.

चिदानन्दम् – *cidānandam* – He who is in the form of pure consciousness and pure happiness. When I say pure happiness, remember the five features of Consciousness and apply to happiness also:

- Pure happiness is not a part, product or property of the mind
- Pure happiness is an independent principle which pervades the mind and makes it happy now and then
- Pure happiness is not limited by the boundaries of the mind
- Pure happiness continues to exist even after the disintegration of the mind and thoughts.
- The surviving pure happiness is not accessible, not because it is absent, but because there is no mental medium for its manifestation.

This pure happiness is absolutely identical to the pure Consciousness and therefore, it is called *cidānandam*. When you chant *cidānanda rūpam śivoham śivoham* (Nirvāṇṣaṭakam), you should remember where Śaṅkarācārya has borrowed it from. Upaniṣads are the ATM's – all concepts are borrowed from them.

अरूपम् – *arūpam* - *Arūpam* means free from form. This description is applicable only to *Ātmarūpa Śiva* – which is *nirguṇa Ātmā* only.

When we say free from *rūpam*, we should include the other four also - *aśabdam*, *asparśam*, *arūpam*, *arasam* and *agandham* as said in Kaṭhopaniṣad 1.3.15.

अद्भुतम् – *adbhutam* – Brahman is the wonder of all wonders because it creates a world without actually creating just as we create a dream world merely with thoughts, without actually creating it. Dream is only a mental projection and therefore, non-existent, but it appears solidly real when we are dreaming. Thus this world appears to be solidly real, even after 25 years of Vedāntic study. It is difficult to accept the world as *mithyā*, even though it is only *nāma-rūpa* without substance. That Brahman could create such a universe itself is the greatest *adbhutam*.

Why did Brahman create this universe? So that Brahman can come down – we are going to see that in Kaivalya Upaniṣad – to the transactional (*vyāvahāric*) world and claim its own glory. Brahman can never claim glory at *pāramārthika* level, because no such transaction is possible at this level. Brahman cannot say: I am *cidānanda rūpaḥ* or *jagat adhiṣṭhānam* or *mayi eva sakalam jātam* etc . The poor Brahman cannot claim pure Brahman. He created this wonderful world and entered it seemingly as *jīva*. I am that *jīva* who is none other Brahman who has come to claim my glory and enjoy life. This whole *tamāṣā* (game) becomes a serious issue. By forgetting my real nature, I convert life into a burden, but by remembering my real nature, I can convert life into a blessing. It is called *adbhutam* (having fun) because I can claim that I am Brahman only with my body. In this mantra, there is no verb to complete it and therefore, we have to supply: *sādhakaḥ dhyāyet* – a spiritual seeker should meditate on such a Śiva.

Which Śiva I choose depends upon where I stand. In Chapter 11 of the Gītā, Arjuna wanted *viśvarūpa darśanam*. Lord Krishna took special pains to give *divya cakṣuḥ* - the ability to see *viśvarūpa*. At the end of the chapter, Arjuna admits that he is not mature enough to appreciate *viśvarūpa Īśvara* because *viśvarūpa bhakti* requires the acceptance of old age, disease and death reverentially because they are also included in *viśvarūpa*. One cannot go to *nirguṇa* Brahman by accepting youth and enjoyment and rejecting old age and suffering. Either reject youth and old age or accept both to be able to seek *nirguṇa* Brahman. If you choose *gṛhasthāśrama*, the *śāstras* say that you can enjoy the familial pleasures, but also be ready to face old

age and adversities without complaining. *Viśvarūpa bhakti* is the reverential appreciation of birth and death, youth and old age, generation and degeneration, *saṁyoga* and *viyoga* etc. Rejection of these opposites is *nirguṇa Īśvara bhakti*. If you partially accept these, *saṁsāra* is assured.

Mantra 7.

उमासहायं परमेश्वरंप्रभुं, त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम् |
ध्यात्वा मुनिर्गच्छति भूतयोनिं, समस्तसाक्षिं तमसः परस्तात् || ७ ||

Umāsahāyam parameśvaraṁ prabhuṁ, trilocanam nīlakaṇṭhaṁ praśāntam |
Dhyātvā munirgacchati bhūtayoniṁ, samastasākṣiṁ tamasaḥ parastāt || 7 ||

ध्यात्वा –**dhyātvā** - Having meditated on प्रशान्तम्– **praśāntam** - the tranquil, परमेश्वरम्– **parameśvaram** -supreme Lord उमासहायम्– **umāsahāyam** - who is the consort of Umā प्रभुम् – **prabhum** - (and) who is the Lord त्रिलोचनम्– **trilocanam** – with three eyes नीलकण्ठम् – **nīlakaṇṭham** -and blue neck, मुनिः गच्छति – **muniḥ gacchati** - the meditator attains (oneness with) भूतयोनिम्– **bhūtayonim** -)Brahman) which is the source of all beings, समस्तसाक्षिम् – **samastasākṣim** - witness of all, परस्तात्तमसः– **parastāt tamasaḥ** - and beyond māyā.

Having meditated on the tranquil, supreme Lord who is the consort of Umā (and) who is the Lord with three eyes and blue neck, the meditator attains (oneness with Brahman) which is the source of all beings, witness of all, and beyond māyā.

In the last verse, I said, either we should have *viśvarūpa bhakti* in which we accept the opposites or *nirguṇa bhakti* in which we reject the opposites. Saṁsāra is alleviated by *viśvarūpa bhakti*; it gets highly diluted. Consequently, ego becomes very thin with *viśvarūpa bhakti*. The thinner the ego, the more the reverential acceptance of events of the creation as *viśvarūpa Īśvara*. In *nirguṇa bhakti, saṁsāra* will be wiped out and the ego will be totally dismissed. Therefore we all should try to graduate to *viśvarūpa* and then to *nirguṇabhakti*. This is the goal of every spiritual seeker. Until then, peace will elude the mind because stress will persist. **FEDERAL** problems will attack:

FE- fear
DE – depression

RE – regret

L – loneliness

These four problems will haunt us until we come to *viśvarūpa* or *nirguṇabhakti*. However, many are not ready for either because maturity is required for both. Many have difficulty accepting cockroaches and mosquitoes as Bhagavan. Whether killing the pests is right or wrong is a different discussion, but the point is it requires tremendous maturity to accept them also as *viśvarūpa*.

In Chapter 11 of the Gītā, even Arjuna could not withstand *viśvarūpa* because of the representation of His terrible mouth as the time principle, that continuously swallowed living beings, who were streaming into the mouth through the stages old age, disease and death. Some were bitten by the Lord. What does that mean? It means they are in intensive care unit (ICU), one step away from death (swallowing by Bhagavan). Bhagavan swallows some directly and the others, he masticates. Arjuna could not bear that sight because he lacked the maturity to accept everything in the creation as *viśvarūpa Īśvara*. He then begged Lord Krishna to return to his pleasant human form. Thus, *eka-rūpa Īśvara dhyānam* is prescribed until we are ready to graduate to *viśvarūpa*. This mantra describes the *iṣṭa devata eka-rūpa Śiva*.

उमासहायम् – *Umāsahāyam* – Umā's consort – it is the description of Lord Śiva, who is worshipped daily as Śāmba Parameśwara, which means the Lord with Amba (*sa +amba = sāmba*). Umā means Pārvati and *sahāya* means husband or consort. It also represents Ardhanārīśvarīśvara (the Lord who is half woman - Umā).

There is a beautiful prayer called *Śivaśaṅkara aṣṭakam*, which I have quoted before:

अतिभीषण कटुभाषण यमकिङ्कर पटली
कृतताडन परिपीडन मरणागम समये ।
उमयासह ममचेतसि यमशासन निवसन्
हर शङ्कर शिव शङ्कर हर मे हर दुरितम् ॥

Atibhīṣaṇa kaṭubhāṣaṇa yamakiṅkara paṭalī

Kṛtatāḍana paripīḍana maraṇāgama samaye

Umayāsaha mamacetasi yamaśāsana nivasan

Hara śaṅkara śivaśaṅkara hara me hara duritam

Oh Lord Śiva, the conqueror of even Yama (Tamil: யமனுக்கு யமன்), when I am in my death bed, suffering from diseases and *Yama kiṅkaras* are using rude words, and beating me, please come with Umā and dance in my mind.

There are eight *ślokas* like this. If you cannot visualize *viśvarūpa* or *arūpa*, you may imagine, Lord Śiva dancing. If this is also difficult, try to worship an *iṣṭa devatā* another way. If that is also difficult, better luck in the next birth!

In the Vedāntic language, Umā means *brahmavidyā* and *umāsahāya* means *brahma vidyā ācāryaḥ*, Dakṣiṇāmūrti.

परमेश्वरम्–*parameśvaram* - The greatest Lord of the universe.

प्रभुम् –*prabhum* - the controller of the universe, which is *sṛṣṭi*, *sthiti* and *laya śaktiḥ*. Prabhu means with *māyāśakti*, because of which Lord Śiva is powerful (the husband has no power without the wife!). That is why *Saundarya Lahiri* begins with: *Śivaḥśaktyā yuktaḥ yadi bhavati śaktaḥ prabhavitum. Nacet devaṁ devo nakalu kuśalaspanditum api* – Śiva cannot even move without the help of Śakti.

त्रिलोचनम् – *trilocanam* – one who has three eyes. This can be taken as description for *viśvarūpa Īśvara*, with *Sūrya*, *Candra* and *Agni* as the three eyes – *Sūrya* illumines during day time, *Candra* illumines on *pourṇami* night and *Agni* on *amāvāsya pourṇami*.   If you cannot visualize that *Īśvara* in this manner, imagine Lord Śiva with a third vertical eye. And meditate. All these are symbols.

नीलकण्ठम् – *nīlakaṇṭham* - The one who is blue-necked – from the *purāṇic* story of lord Śiva swallowing the *halāhala* poison (*halāhalsya viṣam*) to save the world. Here *Nīlakaṇṭha* can be considered as *viśvarūpa* with the blue sky as the neck of lord Śiva and His feet as *bhūloka* and other lower lokas. If blue sky is the neck, Lord Śiva's head is even beyond that.

Dhyānam of Sri Rudra Praśnam
आपाताळ-नभः स्थलान्त-भुवन-ब्रह्माण्ड-माविस्फुरत्-
ज्योतिः स्फाटिक-लिङ्ग-मौलि-विलसत्-पूर्णेन्दु-वान्तामृतैः ।
अस्तोकाप्लुत-मेक-मीश-मनिशं रुद्रानुवाकाञ्जपन्
ध्याये-दीप्सित-सिद्धये ध्रुवपदं विप्रोऽभिषिञ्चे-च्छिवम् ॥

āpātāḷa-nabhaḥ sthalānta-bhuvana-brahmāṇḍa-māvisphurat-

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jyōtiḥ sphāṭika-liṅga-mauḷi-vilasat-pūrṇēndu-vāntāmṛtaiḥ |
astōkāpluta-mēka-mīśa-maniśaṁ rudrānuvākāñjapan
dhyāyē-dīpsita-siddhayē dhruvapadaṁ viprō:'bhiṣiñjē-cchivam ||

पीठं यस्य धरित्रि जलधर कलशं लिङ्गमाकाश मूर्ति,
नक्षत्रं पुष्पमाल्यं ग्रहगणकुसुमं चन्द्रव्ह्न्यर्क नेत्रं ।
कुक्षिः सप्त समुद्रं भुजगिरि शिकरं सप्तपाताळ पादं
वेदं वक्रं षढङ्गं दशदिशि वसनं दिव्य लिङ्गं नमामि ॥

pīṭhaṁ yasya dharitri jaladhara kalaśaṁ liṅgamākāśa mūrtiṁ,
nakṣatraṁ puṣpamālyaṁ grahagaṇakusumaṁ candravhnyarka nētraṁ |
kukṣiḥ sapta samudraṁ bhujagiri śikaraṁ saptapātāḷa pādaṁ
vēdaṁ vakraṁ ṣaḍhaṅgaṁ daśadiśi vasanaṁ divya liṅgaṁ namāmi ||

ब्रह्माण्ड-व्याप्तदेहा भसितहिमरुचा भासमाना भुजङ्गैः
कण्ठे कालाः कपर्दाकलित शशिकला-श्चण्डकोदण्डहस्ताः ।
त्र्यक्षा रुद्राक्षमालाः प्रकटितविभवाः शांभवा मूर्तिभेदाः
रुद्राः श्रीरुद्रसूक्त-प्रकटितविभवा नः प्रयच्छन्तु सौख्यम् ॥

brahmāṇḍa-vyāptadēhā bhasitahimarucā bhāsamānā bhujaṅgaiḥ
kaṇṭhē kālāḥ kapardākalita śaśikalā-ścaṇḍakōdaṇḍahastāḥ |
tryakṣā rudrākṣamālāḥ prakaṭitavibhavāḥ śāṁbhavā mūrtibhēdāḥ
rudrāḥ śrīrudrasūkta-prakaṭitavibhavā naḥ prayacchantu saukhyam ||

प्रशान्तम् – *praśāntam* - Extremely tranquil. Always meditating, especially in the cremation ground indicating absence of the fear of death. Cremation ground signifies the absence of the fear of death (*maraṇa bhaya rāhityam*). Another beautiful signicance is given: many have no time to go to temples and therefore, Lord Śiva, out of compassion, chose a place where everyone (even *nāstikas*) will definitely come so that He can bless them.

भूतयोनिम् – *bhūtayonim* – This means the cause of the universe (*jagat kāraṇam*) - this refers to *māyā-sahitaṁ Brahman*. *Yoni* means *kāraṇam* and *bhūta* means all the things and beings. This word *bhūtayoni* is also in Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad in verse 1.1.6.

समस्तसाक्षिम्– *samasta sākṣim* - The one who is the witness of everything. Only one all-pervading Ātmā reveals all the minds directly (not different individual Ātmās) reveal different minds. The same Ātmā reveals all the fourteen *lokas* indirectly through the mind. The mind is directly illumined and the world is indirectly illumined - *tameva bhāntam anubhāti sarvaṁ tasya bhāsā sarvaṁ idaṁ vibhāti*. Therefore, Ātmā is called the *sākṣi*, the witness of everything. Here, *arūpa* Śiva is illustrated.

तमसः परस्तात् –*tamasaḥ parastāt* – *tamasaḥ* means *māyā* and *parastāt* means beyond. The word *tamas* here does not refer to *tamoguṇa*, but *avidyā* (*triguṇātmaka māyā*). In this context, *parastsāt* does not mean spatially away – if we say this, we will make Brahman a limited entity sitting somewhere away from *māyā*. This refers to the qualitative nature of not being affected by *māyā*. This is exactly like saying that space is beyond all the objects because although space is in and through all objects, it is not touched by any. Another example is: the movie screen is beyond the movie characters; it is unaffected by them.

Brahman pervades *māyā,* but is not affected by it. This is the same as saying that Brahman pervades the world, but not affected by it. Therefore *tamasaḥ parastāt* must be translated as *asangaḥ*, which means unaffected. That is why, for getting mokṣa, we need not leave this world, our body or our mind. Even when I am with the body and the mind, I am Brahman, who am *asangaḥ*. The body-mind complex is *māyā* which is *vyāvahārika satyam.* Therefore, when the mind is turbulent, I can claim, if I have understood the Vedānta, that I am untouched by *māyā* and the events.

Remembering the fourth capsule of the Vedānta - I am never affected by any event that happens in the material world or in the material body mind complex. It is not because I am far away but even when I am inherent in the world, I am the screen and the turbulence is the movie. Movie turbulence cannot disturb the Consciousness screen.

We have so far covered *Śiva varṇanam* – the description of Śiva as *iṣṭa devatā*, *viśvarūpa* and *atmarūpa Īśvara*.

ध्यात्वा – *dhyātvā* - Meditate on any one of these three *Śiva rūpas* according to your level. Don't say I don't have time - find time - that is the sincere advice. Duties will be endless; to begin meditation after the completion of duties is like waiting for the waves to subside before taking a dip in the ocean. This will not happen.

Having done all this, what will I get? This sequential meditation is a long process spanning several decades and even many *janmas*. Unlike other religions, where we have to manage everything oin one *janma*, the advantage in Hindu religion is we can take as many *janmas* as we need to accomplish this. The deadline is not deadly like the other religions.

मुनिः गच्छति – *muniḥ gacchati* – The *sādhaka* merges (*gacchati*) into *Śivam* – *acintyam, avyaktam, anantarūpam, bhūtayonim* etc. For the Sanskrit students, the word Śiva should be read twice – meditating on Śiva, the meditator will reach Śiva.

Bhūtayonim gacchati means *jīvātma-paramātma aikyam*, which is the same as *mokṣa*. Before this *aikyam*, I said that Śiva is *acintyam, avyaktam* etc. and now I claim these glories as mine – I am *acintyam, avyaktam* etc. This bhaktiis Self-bhakti.

I loved myself previously, in spite of being the miserable ego. Now, after knowing my superior nature, I still love myself, but this love is *advaita bhakti*. The self love becomes universal love because everyone is my Self only.

9. Mantras 7 (continued), 8,9,10 and 11

उमासहायं परमेश्वरंप्रभुं, त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम् |
ध्यात्वा मुनिर्गच्छति भूतयोनिं, समस्तसाक्षिं तमसः परस्तात् || ७ ||

Umāsahāyam parameśvaraṁ prabhuṁ, trilocanam nīlakaṇṭhaṁ praśāntam |
Dhyātvā munirgacchati bhūtayoniṁ, samastasākṣiṁ tamasaḥ parastāt || 7 ||

Summary of last classes

Prajāpati, the *ācārya*, describes various *sādhanas* that will lead to *Brahmavidyā* and liberation. The *sādhanas* are of two types: *sahakāri* (indirect) and *sākṣāt* (direct) *sādhanas*. The former are the preparatory steps to prepare the mind for jñāna while the latter help gaining and assimilating the knowledge.

Śravaṇam, mananam and *nididhyāsanam* were mentioned as *śraddhā, bhakti, dhyāna* yogas respectively. Thereafter, *sannyāsa* was highlighted. A person has a choice whether or not to take to formally take external *sannyāsa*, but inner *sannyāsa* that consists of detachment, freedom from *ahaṅkāra* and *mamakāra* and minimum PORT is more important.

Then, the *ācārya* discussed the topic of *brahmadhyānam* where three types of meditation were discussed: *eka-rūpa, aneka-rūpa* and *arūpa*. The first two are *saguṇa brahmadhyānam*, - the meditation on *iṣṭa devatā* and *viśvarūpa* respectively. They are both extremely important for purifying the mind and reducing *rāga* and *dveṣa*.

After these two types of *dhyānams*, one has to go through *śravaṇam* and *mananam* to gain the knowledge of *nirguṇa Brahman*. From *saguṇa brahmadhyānam*, one cannot directly go to *nirguṇa brahmadhyānam* without the knowing what *nirguṇa Brahman* is. Therefore after *viśvarūpadhyānam*, one has to go through *śravaṇam* and *mananam* to gain the doubt-free knowledge of *nirguṇa Brahman,* which is: *nirguṇam Brahman aham asmi.*

After gaining this knowledge, one has to go through the final step of *nirguṇa brahmandhyānam*, which is also called by other names such as: *abedhadhyānam*,

Ātma dhyānam, aikyadhyānam, arūpadhyānam, and *niddhidhyaasanam*. If a person goes through all these stages properly, he will become one with Brahman – *muniḥ dhyātvā bhūtayonim gacchati*. He becomes one with what he meditates upon. Nirguṇa *brahmadhyānam* will help him merge into *nirguṇa* Brahman by claiming *ahaṁ brahma asmi*.

We now continue the class with the next mantra:

Mantra 8

सब्रह्मा स शिवः सेन्द्रः, सोऽक्षरः परमः स्वराट् |
स एव विष्णुः सप्राणः, स कालोऽग्निः सचन्द्रमाः || ८ ||

Sa brahmā sa śivaḥ sendraḥ, so'kṣaraḥ paramaḥ svarāt |
Sa eva viṣṇuḥ sa prāṇaḥ, sa kālo'gniḥ sa candramāh || 8 ||

सः ब्रह्मा –**saḥ brahmā** - He is Brahmā. सः शिवः – **saḥ śivaḥ** - He is Śiva. सः इन्द्रः– **saḥ indraḥ** - He is Indra. सः परमः– **saḥ paramaḥ** - He is the supreme, अक्षरः– **akṣaraḥ** - imperishable, स्वराट्– **svarāt** -self-effulgent one. सः एव विष्णुः– **saḥ eva viṣṇuḥ** - He himself Viśṇu. सः प्राणः– **saḥ prāṇaḥ** - He is prāṇa. सः कालः– **saḥ kālaḥ** - He is time अग्निः – **agniḥ** - (He is) fire. सः चन्द्रमाः– **saḥ candramāḥ** - is the moon.

He is Brahmā. He is Śiva. He is Indra. He is the supreme, imperishable, self-effulgent one. He himself Viśṇu. He is prāṇa. He is time (He is) fire. He is the moon.

By following the above-mentioned *sādhanas*, one will get *brahmavidyā* and *brahmavidyā phalam*. In mantras 8, 9 and 10, the *ācārya* describes the nature of *brahmavidyā*. He also makes an important conclusion that without jñāna, liberation is not possible. There is no other alternate means for liberation.

What is the nature of knowledge? it is *brahma satyam jagan mithyā jīvo brahmaiva na paraḥ*. Brahman, the *nirguṇa caitanyam* is the only true substance (*satya vastu*) - this is *brahma satyam*. That Brahman is none other than myself –*jīvo brahmaiva na paraḥ*. When I claim that I am Brahman, it means only the Consciousness component of the individual and not the physical body, the mind, the senses or thoughts which all belong to *mithyā prapañca*. I am that *Brahmātmā* or *ekātmā* and

everything else is *mithyā*. Everything that is *saguṇam* is *mithyā*. *Nirguṇam* alone is *satyam*.

Saguṇam consists of three things:

- *Saguṇa jīvaḥ* - consisting of *sthūla* and *sūkṣma śarīrams* and *cidābhāsa*
- *Saguṇa prapañca* – everything in the creation is name and form only (*mithya nāma rūpa*).
- *Saguṇa Īśvara* – consisting of *māyā* and Reflected Consciousness (RC) and not the Original Consciousness (OC). OC is *nirguṇam*. *Saguṇa māyā* and *pratibimba caitanyam* also come under *mithyā nāma-rūpa* only.

Saguṇa jīva is called *rajaḥ pradhāna saguṇa padārtha*. *Saguṇa jagat* is *tamaḥ pradhāna saguṇa padārtha*. *Saguṇa Īśvara* is *sattva pradhāna saguṇa padārtha*. This is *saguṇa padārthatrayam*. Everything is *mithyā*. However, if the word *mithyā* is used, it may disturb people. Like we use a nicer term such as "developing" country for an undeveloped country, we use a nicer term *vyāvahārika satyam* (empirical reality) for *mithyā*. The trio of *jīva, jagat* and *Īśvara* is empirical reality. *Brahmātmā* is absolute reality. I am that *Brahmātmā*.

सः **(एव)** ब्रह्मा – *saḥ (eva) brahmā* - That *ekātmā* alone appears as Brahmā in the *vyāvahārika* field. Here it should be understood as Brahmāji, the *caturmukha* Brahamā (not *niruguṇa Brahman*)

सः एवविष्णुः –*saḥ eva viṣṇuḥ* - Viṣṇu is also another *nāmā-rūpa* as the same *nirguṇam Brahman*. Only with *nāma-rūpa*, can He do His function in the *vyāvahārika prapañca*. In their *māyā-veṣams* (forms) Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva do the creation, sustenance and the resolution functions respectively. *Nirguṇam Brahma* without the form cannot do *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *layam*.

Lord Krishna says in the Gītā: *tasya kartāram api mām viddhi akartāram avyayam* - with *māyā-veṣam* in the vyāvahārika plane, I am *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *laya kartā*. Without *māyā-veṣam*, I am the *nirguṇam Brahma akartā*. Thus, we can put on the *māyā-veṣam* and play the drama of life, falsify the *māyā* and claim the *nirguṇam Brahma svarūpam*. We have the choice.

सः **(एव)** शिवः – *sah (eva) śivah* - That one Brahman also puts on the Śiva *veṣam*. Brahmāji uses *rajoguṇa* of *māyā* for *sṛṣṭi*, Viṣṇu uses the *sattva guṇa* for *sthiti* and Śiva uses the *tamoguṇa* for *layam* (resolution). One Brahman uses all the three *guṇas*.

सःइन्द्रः – *sah indrah* - That *nirguṇam* Brahman alone plays the role of Indra

सः प्राणः – *sah prāṇah* - that nirguṇam Brahman plays the role of *prāṇa*. In this context, it is the total or *samaṣṭi prāṇa (Hiraṇyagarbha)*.

सः कालः – *sah kālah* - *Kālah* means the time principle. Brahman by itself does not have *kālatattvam*. The first priniciple that Brahman plus *māyā*, manifests as *kālah*. *Māyā- sahita caitanyam* itself is the definition of *kāla*.

सः अग्निः– *sah agnih* - The word *sah* refers to *nirguṇa Brahma ātmā*, which also manifests as *agnitattvam*.

सः चन्द्रमाः – *sah candramāh* - *Nirguṇa Brahman* also manifests as the moon,

In short, all the *devatās* are different *veṣams* of one *nirguṇa Brahman*.

A technical word *upādhi* is used for *veṣam*. The *saguṇa* appearances are called *sopādhika svarūpam*. The devatās are the *sopādhika svarūpams* of one and the same Brahman. If the *veṣams* are removed in the green room, the real nature of Brahman is revealed: *nirupādhika* Brahman. What is its nature? It is given here:

(सः) स्वराट् – (*sah*) *svarāt* – It is self-effulgent. The *nirupādhika* Brahman is the self-effulgent Consciousness. And *svarāt* means *svayaṁ prakāśah*, which means *caitanya svarūpah*. [For Sanskrit grammar students: *rāt* means *rājase –rāj dhātu*. Svarāt is *jhākārnta pulliṅgah svarāt śabdah – svārāt, svarājau, svarājah*].

परमः – *paramah* – which is absolute. It is the absolute principle that cannot be described by *nāma-rūpa* such as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva etc.

अक्षरः – *akṣarah* - that is not subject to change (because it is absolute) [*na akṣara iti akṣarah*]. It is eternal (*nirvikārah*). While Brahmā, Viṣṇu , Śiva etc. are all subject to

modification, the *nirguṇa* Brahman is absolute and changeless. That alone is reality and that Brahman I am. This is the nature of self-knowledge - *Brahma satyaṁ jagan mithyā, jīvo brahmaiva na paraḥ*. That will be clarified in the following two more mantras.

Mantra 9

स एव सर्वं यद्भूतं, यच्च भव्यं सनातनम् |
ज्ञात्वातंमृत्युमत्येति, नान्यःपन्थाविमुक्तये || ९ ||

Sa eva sarvaṁ yad bhūtaṁ, yacca bhavyaṁ sanātanam |
Jnātvā taṁ mṛtyumatyeti, nānyaḥ panthā vimuktaye || 9 ||

सः एवसर्वम् – **saḥ eva sarvam** - He alone is everything यद्भूतम्– **yad bhūtam** - which was in the past, यत्– **yat** - which (is in the present,) च भव्यम्– **ca bhavyam** - and which will be in the future. ज्ञात्वा – **jñātvā** - Having known तं सनातनम्– **taṁ sanātanam** - that eternal one, अत्येति मृत्युम्– **atyeti mṛtyum** - one transcends mortality. न अन्यः पन्थाः– **na anyaḥ panthāḥ** - There is no other means विमुक्तये – **vimuktaye** - for liberation.

He alone is everything which was in the past, which (is in the present,) and which will be in the future. Having known that eternal one, one transcends mortality. There is no other means for liberation.

सः एव सर्वम् – In short, Brahman appear as everything that is empirical (*saḥ eva*). That *nirguṇam Brahmātmā*, the *ekātmā* alone is *sarvam* (everything) - *sarvam brahmamayam jagat*. [The famous Sadāśiva Brahmendra *kīrtanam*: *sarvam brahmamayam re re sarvam brahmamayam*].

यद्भूतं, यच्च भव्यम् - *Yad bhūtam yacca bhavyam* - Brahman is everything that existed in the past (*bhūtam*) as well everything that will exist in the future (*bhavyam*). The term *yat ca* (*yacca*) includes the third: also everything in the present [*cakāra* indicates the *bhavat* or *vartamāna* – the present].

सनातनम् – *sanātanam* – That Brahman is eternal.

ज्ञात्वा तं मृत्युम् अत्येति – *jṇātvā taṁ mṛtyum atyeti* - By knowing that Brahman as myself (the self), one conquers the tyranny of *kāla*. *Mṛtyuḥ* (death) is *kāla*, the time principle that batters everyone. Every youth who walks his chest up will eventually droop with a slow gait; no one can escape the battering of time. Time will affect everything within the empirical world of space and time (*vyāvahārika deśa kāla*). [Claiming as myself is not mentioned in this *śloka*, but is in the next *śloka*; so, we can add here].

As long as we identify with *pañca anātmā*, we will be subject to the forces of karma and *kāla*. To repeat what we have already learned before, *pañca anātma* that tyrannizes us consists of:

- Profession – anxieties associated with our career
- Possessions – fear or anxiety related to losing our possessions
- Family – anxiety related to the welfare of family members and disturbances due to family events
- *Prārabdha* – our own body is subject to the powerful *prārabdha*.
- The mind – of all the five, mind is the only thing we can exercise some control over by changing our attitude. The control becomes less and less on the others in sequence – body, family, possessions and profession. Our control is higher as we grow internal and lower as we go more and more external. We can never hope to have absolute control because even the mind is influenced by old age.

Therefore, we are only contributors to the well being of our *anātmā*, but not the controllers of any of them. If mokṣa is to get absolute control over *anātmā*, we will never get mokṣa. I have mentioned this before: in the triangular format, the most powerful entity is karma – it is not *jīva* or *jagat* or even *Īśvara*.

Kāla and karma are the most powerful entities that no one can totally stop. Therefore, the only way to negate or at least minimize their impact is to understand that they are all *mithyā*. In summary: don't give it more importance than it deserves.

The good news is that the very *kāla*, tyrant, is also the savior. The worst painful disease in the body will eventually come to an end in time (*kāla*) with the inevitable death. The problem that *kāla* brings will also be solved by *kāla*. At the *anātmā* level, we have limited control and so, understand that it is *mithyātvam* and do not give it too much importance. This doesn't mean you neglect it completely; we are not

prescribing irresponsible behavior. Vedānta wants us to give that right amount – neither under nor over importance. *Anātmā* is neither *pāramātika satyam* that is absolute nor is it *prātibhāsika satyam*, which is just a mental projection. It is *vyāvahārika satyam* – we should accept as is, without judgment. Do not despair that God has given you difficulties in life (why me?) because everyone has them including the Swamiji. Even the *avatāras* such as Rama and Krishna could not escape them.

To deal with it, let *ahaṅkāra* go - remembering that I am not the *ahaṅkāra*. In *Naiśkarmya Siddhi*, I used an expression: neighborize the *ahaṅkāra*. Learn to look at the *ahaṅkāra* as a neighbor. We will sympathize with a neighbor's problem and we will also give our help, but the problem will not deeply affect our heart because it not our problem, but it is the neighbor's. This is not my teaching – Prajāpati is teaching us.

Thus, only by this knowledge, one crosses over the tyranny of time (*jñātvā taṁ mṛtyum atyeti*).

Is there any other solution such as bhakti by which I can get mokṣa?

न अन्यः पन्था विमुक्तये – *na anyaḥ panthā vimuktaye* – there is no method other than jñāna. This does not mean that the others are useless because they are all are useful for *citta śuddhi*, but mokṣa is possible only through jñāna.

If someone asks if bhakti can give liberation, then we should ask what he means by bhakti? If he says, bhakti means *aham Brahma asmi* jñāna, we will happily say that mokṣa is possible through bhakti. However, if he means bhakti in any other sense, such as *dvaita bhakti*, it will not give liberation – it can only give *citta śuddhi*.

Mantra 10

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं, सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
सम्पश्यन्ब्रह्म परमं, याति नान्येन हेतुना ॥ १० ॥

Sarvabhūtasthamātmānaṁ, sarvabhūtāni cātmani ||
Sampaśyanbrahma paraṁ, yāti nānyena hetunā || 10 ||

सम्पश्यन् – **sampaśyan** - Clearly seeing आत्मानम् – **ātmānam** - oneself सर्वभूतस्थम् – **sarvabhūtastham** - in all beings च सर्वभूतानि– **ca sarvabhūtāni** - and all beings आत्मनि – **ātmani** - in oneself, याति – **yāti** - (one) attains परमं ब्रह्म– **paramam brahma** - the supreme Brahman; न अन्येन हेतुना– **na anya hetunā** - not by any other means.

Clearly seeing oneself in all beings and all beings in oneself, (one) attains the supreme Brahman; not by any other means.

Almost the same idea as the last mantra is reinforced here. Both these mantras are extremely important because they answer a very popular question: - how many *mārgas* (paths) are there   for mokṣa? We get different answers from different people indicating that there are multiple paths such as karma yoga for the active, meditation for the emotional, jñāna for the intellectuals, yoga for the mystics etc. This view is not endorsed by the Vedas. The paths other than jñāna are only for preparing the mind. Jñāna is the only path for mokṣa.

परमं ब्रह्मन् सम्पश्यन् – *paramam brahman sampaśyan* - By clearly understanding (*sampaśyan*) the absolute (*paramam*) *nirguṇa* Brahman as the only reality, which is I, the *sākṣi caitanyam*,

याति –*yāti* – (one) attains Brahman or mokṣa. We have to read *paramam Brahman* twice: *Paramam Brahman sampaśyan* and *paramam Brahman yāti*.   Knowing Brahman, one merges into It – this is called mokṣa.

न अन्येन हेतुना – *na anyena hetunā* - Not by any other path. We have to be careful in understanding this. When we say karma does not give liberation, many people misunderstand that the Vedāntins are condemning karma. We are simply saying that the path of karma does not give mokṣa; we are not saying it is useless. Karma yoga is very useful and important for preparing the mind for jñāna. One must use the appropriate method for achieving the goals. Karma and upāsanā do not directly give mokṣa, but they prepare us for it. On the other hand, mere *Vedānta vicāra* cannot give *citta śuddhi*. So, the religious life goes hand in hand with philosophy. That is why, there are temples even in the Vedānta ashramas, where the *brahmacaryas* spend hours of analyzing the Upaniṣad. They have all the various rituals such as *dīpārādhana, satsaṅga, bhajan, japa* etc. Have a balanced approach to the *sādhanas*: never criticize anything, but at the same time, know what can give what.

If jñāna alone can give liberation, how do I see that Brahman? It is given in the first line of the mantra:

सर्व भूतस्थम् आत्मानम् – *sarva bhūtastham ātmānam* - That Brahman is available as *Ātmā* in every being. Here the word *bhūta* means all bodies (*sarva śarīram*). We should not miss at any time that Brahman is present as Ātmā in every body. When we see different electrical gadgets functioning according to their design, we should not lose sight of the invisible electricity that enables them. Light is light and mike is mike because of electricity (*śrotrasya śrotram manaso manaḥ*). Similarly in every body is alive and sentient because of *caitanyatvam*. Therefore, may you recognize the awareness because of which every body is alive and sentient.

We saw in verse 2.2.5 of Kaṭhopaniṣad that even the *prāṇa* does not give life to the body:

न प्राणेन नापानेन, मर्त्यो जीवति कश्चन ।
इतरेण तु जीवन्ति, यस्मिन्नेतावुपाश्रितौ ॥
na prāṇena nāpānena, martyo jīvati kaścana
itareṇa tu jīvanti, yasminnetāvupāśritau

Neither by praṇa nor by apāna does any mortal live. But, they live because of something else upon which these two depend. This is indeed that.

Atma gives life to *prāṇa,* which in turn blesses the body. Therefore, the experience of every living being is the experience of the invisible *caitanyam*.

Krishna laments in verse 15.10 of the Gītā, that everything happens because of him, but the foolish forget Him while experiencing everything:

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वाऽपि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।
विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥१५.१०॥
utkrāmantaṁ sthitaṁ vā'pi bhuñjānaṁ vā guṇānvitam |
vimūḍhā nānupaśyanti paśyanti jñānacakṣuṣaḥ ||15.10 ||

The deluded ones do not recognise (Him) who leaves (the body), who resides in the body), who experiences (objects), (and) who has guṇas. Those who have the eye of wisdom recognise (Him).

This *śloka* must be chanted before eating so that we remember Krishna as the Brahman behind everything [but we focus merely on finishing the chanting of this chapter and attack the dishes!].

Therefore, in and through the action of every living being, may you not miss the thread of Consciousness.

Can I appreciate the presence of Brahman as *caitanyam* in the inert objects such as the wall, floor etc.? Since *caitanyam* is all-pervading, it is in these inert objects also, but it is not expressed in them. Since Brahman cannot be experienced as *cit*, we can and should appreciate Brahman as *sat* in the form of Existence (*sad rūpeṇa*). [Tamil: தூணிலும்இருப்பார், துரும்பிலும்இருப்பார். எப்படிஇருப்பார்? இருப்பக இருப்பார்].

May you appreciate Brahman as *sat cit ātmā* in every body including your own (don't miss yours).

सर्वभूतानि च आत्मानि – *sarva bhūtāni ca ātmāni* – This statement is the complete reverse of the previous statement (*sarva bhūtastham ātmānam*). We have seen this before. First, we say that the space is in all the containers (*ghaṭākāśa*); in a room (*koṣṭa*), there is *koṣṭākāśa*. This is the initial appreciation of the *ākāśa*. Then, the next stage of understanding is that, really speaking, *ākāśa* is not in the containers, but all containers are in the all-pervading *ākāśa*.

Similarly, initially, we say that Ātmā is in everybody. Then we understand that all the bodies, planets, stars, galaxies etc. exist in one *sat cit ātmā*. There are no individual *Ātmās* in many bodies, but there is one *Brahmātma ekātmā* which I should claim as I am. Initially, I can say Bhagavan is great and I am miserable – this is helpful for bhakti to start. Lord Krishna describes the four stages of bhakti in verse 7.16 of the Gītā: *ārtaḥ, arthārtha, jijñāsu* and *jñānī*. In the first three stages, I can separate Bhagavan from me. In the fourth stage, I claim that Bhagavan is great and I am also great because, as I am not different from Bhagavan. Krishna himself says this in verse 7.18 of the Gītā: *jñāni tu ātmaiva me matam* – *jñānī* and I are not two different things.

In the fourth stage of bhakti, I have to claim that I am that *Paramātmā* (*ahaṁ paramātmā asmi*) and that everything is born of me (*mayi eva sakalam jātam*) indicating that I am *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *laya kāraṇam*. Thus, in summary, the first part of

this mantra says that one should see Ātmā in all the bodies and the second part says that one should see all bodies in one Ātmā. Lord Krishna borrows this in the first line of verse 6.29 of the Gītā:

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि।

sarvabhūtasthamātmānaṃ sarvabhūtāni cātmani |

One whose mind is disciplined through meditation perceives the Ātma in all beings and all beings in Ātma.

We will now continue to the next mantra.

Mantra 11

आत्मानमरिणं कृत्वा, प्रणवं चोत्तरारिणम् ।
ज्ञाननिर्मथनाभ्यासात्, पाशं दहति पण्डितः || ११ ||

Ātmānamariṇaṁ kṛtvā, praṇavam cottarāriṇam |
Jnānanirmathanābhyāsāt, pāśaṁ dahati paṇḍitaḥ || 11 ||

कृत्वा आत्मानम् – **kṛtvā ātmānam** - Keeping in mind अरिणम् – **araṇim** - as the (lower araṇi), च प्रणवम् – **ca praṇavam** - and Oṅkāra उत्तरारिणम् – **uttarāraṇim** - as the upper araṇi, ज्ञाननिर्मथनाभ्यासात् – **jnānanirmathanābhyāsāt** - (and) by the practice of churning which is in the form of enquiry, पण्डिताः – **paṇḍitāḥ** - the wise man दहतिपाशम् – **dahati pāśam** - burns down the bondage.

Keeping in mind as the (lower araṇi), and Oṅkāra as the upper araṇi, (and) by the practice of churning which is in the form of enquiry, the wise man burns down the bondage.

In the previous ślokas, various *sādhanas* were mentioned and the nature of Brahman was described as *ekarūpa, anekarūpa* and *arūpa*. The nature of the knowledge in the binary format - *brahma satyam jagan mithyā, jīvo brahmaiva na paraḥ* - was also discussed. We also discussed the benefits of jñāna (*jñāna-phalam*).

The teacher said that jñāna alone gives liberation. We have not yet discussed in detail, the *sādhanas* to gain that knowledge: *śravaṇam* and *mananam* even though we discussed *nididhyāsanam* in the form of *nirguṇa brahmadhyānam*.

In this mantra, the Upaniṣad addresses the main topic of *mahāvākya vicāraḥ*, which is the also the central topic of all the Upaniṣads. This *vicāra* consists of *śravaṇam* and *mananam*. *Śravaṇam* is the consistent and systematic study of the Vedāntic scriptures for a length of time under the guidance of a competent and live *ācārya*. This is not the classical definition. In the *śāstras* tradition, *śravaṇam* has a technical definition: *upakramādi ṣadliṅgaiḥ vedāntānām advaite brahmaṇi tātparya niścayaḥ śravaṇam*. I will defer he discussion of this definition to the introduction to the next Upaniṣad (or the following one). For our purpose, *śravaṇam* is a consistent and systematic study.

Mananam is the removal of doubt. *Śravaṇam* and *mananam* together is called *vicāraḥ*. We will discuss this topic in the next class.

10. Mantras 11 (continued) and 12

आत्मानमरिणं कृत्वा, प्रणवं चोत्तरारिणम् |
ज्ञाननिर्मथनाभ्यासात्, पाशं दहति पण्डितः || ११ ||

Ātmānamariṇaṁ kṛtvā, praṇavam cottarāriṇam |
Jnānanirmathanābhyāsāt, pāśaṁ dahati paṇḍitaḥ || 11 ||

Summary of the previous classes

Up to verse 10, Prajāpati the *ācārya* discussed the following topics:

Brahmavidyā sādhanāni – Direct (*sākṣāt*) and supportive (*sahakāri*) *sādhanas* were discussed. *Saguṇa* and *nirguṇa brahmadhyānam* were also discussed.

Brahmavidyā svarūpam – Brahman alone is the truth and everything else is only *nāma-rūpa* (mithyā). *One nirguṇa Brahman* alone appears as the *vyāvahārika* (empirical) *jīva, jagat* and *Īśvara*. The difference in these is caused by *māyā*. When *māyā* is negated, everything resolves into *nirguṇa* Brahman, which I claim as my identity. This is described by the statement: *brahma satyam jagan mithyā, jīvo brahmaiva na paraḥ*.

Brahmavidyā phalam – The *phalam* is *mokṣa* from *saṁsara*. The problems of *saṁsāra* are caused by our attribution of *satyatvam* (reality) to *mithyā*. While *mithyā* by itself is harmless, we give it the power to hurt us by attributing *satyatvam* to it. Mokṣa is not the physical elimination of *mithya prapañca* or escaping from it, but it is the understanding *mithyā* as *mithyā*. For example, understanding a movie as movie is entertainment, but attaching reality to it can cause emotional problems. With this freedom from the tyranny of *mithya prapañca*, the world is no longer a burden and the life becomes a blessing. It is a blessing because only when I am alive, I can claim the glory that I am the content – *sarva bhūtastham ātmānam*.

The *ācārya* also said that *Brahmavidyā* is the only means for liberation; not one of the means. It is erroneously quoted by many that karma yoga, *upāsanā*, Raja yoga etc. will lead to mokṣa. They are all useful for preparing the mind for jñāna, but will

directly lead to mokṣa. This is clearly mentioned in the second line of Mantra 10: *na anyena hetunā* – there is no other means.

Continuing with this class

The central teaching of this Upaniṣad begins with mantra 11 in which *Vedānta vicāra* is introduced. In mantra 2, *śravaṇam* was mentioned as a direct *sādhana* – it was called *śraddhā* in that mantra. Mantra 11 onwards, the Upaniṣad discusses how to do self-enquiry (*Vedānta vicāra* or *mahāvākya vicāra*) with the help of *Vedānta pramāṇam* and the *ācārya*.

In this mantra, *śravaṇam* is likened to the process of kindling the fire for performing a *yāga*. The fire for a Vedic ritual cannot be kindled in any manner or brought from any place. The *śāstras* prescribe that the sacred fire should be brought from *Sūrya* Bhagavan using a magnifying lens. The *śāstras* also prescribe another popular method called *araṇi mathanam*, which is often mentioned in the scriptures:

When two logs of wood are churned in a certain way, the friction creates sparks of fire. The *śāstras* prescribe the type of wood and the manner in which fire should be created. The lower block of wood called *adho araṇi* is made out of *aśvattha vṛkṣaḥ* (tree). There is a small pit or a scoop in the lower block where another rod of wood can be inserted and churned to create the sparks. The churning rod or *uttara araṇi* should be made out of *śamī vṛkṣaḥ*. The *yajamāna* (priest) churns the rod with a rope. The fire is created by catching the sparks with a very dry grass or cotton and transferred directly to the *homa kuṇḍa*. The fire that kindled in this manner should receive oblations. This verse likens the *Vedānta vicāra* to the *araṇi mathanam* process.

आत्मानम् अरणिं कृत्वा – *ātmānam araṇim kṛtvā* - The Upaniṣad says that the lower *araṇi* is the qualified, steady and focused mind of the student. Just as the lower *araṇi* does not move, the student's mind should be in the class without travelling all over. Therefore, the student requires purified mind (*citta śuddhi*). It should also be steady and unwavering (*citta dairyam* or *sthairyam*).

प्रणवं चा उत्तर अरणिम्– *praṇavam ca uttara araṇim* – *Praṇava* means *oṁkāra* mantra. We have seen before in Kaṭhopaniṣad that *praṇava vicāra* can lead to *ātmajñānam*. We will also see this in Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad which reveals Brahman through *oṁkāra*

vicāra.   *Akāra* of *oṁkāra* (AUM) is equated to *viśva* (*jāgrat avasthā*); *ukāra* is equated to *taijasa* (*svapna avastha*) and *makāra* is equated to *prājña* (*suṣupti avasthā*). After introducing *viśva, taijasa* and *prājña* – *akāra, ukāra* and *makāra* – the Upaniṣad negates all of them. *Viśva, taijasa* and *prājña* are resolved when one disidentifies from *jāgrat, svapna* and *suṣupti* and claims himself as *avasthātraya sākṣī*. What is left behind is none of the *a* (अ), *u* (उ) or *ma* (म); *oṁkāra* is followed by silence awareness. Through *oṁkāra vicāra, avasthātraya sākṣī* is revealed as silence awareness. Thus *oṁkāra* mantra can serve as a churning rod. Here, churning refers to *vicāraḥ* because in enquiry, we churn our mind. We can also use the *mahāvākya* mantras for *vicāraḥ*. Thus, *praṇavam* refers to *oṁkāra* or *mahāvākya* or an appropriate Upaniṣad mantra. In short, the Upaniṣad mantras serve as the churning rod. Churning should be done repeatedly. *Śravaṇam* is not meant to be done once – it must be repeated regularly. Who does the churning? It is done by the guru with the active cooperation of the *śiṣya* with an available mind.

ज्ञानं निर्मथनम् अभ्यासात् – *jñānaṁ nirmathanam abhyāsāt* - By the practice of churning in the form of enquiry. *Nirmathanam* means churning, which in the *Vedāntic* context means enquiry. This consists of analyzing the *mahāvākya* (for example, *tvam pada* in *tat tvam asi*), separating the literal meaning (*vācyārtha*) from the intended meaning (*lakṣyārtha*) and taking the latter to reveal the pure Consciousness. Similarly, *tat pada* (in *tat tvam asi*) is also analyzed for *vācyārtha* and *lakṣyārtha* and understood that *Paramātmā* is the pure Existence. *Tvam* refers to pure Consciousness and *tat* refers to pure Existence and *asi* reveals the oneness of both. This requires a very long process, which is called *nirmathanam*. This process of *mahāvākya vicāra* must be repeated (*abhyāsaḥ*) to create the sparks of knowledge with the appropriate material to kindle the fire of knowledge.

Śravaṇam can only kindle a feeble flame. One has to then gently fan and nourish the fire. When the Vedāntic knowledge is feeble, a small family problem may put out the flame. Therefore, the feeble flame should be nourished into a huge conflagration. To do this, *śravaṇam* must be followed by *mananam* (gentle fanning). Between classes of *śravaṇam*, I should devote some time asking if I am convinced of this teaching. If I am not convinced, I should investigate to determine what my intellectual flaw is. Mananam should be followed by *nididhyāsanam*, the crucial process by which we change our mindset. Without this change in mindset, the Vedāntic study is incomplete and ineffective. The mindset conversion means that the triangular format must be converted to the binary format. If we cannot accomplish this in this birth,

we should try in the next birth and the next and so on. This is a compulsory requirement. In *śravaṇam*, guru plays a prominent role and in mananam, he plays a limited role. However, *nididhyāsanam* is the complete responsibility of the *śiṣya* alone; the guru cannot help.

That is what in Mundaka Upaniṣad the guru says, *svastiva pārāya tamasaḥ parastāt* – the *śiṣya* go through the last lap alone. When all three *sādhanas* are complete, the spark of knowledge is converted into a huge conflagration of fire of knowledge. The benefit of such knowledge (*jñāna phalam*) is also given next

पण्डितः – *paṇḍitaḥ* - That *śiṣyaḥ* who is established in this knowledge (*jñāna niṣṭaḥ*). In the Gītā, he is also called *sthita prajña* in Chapter 2, *parā bhakta* in Chapter 12 and *guṇātītaḥ* in Chapter 14.

पाशं दहति – *pāśaṁ dahati* - He destroys all the oblation materials that are offered (*svāhā*). The first and the foremost oblation is *avidyā*. Then *ahaṅkāra* (I-ness) is offered, followed by *mamakāra* (my-ness). Then, *kartṛtvam, bhoktṛtvam* and *pramātṛtvam* must be offered. Then all karmas, *sañcita, āgāmi* and *prārbdha* must be offered. Finally, the very triangular format itself must be offered into the fire of knowledge. All these things together are called *pāśaḥ* or bondage. Often, in life, I am trapped in the family or in a company. This sense of trap is *saṁsāra*. If I feel that life is a burden, then I am trapped in *saṁsāra*. The enlightened disciple burns all these shackles (*dahati*) in the fire of knowledge.

Lord Krishna has borrowed the idea from this mantra for verse 4.37 of the Gītā:

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात् कुरुतेऽर्जुन।
ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणिभस्मसात् कुरुते तथा॥४.३७॥

yathaidhāṁsi samiddhō'gnirbhasmasāt kurutē'rjuna|
jñānāgniḥ sarvakarmāṇi bhasmasāt kurutē tathā ||4.37||

Oh Arjuna! The fire of knowledge reduces all Karmas to ashes just as a well-kindled fire reduces the fuel to ashes.

Self knowledge is often compared to fire in our scriptures. Fire has two-fold power: it has the illumining (revealing) and destroying power – *prakāśa śaktiḥ* and *daha śaktiḥ*. *Brahmavidyā* also has these two powers. Here, *daha śakti* is discussed – it

burns *saṁsāra*. *Prakāśa śakti* that reveals Brahman, that was covered with darkness of ignorance (*ajñāna timiram*). The revealing and destroying aspects of Brahmavidyā is discussed in verse 5.16 of the Gītā:

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥५.१६॥

jñānēna tu tadajñānaṃ yēṣāṃ nāśitamātmanaḥ|
tēṣāmādityavajjñānaṃ prakāśayati tatparam || 5.16 ||

However, knowledge illumines that supreme (Ātma) like the Sun for those, whose ignorance of the Ātma is destroyed by Knowledge.

Thus the enquiry process results in *Brahmavidyā* that burns *saṁsāra* and reveals Brahman.

We will now get into the details of enquiry. The following mantras are the essence. Mantras 12 through 22 consist of *mahāvākyams.*

Mantra 12

स एव मायापरिमोहितात्मा, शरीरमास्थाय करोति सर्वम्।
स्त्रियन्नपानादिविचित्रभोगैः, स एव जाग्रत्परितृप्तिमेति ॥ १२ ॥

Sa eva māyāparimohitātmā, śarīramāsthāya karoti sarvam |
Striyannapānādivicitrabhogaiḥ, sa eva jāgratparitṛptimeti || 12 ||

मायापरिमोहितात्मा– **māyāparimohitātmā** - With the mind deluded by māyā, सः एव– **saḥeva** - he himself शरीरम् आस्थाय– **śarīram āsthāya** - identifies with the body करोति सर्वम्– **karoti sarvam** - and performs all actions. जाग्रत् – **jāgrat** - In the waking state, सः एव – **saḥ eva** - he himself एति परितृप्तिम्– **eti paritṛptim** - attains fulfillment स्त्रियन्नपानादिविचित्रभोगैः– **striyannapānādivicitrabhogaiḥ** - through various sense-objects like woman, food, and drink.

With the mind deluded by māyā, he himself identifies with the body and performs all actions. In the waking state, he himself attains fulfillment through various sense-objects like woman, food, and drink.

In the Vedānta, this creation is often compared to a dream because of several similarities between *svapna prapañca* and *jāgrat prapañca*. It should be noted carefully that we do not say that *jāgrat prapañca* is a dream (*svapna*); we merely say that the two *prapañcas* are very are similar, but they do have differences. Here, for our purpose of understanding, we will discuss only the similarities and not the differences. We study the similarity for the clarity of understanding. When we use the expression, "he is like a pillar", we do not intend to convey that he is inert, motionless and round. We try to convey the idea that just as a pillar supports a building structure, this person plays such an important role, that in his presence the entire organization is supported and if he resigns, the whole organization will collapse. We highlight the supporting role, but not the other differences because they are irrelevant for understanding. Similarly, we focus on the similarities between *jāgrat* and *svapna* to understand *jāgrat prapañca* clearly as *mithyā*.

I, the waker, project a dream world in sleep (*nidrā*). When I am under the spell of *nidrā śakti,* I have the power to project the dream out of my own mental *vāsanās*. This power to produce an unreal dream world is called *vikṣepa śakti*.

Then, I quit the *jāgrat prapñca* and enter the dream world to experience it. So at the time of projecting the dream, I die to the waking world, disown my wakerhood and identify with a dream body that I temporarily create during the dream. Thus, I lose the status of the creator of the dream and assume the status of the created. This shift takes place because of the same *nidrā*. So, *nidrā* causes the projection of the dream as well as my conversion from the creator to the created – *sraṣṭṛ* to *sṛṣṭa* (creator to creature).

Once I become a created being, I forget the *jāgrat avasthā*, my waker status and the fact that the dream world that I constructed with my thoughts is unreal. There are no objects in the dream; they are only thoughts. Every object and person in the dream unreal – they are only my *vāsanās*. I then attribute reality to the unreal – *mithyā* becomes *satyam*. The unreality (*mithyātvam*) of the dream is covered because of the same *nidrā*. This concealment of the fact that there is no dream world other than me causes me to believe that I am confronting an external world. Only upon waking up, I know that there is no world other than me (who created it). [Dakṣināmūrti stotram– *paśyannātmani māyayā bahir iva udbhūtam yathā nidrayā* – projected in dream by *māyā* as if it is outside).

Thus, I forget that the dream world is non-different from me and that it cannot do anything to me. This concealment happens because of another power of the same *nidrā* called *āvaraṇa śakti*. With this power, the dreamness of the dream and the wakerhood of the waker are concealed. As I have often said, dream is not a dream in the dream for the dreamer. He will dismiss it as a dream only upon waking. This concealment is universal – no one dreams with the awareness that he is dreaming – the dream is taken as real.

The only solution to the problems of the dream world is to wake up. If a person next to you is screaming in his dream that a tiger is chasing him, do you run to get a gun? The only solution is to wake him or her up. Whether it is a family problem or a corporate problem or any blessed problem, the dreamer in a dream will not believe that it is unreal – to him, the problem is solidly real. If the guru tells us that we can get mokṣa only through jñāna (*jñānmātreṇa mokṣa*), we will not believe him. Thus, jñāna is waking from one order of reality to another – that is shifting the order of reality.

When I wake up from the dream, my *vikṣepa* and *āvaraṇa śaktis* are lost. Imagine if I can continue to dream even after I wake up – it will be will be like watching a movie. I can watch with awareness that everything arises out of me and established in me – *mayi eva sakalaṁ jātaṁ mayi sarvam partiṣṭhitam.* This is like the dream *jīvan mukti*. To summarize the points:

When I am under the spell of *nidrā*, I, the waker project a dream through the *vikṣepa śakti*

I then enter the dream, disown my creator status and claim the status of the created. The dreamness of the dream is concealed through *āvaraṇa śakti* and the dream is given a higher reality.

I then suffer the terrible *saṁsāra* not knowing that my dream is a dream. The solution to this problem is waking up.

Now the Vedānta says that *jāgrat prapañca* is similar to a dream. Before I came into the spell of *nidrā*, I was a Waker (with a capital W), that is Brahman. Corresponding to the *nidrā* that creates the *svapna prapañca*, we have another *Nidrā* (with a capital N), that is responsible for the creation of the *jāgrat prapañca*. This *Nidrā* is

called *māyā*, which is also called *mahā nidrā*. The *nidrā* that creates the *svapna prapañca* is *alpa nidrā*. Verse 18 of Advaita Makaranda says:

आत्माज्ञान महानिद्रा जृम्भितेस्मिन् जगन्मये ।
दीर्घस्वप्ने स्फुरन्त्येते स्वर्गमोक्षादि विभ्रमाः ॥

ātmājñāna mahānidrā jṛmbhitesmin jaganmaye
dīrghasvapne sphurantyete svargamokṣādi vibhramāḥ

This entire cosmos is projected by *ātma ajñāna rūpa* or *māyā rūpa mahā nidrā*. It is a very long dream (*dīrgha svapna*). Our local dream is very short, but in this dream, all the *punarapi jananam punarapi maraṇam* occurs. Therefore, this *mahānidrā* is *māyā*.

With the help of *māyā vikṣepa śakti*, I, the *mahā* waker, Brahman project a universe called *jāgrat prapañca*. Having projected this universe, I drop the *mahā* waker status of the creator and assume the status of the created. Thus *Parmātmā* falls to the status of *jīvātmā*. This is called the spiritual fall.

Once I take the created *jīvātmā* status, the *āvaraṇa śakti* of *mahā nidrā* conceals the *mithyātvam* of *jāgrat prapañca*. Thus, *jāgrat prapañca* is another type of *svapna - mahā svapna* [as mentioned before, the *svapna* that occurs daily in sleep is called *alpa svapna*]. It is not *satyam* - here, my creator hood is concealed (it is called *mahā svapnatvam* or in the Vedānta, it is called *mithyātvam*). With the *mithyātvam* concealed, as a *jīvātmā*, I am in triangular format - I am a victimized *jīvātmā*, the world is victimizer and the only savior is Bhagavan. I am forever stuck in *saṁsāra*. Kaivalya Upaniṣad says: wake up!

11.   Mantras 12 (continued), 13 and 14

स एव मायापरिमोहितात्मा, शरीरमास्थाय करोति सर्वम् |
स्त्रियन्नपानादिविचित्रभोगैः, स एव जाग्रत्परितृप्तिमेति || १२ ||

Sa eva māyāparimohitātmā, śarīramāsthāya karoti sarvam |
Striyannapānādivicitrabhogaiḥ, sa eva jāgratparitṛptimeti || 12 ||

Summary of the last class

Mahāvākya vicāra which was introduced in the 11th mantra, through the *araṇi mathana* example is being elaborated in the 12th mantra. I said that the Vedānta compares the *jāgrat prapañca* to a form of *svapna* because of four similarities. I was talking about these similarities in the last class:

-   When I am under the spell of *nidrā*, I, the waker project a dream through the *vikṣepa śakti.* The dream world is created out my *vāsanās.*

-   I then enter the dream world that I have created and activate the *āvraṇa śakti*

-   The dreamness of the dream is concealed because of the *āvaraṇa śakti* and the dream is given a higher reality. My creatorhood is concealed and I claim the status of the created

-   I then suffer in the dream because dreamness is concealed and it looks as real as *jāgrat prapañca*. Thus, I empower the *svapna* to hurt me; this stage converts *svapna saṁsāra*. into The only solution to this problem is waking up.

The Vedānta says that the same thing happens to the *jāgrat prapañca* also. I, as Brahman is free from saṁsāra. When I come under the spell of *māyā* (*mahā nidrā*), *mahā vikṣepa śakti* becomes active. It then projects a *mahā svapna* called *jāgrat prapañca*. I enter this *jāgrat prapañca* and identify with the body in this *mahā svapna*. Then the *āvaraṇa śakti* conceals the fact that I am the creator of the *mahā svapna*. Then, the *mahā svapna* is misunderstood as real. Thus, I give it the capacity to burden me. Every person, object, stage of life, planets and even religion becomes

the cause of *saṁsāra*. Instead of liberating, religion becomes the cause of fear which the atheists are free from. The atheists seem to be better off because they only have the worldly fears. The religious people have both worldly and religious fears. This fear is primarily due losing sight of the main teaching of the religion and adhering to the mistaken symbolic messages.

After these four stages, the world becomes a burden. I am no longer Brahman because I have taken the identification of a *jīvā*. This is the message given here.

Continuing with this class

सः एव आत्मा – *Saḥ evaātmā* – I am none other than the *Paramātmā* – Ātmā is the real self

माया परिमोहितः – *māyā parimoitaḥ* - under the spell of *mahā nidrā* called *māyā*

शरीरम् आस्थाय – *śarīram āsthāya* – I identify with the physical body. I create this world through the *vikṣepa śakti* bestowed upon me by *mahā nidrā*. I, the Brahman, the creator of the universe also create this physical body (*prapañcam śarīraṁ ca sṛṣṭvā*). Then, I identify with this physical body – this is called *praveśaḥ*. Then *āvaraṇa śakti* is triggered. I then forget my *Paramātmā* status and identify with the *jīvātmā*.

सर्वं करोति – *sarvaṁ karoti* – I do all actions as *jīvātmā* having forgotten my *Paramātmā status* and the *mahā svapnam* status of this universe. The dream transactions are called *mahā svapna vyavahāra* – all our transactions are just that – described in the next line.

स्त्री अन्नपानादि विचित्रभोगैः – *strī annapānādi vicitrabhogaiḥ* - *Strī* means wife. Once I identify with the body, grow as an individual, build a relationship with a woman, establish a household and the kitchen. Then I engage in food and drinks. This is the journey for everyone. Then I go through all the experiences (*bhoga*) – *sukha* and *duḥkha* - in life – creating a family and deeply entrenching in the problems associated with relationships. I do this blindly and mechanically without understanding that it is *mahā svapna*. I do all this without questioning who I am, where I come from etc. (*kastvam, ko'haṁ kuta āyātaḥ, kā me jananī ko me tātaḥ* -

Who are you? Who am I? From where did I come? Who is my mother? Who is my father?).

How do I know whether I understand it is *svapna* or not? The moment I know this *svapna* as *svapna*, it stops to be a burden. When it is not understood as *svapna*, it becomes a *mahā* burden.

स एव – *sa eva* – This means that *Paramātmā* in *jīvātma veṣam*

जाग्रत् परितृप्तिमेति – *jāgrat paritṛptimeti* - goes through the enjoyment (*tṛpti*) in *jāgrat avasthā* (*prapañca*). This is the first *avasthā* called *mahā svapna*. Remaining in *mahā svapna*, the *jivātmā* creates another *svapna* – a dream within a dream – our regular dream called *alpa svapna*. This is described in the next verse.

Mantra 13

स्वप्ने स जीवः सुखदुःखभोक्ता, स्वमायया कल्पितजीवलोके।
सुषुप्तिकाले सकले विलीने, तमोऽभिभूतः सुखरूपमेति ॥ १३ ॥

Svapne sa jīvaḥ sukhaduḥkhabhoktā, svamāyayā kalpitajīvaloke I
Suṣuptikāle sakale vilīne, tamo'bhibhūtaḥ sukharūpameti II 13 II

स्वप्ने –**svapne** - During dream, सः जीवः–**saḥ jīvaḥ** - that jīva सुखदुःखभोक्ता – **sukhaduḥkhabhoktā** becomes the experiencer of pleasure and pain कल्पितजीवलोके – **kalpitajīvaloke** - in the subjective world projected by स्वमायया –**svamāyayā** - his own māyā. सकले विलीने–**sakale vilīne** - When everything is resolved सुषुप्तिकाले – **suṣuptikāle** - in the state of sleep, एति सुखरूपम् – **eti sukharūpam** - he attains the nature of ānanda, तमोऽभिभूतः–**tamo'bhibhūtaḥ** - overpowered by ignorance.

During dream, that jīva becomes the experiencer of pleasure and pain in the subjective world projected by his own māyā. When everything is resolved in the state of sleep, he attains the nature of ānanda, overpowered by ignorance.

Alpa svapna is caused by the regular sleep or *alpa nidrā*. The same sequence of *vikṣepa* and *āvaraṇa śaktis* operates here.

सः एव जीवः – *saḥ eva jīvaḥ* - The *jīva* who is under the spell of *mahā nidrā*, now comes under the spell of the second *alpa nidrā*. Through this, he enters into *alpa svapna*, which is called *prātibhāsika prapañca*. In that *svapna*, I get another body, which projected by my own *vāsanās*.

स्वमायया – *swamāyayā* – Through my *māyā* - here, *māyā* refers to *alpa nidrā*.

कल्पित जीवलोके - *kalpita jīvaloke* – I create the *alpa svapna* – the *prātibhāsika prapañca* – the subjective projection.

सुख दुःख भोक्ता भवति - *sukha duḥkha bhoktā bhavati* – Here also, I go through experiences similar to the *mahā svapna* – I get married (to may be someone different from the *jāgrat prapañca* wife), have children, problems etc. My *vāsanās* dictate the nature of the dream. *Svapna* becomes a burden because it is not understood as *svapna* in *svapna*. The moment I wake up, *svapna* becomes a joke for me because I know it is not real. I dismiss it once I understand it as *svapna*. Similarly, the moment I know that the *jāgrat prapañca* is *mahā svapna*, I am relieved of the burdens of *saṃsāra*. In the Vedānta, this is called *jagan mithyātva niścaya* or *mahā svapnatva niścaya*. If the *saṃsāra* continuously exists, a person will commit suicide. Therefore, we are given a brief respite from both *saṃsāras* briefly in *suṣupti avasthā* when *vikṣepa śakti* is not active.

सुषुप्तिकाले – *suṣupti kale* – this is the deep sleep state when *vikṣepa śakti* of both *alpa nidrā* and *mahā nidrā* are non-operational. The internal or the external universe is not projected at this time.

सकले विलीने – *sakale vilīne* - everything gets resolved in the deep sleep state,

तमोऽभिभूतः – *tamo'bhibhūtaḥ* - completely covered by *tamas*.

सुखरूपम् एति – *sukharūpam eti* – In *suṣupti*, I abide in *ātmasvarūpam* without knowing it. In fact, *suṣupti* is equal to mokṣa. In Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (*svayaṁjyoti brāhmaṇam*), *suṣupti* is given as an example for mokṣa. In *suṣupti*, I am *advaitaḥ* and *ānandaḥ*. The only problem is that when *suṣupti* is over, *vikṣepa* and *āvaraṇa śaktis* again take over.

Mantra 14

पुनश्च जन्मान्तरकर्मयोगात्, स एव जीवः स्वपिति प्रबुद्धः ।
पुरत्रयेक्रीडतियश्चजीवः, ततस्तुजातंसकलंविचित्रम् ।
आधारमानन्दमखण्डबोधं, यस्मिँल्लयंयाति पुरत्रयं च ॥ १४ ॥

Punaśca janmāntarakarmayogāt, sa eva jīvaḥ svapiti prabuddhaḥ I

Puratraye krīdati yaśca jīvaḥ tatsu jātaṁ sakalaṁ vicitram I

Ādhāramānandamakhaṇḍabodhaṁ, yasmin layaṁ yāti puratrayaṁ ca II 14 II

पुनः च–**punaḥ ca** - Once again, सः एव जीवः–**saḥ eva jīvaḥ** - that very jīva स्वपिति – **svapiti** - dreams प्रबुद्धः –**prabuddhaḥ** - or wakes up जन्मान्तर कर्मयोगात् –**janmāntara karmayogāt** - because of the association with past karma. सकलं विचित्रम् – **sakalaṁ vicitram** - All this diversity जातम् – **jātam** -is born ततः तु– **tataḥ tu** - out of that (jīvā) alone यः च जीवः – **yaḥ cajīvaḥ** - which jīva क्रीडति –**krīdati** - sports पुरत्रये– **puratraye** - in the three worlds of experience. च –**ca** - Moreover, पुरत्रयम्–**puratrayam** - the three worlds लयं याति – **layaṁ yāti** - resolve यस्मिन् –**yasmin** -into that (jīvā) अखण्डबोधम् – **akhaṇḍabodham** - which is indivisible consciousness आनन्दम् – **ānandam** - and ānanda, आधारम् – **ādhāram** - the substratum (of all).

Once again, that very jīva dreams or wakes up because of the association with past karma. All this diversity is born out of that (jīvā) alone which jīva sports in the three worlds of experience. Moreover, the three worlds resolve into that (jīvā) which is indivisible consciousness and ānanda, the substratum (of all).

Even though every *jīvātmā* gets a respite from *mahāsvapna* as well as *alpa svapna*, this respite is very brief – again he wakes up.

पुनः च – *punaḥ ca* – once again,

स एव जीवः – *sa eva jīvaḥ* – the very same *jīvātmā* who is none other than the *Paramātmā*,

स्वपिति - *svapiti* – enters *alpa svapna* (*svapiti = svapnaṁ paśyati*)

प्रबुद्धः – *prabuddhaḥ* - or he wakes up to *mahāsvapna.* He comes to *jāgrat avasthā.* The normal expression is - either he dreams or he wakes up. The Vedāntic expression is – either he enters *alpa svapna* or wakes up to *mahā svapna.* What decides which *svapna* I should enter and when?

जन्मान्तर कर्मयोगात् – *janmāntara karmayogāt* - the karma (*puṇya-pāpa*) from the past births (*janmāntara = pūrva janma*) decides this. I move around between *alpa svapna* and *mahā svapna – avasthātrayam* goes on and on

There are two important differences between *alpa svapna* and *mahāsvapna*:

In *alpa svapna*, waking happens naturally in time; no effort is required. I do not need to do any *sādhana* such as *karma yoga, upāsanā, śravanam, mananam* etc. in my dream to wake up. However, in *mahā svapna*, waking never happens naturally. If I do not deliberately work to wake up, *mahāsvapna* will continue eternally. Even if I go to *alpa svapna* and *suṣupti*, I will return eventually to *mahā svapna.* Thus, waking up requires effort as Kaṭhopanisad (1.3.14) puts it: *uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpyavarān nibodhata* – Arise! Wake Up! When the Upaniṣad says, "wake up", it is clear we are in dream. The Upaniṣad also clearly says waking up is not automatic – know your *Paramātmā* nature by approaching a *śrotriya Brahmaniṣṭha* guru (*varaḥ*). When I wake from *alpa svapna*, and enter *mahā svapna (jāgrata avasthā)*, both *vikṣepa* and *āvaraṇa śaktis* disappear. This means that *alpa svapna* ends when you wake up from *nidrā.* However, I come out of the *mahā nidrā* spell through *Ātmajñānam*, the *nidrā's āvaraṇa śakti* goes away and therefore, I understand *mahāsvapnam* as *mahāsvapnam.* However, the *vikṣepa śakti* of the *mahā nidrā* remains and therefore, the world does not disappear. The *jñānī* continues to experience the world until his physical death because of this *vikṣepa śakti.* This is *jīvanmukti* where the dream continues even after waking up through jñāna. With the disappearance of *āvaraṇa śakti*, I understand the *svapna* as *svapna.* I no longer consider myself as the created, but I understand myself as the creator. Thus, the *mahā svapna* does not disappear, but it gets falsified (*mithyātvam niścaya*).

पुरत्रये क्रीडति यः च जीवः – *puratraye krīḍati yaḥ ca jīvaḥ* - This *jīvātmā*, under the spell of *mahā nidrā* is sporting in the three *avasthās* (*puratrayam* – three *purams* = *avasthātrayam* – three *avasthās*) – *jāgrat avasthā* (*mahā svapna*), *svapna avasthā*

and *suṣupti avasthā*. We have to supply that this *jīvātmā* is none other than the *Paramātmā* under the spell of *mahā nidrā*.

ततः**तु** – *tataḥ tu* - From that *jīvātmā* who is none other than *Paramātmā* (we can use the word *ekātmā*)

सकलं विचित्रम् जातम् – *sakalaṁ vicitraṁ jātam* – the entire manifold universe belonging to both *alpa* and *mahā svapnas* is born.

The moment I come out of the spell of *mahā nidrā*, I am called a *jñānī*, which, in the language of the Vedānta is called *mahā* waker. People other than the *jñānīs* are in *alpa svapna* or *mahā svapna* or *suṣupti*. Therefore, the expression *tatastu jātaṁ vicitram* is a *mahāvākyam*. *Puratraye krīḍati yaśca jīvaḥ* is *tvaṁ pada lakṣyārtha*. And, *tatastu jātaṁsakalaṁ vicitram* is *tat pada aikyam*. This *jīvātmā* is none other than the *Paramātmā* and therefore there is only *ekātmā*. And what is that *ekātmā*? It is I, who has come out of both *nidrās–mahā nidrā* and *alpa nidrā*.

I can easily come out of *alpa nidrā* without my effort. I get out of *mahā nidrā* by claiming that I am the five capsules of the Vedānta:

- I am of the nature of eternal and all pervading consciousness
- I am the only source of permanent peace security and happiness
- By my mere presence, I lend life to the material body through which I experience the material universe
- I am never affected by any event that happens in the material world or to the material body. In the context of Kaivalya Upaniṣad, I can put it slightly differently. I, the *mahā* waker, am never affected by any event that happens in *alpa svapna* or in *mahāsvapna*.
- By forgetting my *mahā* waker nature, I convert life into a burden. Life consists of *alpa svapna* and *mahāsvapna*. By remembering my *mahā* waker nature, I convert life into a sport, entertainment or a blessing. This is the *jñānī's* discovery.

आधारम् – *ādhāram* – I, the *ekātmā* am the support (*ādhāraḥ*). Just as the *mahā* waker is the support of *mahāsvapna*, I am *viśvādhāraṁ gaganasadṛśam - gaganam*

means space – like *ākāśa*, I am the all-pervading Existence Consciousness. The millions of galaxies are just *mahā svapnās* in me, the *caitanyam*.

आनन्दम् – *ānandam* - I am *ānanda-svarūpa*. The term "I" does not refer to the body which is subject to pain. The mind reflects my *ānanda* now and then when the *puṇya* is favorable, but it is not its nature because it consists of the *guṇas* which are constantly fluctuating. A fluctuating mind cannot hold the *ānanda* reflection steadily. I am the original *ānanda* (*bimbānandaḥ*).

अखण्डबोधम् - *akhaṇḍabodham* - I am the undivided consciousness.

यस्मिन् लयं याति पुरत्रयं च - *yasmin layaṁ yāti puratrayaṁ ca* – The entire *puratrayam* consisting of the *jāgrat, svapna* and *suṣupti avasthās*, ultimately resolves into me. The term *yasmin* means *ekātmāni mayi* – in me, the *ekātmā*.

In short, the *mahāvākyam* is: I am Brahman, the *ekātmā,* the *mahā* waker.

12.   Mantras 14 (cont'd), 15, 16, 17.

पुनश्च जन्मान्तरकर्मयोगात्, स एव जीवः स्वपिति प्रबुद्धः ।
पुरत्रयेक्रीडतियश्चजीवः, ततस्तुजातंसकलंविचित्रम् ।
आधारमानन्दमखण्डबोधं, यस्मिँल्लयंयाति पुरत्रयं च ॥ १४ ॥

Punaśca janmāntarakarmayogāt, sa eva jīvaḥ svapiti prabuddhaḥ I
Puratraye krīdati yaśca jīvaḥ tatsu jātaṁ sakalaṁ vicitram I
Ādhāramānandamakhaṇḍabodhaṁ, yasmin layaṁ yāti puratrayaṁ ca II 14 II

Summary of the last class

The Upaniṣad points out that this *svapna prapañca*, the dream world is a burden for a dreamer until he becomes a waker. As long as the waker-hood is concealed by the spell of *nidrā*, the dreamworld overwhelms the dreamer. When the dreamer becomes the waker, he can comfortably say that *svapna prapañca* arises, rests and resolves in him. The objects and people in the *svapna prapañca* are nothing but thoughts in his mind. Thus, *svapna prapañca* is no longer a burden after this understanding.

In the Vedānta, this is extended to the *jāgrat prapañca* also. The *jāgrat prapañca* will be a burden until I know that I am a *mahā* waker. The *mahā* waker status is concealed by the spell of *mahā nidrā* (*māyā*) and thus, I, as an ordinary waker find the *jāgrat prapañca* overwhelming. Because of *māyā*, the *mahā nidrā*, I have lost sight of my *mahā* waker status. When I gain the higher status of *mahā* waker, I no longer find the *jāgrat prapañca* burdensome.

The *svapnaprapañca* disappears the moment I wake up from sleep. However, when I wake up from the *mahā nidrā* after gaining jñāna, the *jāgratprapañca* continues to exist. That is the first difference between the two wakings.

Waking from the dream can happen naturally when the *prārabdha* is exhausted because the duration of the dream is also decided by our *prārabdha* karma. The type of dream is also determined by *prārabdha* – *pāpa prārabdha* will bring terrible dreams and *puṇya prārabdha* will give good dreams. The *śāstras* also say that even a *jñānī* exhausts some amount of *prārabdha* through the dreams. Therefore, one can wake up from the dream, when that dream *prārabdha* is exhausted.

Waking up from the *jāgrat prapañca*'s *saṁsara* dream to our *mahā* waker status, will not happen automatically. If it is a natural process, *Vedānta vicāra* will be redundant. We have to work for it through karma and *upāsana* yogas, and *śravaṇa-manana-nididhyāsana* yogas.

What does one wake up to? The very same *jīva* who moves around in *avasthātrayam* (*yaḥ jīvaḥ puratraye krīḍati*) and remains the witness of the three states is the undivided Consciousness that is not confined to the body-mind complex (*saḥ jīvaḥ ādhāram ānandam and akhaṇḍabodham*) that is *ānandasvrūpam* and the substratum of the entire universe.

When I am in the dream, experiencing the dream universe, I am a member of that universe. When I wake up, the whole thing is reversed. Instead of saying that I am in *svapna prapañca*, I say that *svapna prapañca* is in me. Similarly when the second spiritual awakening takes place, I don't say I am in *jāgrat prapañca*, but I say that the entire *jāgrat prapañca* is in me. The word "me" does not imply the body-mind complex, but the Consciousness component that pervades the body-mind complex.

I am *ānandasvrūpaḥ* or *bimbānanda* that gets reflected by the mind now and then. I am also the *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *laya kāraṇam* expressed by the terms in the verse – *tatastu jātam*, *ādhāram* and *yasmin puratrayam layam yāti*.

The Upaniṣad defines Brahman as *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *laya kāraṇam*. Here it is said I am *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *laya kāraṇam*. Equating the two statement, we get the *mahāvākyam*: I am Brahman, the *jagat kāraṇam*.

Continuing with this class

Mantra 15

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणः, मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।
खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः, पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥ १५ ॥

Etastasmājjāyate prāṇaḥ, manaḥ savendriyāṇi ca |

Khaṁ vāyurjyotirāpaḥ, pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī || 15 ||

एतस्मात् – **etasmāt** - From this (jīva) जायते – **jāyate** - are born प्राणः – **prāṇaḥ** - the prāṇa, मनः – **manaḥ** - mind, सर्वेन्द्रियाणि – **sarvendriyāṇi** - all sense organs, खम् – **kham** - space, वायुः – **vāyuḥ** - air, ज्योतिः – **jyotiḥ** - fire, आपः – **āpaḥ** - water, च पृथिवी – **ca pṛthivī** - and the earth धारिणी विश्वस्य – **dhāriṇī viśvaya** - which is the supporter of all.

From this (jīva) are born the prāṇa, mind, all sense organs, space, air, fire, water, and the earth which is the supporter of all.

एतस्मात् – *etasmāt* - From this *jīvātmā* who is none other than the *Paramātmā* – the *ekātmā*, the *mahā* waker. The difference between *mahā* waker and an ordinary waker is *deha abhimāna* – the latter identifies with the body-mind complex and former renounces it.

खम् वायुः ज्योतिः आपः पृथिवी च जायते – *kham vāyuḥ jyotiḥ āpaḥ pṛthivī ca jāyate* – (from this *ekātmā* alone), the five elements (*pañca bhūtas*) arise - space (*kham*), air (*vāyuḥ*), fire (*jyotiḥ*), water (*āpaḥ*) and earth (*pṛthivī*).

विश्वस्य धारिणी – *viśvasya dhāriṇī* – This is the description for *pṛthivī*. It is the supporter (*dhāriṇī*) of all the things and beings (*viśvasya*). The *pañcabhūtas* include both *sthūla* and *sūkṣma bhūtas*. In addition to the *bhūta prapañca*, the *bhautika prapañcas* (products of *bhūta prapañcas*) are also born out me. These are:

प्राणः – *prāṇaḥ* - the five-fold physiological system (*pañca prāṇas*) – *prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, udāna* and *samāna.*

मनः – *manaḥ* - the four-fold internal organs (*antaḥkaraṇam*) consisting of the mind (*manaḥ*), intellect (*buddhi*), memory (*cittam*) and ego (*ahaṅkāra*)

इन्द्रियाणि च – and the ten sense organs – five organs of knowledge (*jñānendriyāṇi*) and five organs of action (*karmendriyāṇi*).

If you remember, it was taught in Tattva Bodha that *prāṇa* is born of all five subtle elements (*pañca sūkṣma bhūtas*) put together. Also, they are born out of *rajoguṇa* of the *pañca sūkṣma bhūtas.* Similarly, the mind is born out of the *sattva guṇa* of the *pañca sūkṣma bhūtas. Indriyas* are born out of the *sattva guṇa* of the individual *sūkṣma bhūtas.* Thus, the *sūkṣma śarīram* consists of the *pañca prāṇas, pañca jñānedriyāṇi, pañca karmendriyāṇi* and *catvāri antaḥkaraṇam.* I request all students

to necessarily study the Tattva Bodha before studying the Upaniṣads. To those who have already studied Tattva Bodha, I recommend revising it regularly. Otherwise, there will be gaps in understanding in the Upaniṣad class. The concepts in Tattva Bodha will be used heavily in the more difficult Upaniṣads such as Taittarīya and Māṇḍukya.

The Upaniṣad says that the *sūkṣma śarīrams* of all beings are born out of me. What a teaching! I am the ultimate cause of even Hiraṇyagarbha's *sukṣma śarīram*. In short, I am the *jagat kāraṇam Brahman*.

Mantra 16

यत्परं ब्रह्म सर्वात्मा, विश्वस्यायतनं महत् ।
सूक्ष्मात्सूक्ष्मतरं नित्यं, तत्त्वमेव त्वमेवतत् ॥ १६ ॥

Yatparaṁ brahma sarvātmā, viśvasyāyatanaṁ mahāt I
Sūkṣmātsūkṣmataraṁ nityaṁ, tattvameva tvameva tat II 16 II

त्वम् एव –**tvam eva** - You are indeed तद् महत् – **tad mahāt** - that infinite, नित्यम् – **nityam** - eternal, परं ब्रह्म – **paraṁ brahma** - supreme Brahman यत् सर्वात्मा–**yat sarvātmā** - which is the self of all, आयतनं विश्वस्य – **āyatanaṁ viśvasya** - which is the abode of all, सूक्ष्मतरं सूक्ष्मात् – **sūkṣmataraṁ sūkṣmāt** - and which is subtler than the subtle. तद् एव त्वम्–**tad eva tvam** - That (Brahman) is indeed you.

You are indeed that infinite, eternal, supreme Brahman which is the self of all, which isthe abode of all, and which is subtler than the subtle. That (Brahman) is indeed you.

Mantras 14, through 17 are *mahāvakya mantras* taught by the teacher.

यत् परं ब्रह्म – *yat paraṁ brahma* - The supreme (*paraṁ*) Brahman is described in the Upaniṣads as the cause of the universe (*jagat kāraṇam*)

विश्वस्य आयतनम् – *viśvasya āyatanam* – that *paraṁ Brahman* is described as the abode or the support of this vast universe, and therefore,

महत् – *mahat* – it is infinite. The universe includes space (*ākāśa*) also. Therefore, Brahman is even greater than *ākāśa*. Space arises only at creation and then

resolves at the time of *pralayam* into Brahman. Therefore, Brahman is the support of even *ākāśa.*

सर्व आत्मा – *sarva ātmā* – It is the inner essence of the entire creation. It is available in the form of *sat* (Existence) and *cit* (Consciousness) principle in all the living beings (*sat cit rūpeṇa sarva ātmā*).

नित्यम् – *nityam* - It is eternal - which means that it continues to exist even after the time resolves. When the universe resolve, the space and time also get resolved. Everything is located in time but time itself is located in Brahman.

A side note on time and space: space is understood as the gap between two things. Therefore, concept of space requires duality. When duality resolves, space also resolves. Similarly time is always understood as a gap between two events. If duality goes away, the events go away and then time ceases to exist. In deep sleep state, duality of objects and events do not exist and therefore, space and time are resolved.. In *suṣupti*, even when time and space are resolved, the time-less and space-less *caitanyam* continues. *Nityam* means time-less and space-less.

सूक्ष्मात् सूक्ष्मतरम् – *sūkṣmāt sūkṣmataram* – It is subtler than the subtlest entity. In the *śāstras*, subtlety is measured by the number of attributes that an entity has. Greater the number of attributes, less the subtle an object is. Subtlety is inversely proportional to the number of *guṇas*. Subtler the element, the more difficult it is to comprehend. I will give the following example:

Of the five elements, *pṛthivī* (the earth) is the grossest (least subtle) because it has all the five properties (*guṇas*) – *śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa* and *gandha* (*pañca indriya grāhyam* - can be grasped by all five sense organs). *Jalam* (water) is subtler than *pṛthivī* because it has only four *guṇas* – it does not have smell or *gandha*. It is *catur indriya grāhyam*. Agni is subtler than *jalam* because it has only three *guṇas* - in addition to smell, it lacks taste (*rasam*) and therefore, it *tri-indriya grāhyam*. *Vāyu* has only two *guṇas* – it does not have form (*rūpa*). Thus, it is *dvi-indriya grāhyam*. Space or *ākāśa* is the subtlest because, it cannot even be felt by touch. It has only one property, which is sound (*śabda mātra guṇam*). It can be grasped only by one *indriya*, the ear (*śrotrendriyam*). It is *eka-indriya grāhyam*. Thus, *ākāśa* is the most difficult to understand because it can only be heard – not in the general form, but *ākāśa's śabda* becomes manifest through speech or any instrument.

Brahman does not have a single *guṇa* - *aśabdam, asparsham, arūpam, arasam* and *agandham*. It is subtler than the subtlest *ākāśa*. Therefore it is *pañca indriya agrāhyam*. It cannot be objectified and therefore it is incomprehensible (*aprameyam*). Naturally, we get a fundamental doubt: if it can never be objectified by any instrument, how do I know that the blessed Brahman exists?

The Upaniṣad says that Brahman exists. What is it that exists, but can never be objectified?

तद् एव त्वम् – *tad eva tvam* – That (Brahman) is you. Prajāpati, the guru of this Upaniṣad says that the objectifier of everything, the subject is one that can never be objectified.

Everything in the world can be observed except the observer, the Consciousness. Even my body-mind complex is observed by me and through it, I observe the world. Therefore, the body and mind are the observed as well as the observing media. But I am neither the observed, nor the observing medium. I am the observer Consciousness.

The third capsule of the Vedānta says: by my mere presence, I give life to the material body, and through this body, I experience the material universe. We extend this to the mind also. I am neither the material universe nor the material body nor the material mind. I am the non material spiritual consciousness principle called Brahman. Therefore, *tat Brahman tvam eva* is a *mahāvākyam*.

त्वम् एव तत् – *tvam eva tat* – You alone are That (Brahman). It is reinforced by putting it in the reverse form. Brahman is you and you are Brahman. Then only the *aikyam* (merger) becomes complete.

Mantra 17

जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्त्यादि-प्रपञ्चंयत्प्रकाशते।
तद् ब्रह्माहमितिज्ञात्वा, सर्वबन्धैःप्रमुच्यते ॥ १७ ॥

Jāgratsvapnasuṣuptyādi-prapañcaṁ yatprakāśate I

Tad brahmāhamiti jñātvā, sarvabandhaiḥ pramucyate II 17 II

अहं तद् ब्रह्म – **ahaṁ tad brahma** - I am that Brahman यत् प्रकाशते – **yat prakāśate** - which illumines जाग्रत्स्वप्रसुषुप्त्यादि-प्रपञ्चम् - **jāgratsvapnasuṣuptyādi-prapañcaṁ** - the worlds like waking, dream, and sleep. ज्ञात्वा इति – **jñātvā iti** - Having known thus, प्रमुच्यते – **pramucyate** - one is liberated सर्वबन्धैः – **sarvabandhaiḥ** - from all bonds.

I am that Brahman which illumines the worlds like waking, dream, and sleep. Having known thus, one is liberated from all bonds.

This mantra is another very important *mahāvākyam*. In fact, all these mantras can be used for *nididhyāsanam*. The Vedāntic *nididhyāsanam* not like a yogic meditation, which is simply a thoughtless state (*nirvikalpaka samādhi*). It is dwelling upon the essential teaching of the Vedāntic scriptures – I can practice it through these mantras, by claiming that I am the *mahā* waker in the *veṣam* (guise) of a father, mother, spouse, child etc. By this, I keep reminding myself that these are all *veṣams*. The moment I forget that these are *veṣams*, I forget that I am a *mahā* waker and I become *mahā* real. This is when the life becomes MBBS – **M**eaningless, **B**urdensome, and **B**oring **S**truggle, that I am tired of.

How should you do *nididhyāsanam* using these *mahāvākya* mantras?

तद् ब्रह्म अहम् – *tad brahma aham* – I am that Brahman, the creator (not the created). So, this is a *mahāvākyam* without a preposition. Technical definition of *mahāvākyam* is: *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā* are mentioned without any preposition. The statements like "I am from *jīvātmā*" or "I am from *Paramātmā*" or "I am in *Paramātmā*" are not *mahāvākyas*. We create *dvaita* the moment we use a preposition. With the freedom from the dividing preposition (*bhedaka vibhakti abhāvaḥ*), we get *tad brahma aham asmi* – I am that *mahā* waker Brahman.

यत् प्रकाशते –*yat prakāśate* – As the *jīvātmā* behind the body-mind complex, I reveal or illumine

जाग्रत् स्वप्र सुषुप्ति आदि प्रपञ्चम् – *jāgrat svapna suṣupti ādi prapañcam* – As the *Paramātmā* playing the *jivātmā* role, I illumine the three-fold universe (*prapañcatrayam*) consisting of the three *avasthās* – *jāgrat, svapna* and *suṣupti*. The *suṣupti prapañca* is nothing but the *jāgrat* and *svapna prapañcas* in unmanifest condition. It is also called the *avyakta prapañca*, also known as *māyā*. In the deep sleep state, I am the witness of *māyā*, which is total blankness. According to the

Vedānta, blankness is not nothingness, but the creation in the invisible unmanifest state – *avyakta avasthā*.

Thus, as the *jīvātmā*, I witness *suṣupti* in the *avayakta prapañcam*, *svapna* in *sūkṣma prapañcam* and *jāgrat* in *sthūla prapañcam*. Am I, the witness affected by what I witness? The Vedānta says that I, the witness am not affected by what I witness just as the sunlight which reveals all the objects on the earth, is not contaminated by the dirty objects. We saw this in mantra 2.2.11 of the Kaṭhopaniṣad:

सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुः, न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैर्बाह्यदोषैः ।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा, न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्यः ॥

sūryo yathā sarvalokasya cakṣuḥ, na lipyate cākṣuṣairbāhyadoṣaiḥ
ekastathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā, na lipyate lokaduḥkhena bāhyaḥ

Being transcendental, the one Ātmā which is in all beings is not affected by the sorrows of the world just as the sun, the eye of the entire world is not affected by the perceptual (and) external impurities.

The skeptical students ask how one cannot be affected because their experience says otherwise. They are affected by the actions of their spouses, children, bosses etc. I am affected only when I forget my *mahā* waker status and identify with the body-mind complex, which is also part of *prapañcatrayam*.   The meaning of the word I is – the witness (*sākṣī*) of the body-mind complex – as the witness of the distress of mind also, I am unaffected. With the status of *mahā* waker, I understand that the mind being material in nature, cannot avoid fluctuation. Lord Krishna says in verse 14.22 of the Gītā:

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च पाण्डव।
न द्वेष्टि सम्प्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥

prakāśaṃ ca pravṛttiṃ ca mōhamēva ca pāṇḍava |
na dvēṣṭi sampravṛttāni na nivṛttāni kāṅkṣati ||

Oh Arjuna ! He does not hate brightness, activity, and delusion as they arise, nor does he desire (them) as they withdraw.

The jñānī accepts the fluctuations of the mind by remaining detached from the mind because he understands that the mind is also subject to the three gunas. The detachment from the mind is *sākṣi bhāva*.

इति ज्ञात्वा – *iti jñātvā* - Thus claiming the *mahā* waker status, that is called *sākṣi bhāva*, and that the entire universe is only *nāma-rūpa prapañca*, I am untouched – the Sanskrit word for this is *asaṅga sākṣī*. This is called binary format.

सर्व बन्धैः प्रमुच्यते - *sarva bandhaiḥ pramucyate* - such a person will be free from all the shackles of *saṁsāra*.

If I do not acquire the binary format (*sākṣibhava*), I slip from the *mahā* waker status to the ordinary waker, which means I am in the triangular format. In the triangular format, karma controls my fate. With karma, I am ever stuck in the cycle of birth and death.

Many people think bhakti can save them from karma. A bhakta can save himself from karma only when he uses Bhagavan to come to the binary format. An intelligent bhakta does not use Bhagavan not to save him from each *prārabdha* because this is not the permanent solution. This will only take him from one problem to another. The intelligent use of bhakti is to study Bhagavan's *śāstras* and lifting oneself from the triangular format to the binary format. Graduate from the *ārta* and *arthārtha bhakti* to *jijñāsu* and then jñāna bhakti.

13.   Mantras 17 (continued), 18, 19 and 20

जाग्रत्स्वप्रसुषुप्त्यादि-प्रपञ्चंयत्प्रकाशते।
तद् ब्रह्माहमितिज्ञात्वा, सर्वबन्धैःप्रमुच्यते ॥ १७ ॥

Jāgratsvapnasuṣuptyādi-prapañcaṁ yatprakāśate I

Tad brahmāhamiti jñātvā, sarvabandhaiḥ pramucyate II 17 II

Summary of the last class

From mantra 12 onwards, the teacher Prajāpati is giving *mahāvākya upadeśa* in which he is pointing out that the *jīvātmā,* who is the witness of the three states (*avasthātraya sākṣi caitanyam*) is none other than the *Paramātmā*, the supporter (*adiṣṭhānam*) of the entire creation as pure Existence. So, it is taught that the Consciousness (*cit*) is the same as Existence (*sat*). That was summarized in mantra 17 that we completed in the last class.

The Consciousness illumines *avasthātrayam* that consists of:

- *Jāgrat avāthā* – the extroverted state of mind that travels out through the sense organs

- *Svapna avasthā* – the introverted state of mind turned towards its own memories and *vāsanās*

- *Suṣupti avasthā*– the state when the mind is neither extroverted or introverted, but passive and relaxed

These three *avasthās* together constitute *antaḥkaraṇa dharma*.

I am the observer of the mind as well as its three states. Therefore, these attributes (the three states) belong to the mind and not to me. I am the *avasthātraya sākṣī,* different from *avasthātrayam*. Therefore, the problems of *saṁsāra* belong to *avasthātrayam* and not to me, the *sākṣī*. The attitude that I am *saṁsāra vilakṣaṇah* is called *sākṣī bhāvaḥ*. In summary, I am that Brahman.

Then, that Brahman I am. Here, by Brahman, we mean the pure Existence, which is all pervading. Why do we shift our attention from Consciousness to Existence?

When we understand Ātmā as only Consciousness, we feel Ātmā is limited in location because Consciousness is available only in the mind. Existence is not located in one place; it is in the nearest atom as well as the farthest star. Therefore, we have to equate Consciousness with Existence. Therefore I, the Consciousness (*cit*) am none other than Existence (*sat*) is *jīvātma-Paramātma-aikyam*, which in my language is the binary format. Since I am the *sat-cit Ātmā*, everything has to borrow existence from me. Just as the dream world borrows its existence from the waker, the *jāgrat prapañca* borrows its existence from *mahā* waker. And since they all have borrowed existence, they are *mithyā* while I am s*atyam*. This is *satyam-mithyā*, the binary format that will set me free . Until I adopt this format, I will be stuck with the problems of *saṁsāra* in the triangular format.

Continuing with this class

Mantra 18

त्रिषु धामसु यद्भोग्यं, भोक्ता भोगश्च यद्भवेत् ।
तेभ्यो विलक्षणः साक्षी, चिन्मात्रोऽहं सदाशिवः ॥ १८ ॥

Triṣu dhāmasu yadbhogyaṁ, bhoktā bhogaśca yadbhavet I
Tebhyo vilakṣaṇaḥ sākṣī, cinmātro'haṁ sadāśivaḥ II 18 II

अहं विलक्षणः – **ahaṁ vilakṣaṇaḥ** - I am distinct तेभ्यः – **tebhyaḥ** - from all those यद् भोक्ता भवेत् – **yad bhoktā bhavet** - which are the subject (of experience,) यद् भोग्यम् – **yad bhogyam** - the object (of experience,) च भोगः – **ca bhogaḥ** - and the instrument (of experience) त्रिषु धामसु – **triṣu dhāmasu** - in all the three states. साक्षी – **sākṣī** - (I am) the witness चिन्मात्रः – **cinmātraḥ** - which is pure consciousness सदाशिवः – **sadāśivaḥ** - and which is ever auspicious.

I am distinct from all those which are the subject (of experience,) the object (of experience,) and the instrument (of experience) in all the three states. (I am) the witness which is pure consciousness and which is ever auspicious.

Up to mantra 17, the teacher gives the *mahāvākya upadeśa* to the *śiṣya* (*tat tvam asi*). In mantras 18 through 22, the same *mahāvākya* is presented as received by the *śiṣya* (*ahaṁ brahma asmi*).The former is called *upadeśa rūpa mahāvākyam* and the latter is called *anubhava rūpa mahāvākyam*. In the latter *mahāvākyam*, the student declares that he has achieved the binary format.

This is reflected in a splendid śloka written by Śaṅkarācārya in *Advaita Pañcakam*, also called *Advaita Pañcaratnam*. All five ślokas in this are *nididhyāsana ślokas*. He has written many *ślokas* in which I can claim that I am *satyam* and everything else is *mithyā* (*Ahaṁ Brahma asmi, ahaṁ satyam mad vyatiriktam sarvaṁ mithyā*)

मत्तो नान्यत्किञ्चिदत्रास्ति विश्वं
    सत्यं बाह्यं वस्तु मायोपक्लृप्तम् ।
आदर्शान्तर्भासमानस्य तुल्यं
    मय्यद्वैते भाति तस्माच्छिवोऽहम् ॥ ५ ॥

mattō nānyatkiñcidatrāsti viśvaṁ
    satyaṁ bāhyaṁ vastu māyōpaklṛptam |
ādarśāntarbhāsamānasya tulyaṁ
    mayyadvaitē bhāti tasmācchivō:'ham || 5 ||

Other than me, there is no universe that is *satyam*. The *bāhya prapañca* (external universe) is projected by own *māyā śakti* – like a city reflected in a mirror. I am the very self-effulgent *advāita* Śiva.

These have been borrowed from the beautiful *nididhyāsana* mantra of Kaivalya Upaniṣad.

अहं साक्षी अस्मि – *ahaṁ sākṣī asmi* - I am the *cid rūpaḥ*, the original Consciousness, which is called *sākṣī* from my own standpoint. I, the *sākṣī,* am known by three names when I am associated with the three *avasthās*:

Viśva – illuminating the *jāgrat avasthā*
Taijasa – illuminating the svapna avasthā
Prājña – illuminating the suṣupti avasthā

This is akin to the term moonlight – moon does not have its own light; it is borrowed from the sun. It is only the sunlight that spreads over the moon is called moonlight. I, the Consciousness, remaining the same, illuminate the three *avasthās* – *jāgrat*, *svapna* and *suṣupti*. Consciousness is my intrinsic nature.

त्रिषु धामसु – *triṣu dhāmasu* – in these three states – *jāgrat, svapna* and *suṣupti avasthās,*

यत्भोग्यम् - *yat bhogyam* – three universes are experienced – *sthūla prapañca* in *jāgrat avasthā, sūkṣma prapañca* in *svapna avasthā* and *kāraṇa prapañca* in *suṣupti avasthā*.

भोक्ता – bhoktā– there are three experiencers (the subjects) – *viśva cidābhāsa* in *sthūlaprapañca, taijasa cidābhāsa* in *sūkṣma prapañca* and *prājña cidābhāsa* in *kāraṇa prapañca*.

भोगः च–*bhogaḥ ca* –and three experiences (*anubhavatrayam*) in the form of thoughts in these three universes

The process of experience involves three things: *bhoktā* (the subject), *bhogyam* (the object) and *bhogaḥ* (it can mean either the experience or the experiencing instrument). This group of three is called *tripuṭi* (triad).

तेभ्यः विलक्षणः – *tebhyaḥ vilakṣaṇaḥ* - I am different from all of them – that is, I am different from anything that I experience. The fundamental law is that the experiencer is different from anything that is experienced. For example, the camera is different from anything that is photographed; the camera will never be in the picture.

Am I the subject or different from the subject? I, the Consciousness am neither the subject nor the object. When I am experiencing something, there is an object of experience. To experience that object, I temporarily get the status of the subject. When the object is negated, I lose the subjecthood. I enjoy the guru status because of you, the *śiṣyas* continue to come to the class. I am elevated to gurudom. Guru minus the gurudom is just an individual. Minus the object, the Consciousness is not even the subject. What is my nature?

चिन्मात्रः – *cinmātraḥ* - I am pure Consciousness. Emotions do not belong to me, but to the mind, the medium of expression. You may have a good CD, but of the CD player (medium) is defective, the music sounds bad. Similarly, I am pure, but when expressing through the defective body-mind complex, I appear to be horrible. This is the definition of *jīvātmā*.

सदाशिवः –*Sadāśivaḥ* - I, the *jīvātmā*, the Consciousness behind the individual self, am none other than the *Paramātmā*, the Consciousness behind the universal self. *Sadāśivaḥ* is the universal Consciousness (*Śiva eva sadā jīvaḥ* - Śaṅkarācārya in *Advaita Anubhūti*).

Mantra 19

मय्येव सकलं जातं, मयि सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
मयि सर्वं लयं याति, तद् ब्रह्माद्वयमस्म्यहम् ॥ १९ ॥

Mayyeva sakalaṁ jātaṁ, mayi sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam I
Mayi sarvaṁ layaṁ yāti, tad brahmādvayamasmyaham II 19 II

सकलं जातम् – **sakalaṁ jātam** - Everything is born मयि एव – **mayi eva** - in me alone, सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् – **sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam** - everything is based on me alone; सर्वं लयं याति – **sarvaṁlayaṁ yāti** - everything resolves मयि – **mayi** - into me alone. अहं अस्मि – **ahaṁ asmi** - I am तद् अद्वयं ब्रह्म – **tad advayaṁ brahma** - that nondual Brahman.

Everything is born in me alone; everything is based on me alone; everything resolves into me alone. I am that nondual Brahman.

This is a very beautiful mantra. In the dream I feel that I am a creature within the *svapna prapañca*, but the moment I wake up, I reverse the statement that the dream world is within me. Also, I say that the dream world is born out of me (I am the *sṛṣṭi kāraṇam*), it rests in me (I am the *sthiti kāraṇam*) and it resolves into me (I am the *laya kāraṇam*). I can say this only as a waker, but not as a dreamer. Similarly, after understanding that I am the *mahā* waker, I am able to make the statement that *jāgrat prapañca* is *mahā svapna* which is born out of me, rests in me and also resolves in me.

मयि एव सकलं जातम् – *mayi eva sakalaṁ jātam* – Everything is born out of me. I am the *jagat kāraṇam brahma*. This is the meditation that is prescribed here. The whole universe including time and space is born out of me, but the statement will be a fact only when the meaning of the word "me", is clear. If I take me as the body-mind complex, this mantra is absolutely meaningless. Before practicing *nididhyāsanam*, I should be clear about the meaning of I as the Consciousness – only then, abiding in it, this statement will be meaningful. As Lord Krishna prescribes in verse 6.25

(*śanaiḥ śanaiḥ uparamed*) - before dwelling upon this mantra, learn to gradually withdraw from the *pañca anatmas* – incidental profession, possessions, family etc. mentally handing them over *viśvarūpa Īśvara*. This is called *ātma-nivedana-rūpa-bhaktiḥ*. Through this bhakti, *ahaṅkāra* and *mamakāra* must be sincerely handed over. This is the symbolism in Mahābali and Vāmana *avatāra* - Mahābali handed over everything, but still retained *ahaṅkāra.* Vāmana's first two steps removed his *mamakāra* and the third step removed his *ahaṅkāra.*

From me, the *caitanyam* alone, the creation is dancing about for a few seconds. When we look from the point of view of totality, these experiences are nothing but a few moments (*kṣaṇams*). However, the problem is we get lost in the bubble called life. We miss the *adhiṣṭhānam* behind the bubble. In the bubble, I miss my true nature – water.

मयि सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम्–*mayi sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam* – everything rests in me, albeit for a limited time. I am the *sthiti kāraṇam*.

मयि सर्वं लयं याति – *mayi sarvaṁ layam yāti* - Ultimately, they all resolve into me only. I am the *laya kāraṇam*. Brahman is said to be *sṛṣṭi-sthiti-laya kāraṇam* in the Upaniṣads. Here the student is saying that he is *sṛṣṭi-sthiti-laya kāraṇam*. What does the student imply?

तद् अद्वयं ब्रह्म अहम् अस्मि – *tad advayaṁ brahma aham asmi* – I am that non-dual Brahman

This is another beautiful mantra for *nididhyāsanam*.

Mantra 20

अणोरणीयानहमेव तद्वद्, महानहं विश्वमहं विचित्रम् ।
पुरातनोऽहं पुरुषोऽहमीशः, हिरण्मयोऽहं शिवरूपमस्मि ॥ २० ॥

Aṇoraṇīyānahameva tadvad, mahānahaṁ viśvamahāṁ vicitram I
Purātano'haṁ puruṣo'hamīśaḥ, hiraṇmayo'haṁ śivarūpamasmi II 20 II

अहम्अणीयान् अणोः – **aham aṇīyān aṇoḥ** - I am subtler than the subtle. तद्वत् – **tadvat** - Equally, अहं महान् एव – **ahaṁ mahān eva** - I am big also. अहम् – **aham** - I am विचित्रम्

– **vicitram** - the manifold विश्वम् – **viśvam** - universe. – अहंपुरातनः – **aham purātanaḥ** - I am the ancient one. अहंपुरुषः – **aham puruṣaḥ** - I am the all-pervasive one. ईशः – **īśaḥ** - (I am) the ruler. अहंहिरण्मयः – **aham hiraṇmayaḥ** - I am the effulgent one. अस्मिशिवरूपम् –**asmi viśvarūpam** - I am the very auspiciousness.

I am subtler than the subtle. Equally, I am big also. I am the manifold universe. I am the ancient one. I am the all-pervasive one. (I am) the ruler. I am the effulgent one. I am the very auspiciousness.

This is another wonderful *nididhyāsana* mantra.

अहम् एव अणोः अणीयान् महतः महीयान् – *aham eva aṇoḥ aṇīyān mahātaḥ mahīyān* - We saw the same idea expressed in mantra 1.2.20 in *Kaṭhopaniṣad* . I am the smallest and the biggest thing in creation. How to understand this? The whole creation is nothing but Ātmā plus *nāma-rūpa* – just as water that appears as the smallest bubble as well as the biggest ocean. The bubble is a product (*kāryam*), whose cause is the ocean (*kāraṇam*). Vedānta says that there is really neither bubble, the *kāryam* nor ocean, the *kāraṇam*. There is no bubble or ocean; there is only water. Similarly, I am one *sat-cit-ātmā*, who appears as a micro atom as well as the macro star or sun. I appear as *kāryam* as well as *kāraṇam*. I appear as *jīvātmā* as well as *Paramātmā*. Once you remove all the *nāma-rūpas*, I am *ekātmā* only. The awareness of the fact that everything is my own appearance is called *sarvātmabhāvaḥ - sarvam ātmā iti bhāvah*.

विचित्रं विश्वम् अहम् अस्मि –*vicitram viśvam aham asmi* - The universe which is the wonder of all wonders that is full of varieties and opposites (mixture of good and bad, pain and pleasure etc.). Mokṣa is not trying to get only good life; it is accepting the pairs of opposites as an integral part of this transactional universe (*vyāvahārika prapañca*).

अहं पुरातनः – *aham purātanaḥ* - I am the most ancient one – *anādiḥ*, which means without beginning.

अहं पुरुषः – *aham puruṣaḥ* - The word *puruṣaḥ* has two meanings:

- the resident of the body – *purī śarīre ṣete iti puruṣaḥ* - Consciousness as *jīvātmā – puruṣete iti puruṣaḥ jīvātmā*.

- The one pervades everything – *pūrayati sarvam iti puruṣaḥ*.. So as *Paramātmā*, I pervade everything.

In short, I am the *jīvātmā* as well as the *Paramātmā*.

ईशः – *īśaḥ* - I am the master - the independent one on whom the entire world is dependent. *Satyam* is independent while *mithyā* depends upon *satyam*. Bubble and ocean are both dependent on water, but the existence of water is independent of them. The waker is independent of the dream, but the latter depends upon the former. I am *Īśaḥ* who is *svatantraḥ*, which means the free one.

अहं हिरण्मयः – *aham hiraṇmayaḥ* - I am effulgent. I am *caitanya svarūpaḥ* that is also *prakāśa svarūpaḥ*. *Hiraṇmaya* literally means golden and gold represents the shining. *Prakāśa* in the Vedāntic context means Consciousness.

शिवरूपम् अस्मि – *śivarūpam asmi* – *Śivaḥ* means auspiciousness (*maṅgala svarūpaḥ*). I am ever the auspicious one. And auspiciousness stands for *ānanda* because it is *maṅgalam* (*duḥkham* is *amaṅgalam*). Therefore, *Śivarūpam* means *ānanda svarūpaḥ aham asmi*.

We have so far described I, the Consciousness as *sat* and *cit*; now Prajāpati brings in the third concept: I am *ānandaḥ*. I get reflected in the mind now and then and this reflection is called *pratibimba ānandaḥ* or experiential pleasure. This experiential pleasure appears when the mind reflects *ānanda*, but disappears when the reflection goes away. The mind, by nature is fluctuating constantly and hence, the experiential pleasures come and go. I, the *ānanda*, am ever present. We will see this analyzed more elaborately in the next Upaniṣad – *ānanda mīmāmsā* in Taittirīya Upaniṣad.

One may wonder if our problems will go away after studying the Vedānta. The problems will still be very much there, but they will be dimmed when the mind is saturated with the light of this knowledge. This is called *abhibhāvaḥ*. During the day time, the stars are very much there, but they are as though absent because of the overwhelming sunlight. Similarly, the *jñānīs* also have the same problems as the *ajñānīs* because they share the same world, but with *nididhyāsanam*, they keep the light of self-knowledge in his mind all the time. That is why, *śravaṇam* alone is not enough. This is called mokṣa (*mithyātva niścayaḥ*).

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14. Mantras 21 to 25

अपाणिपादोऽहमचिन्त्यशक्तिः, पश्याम्यचक्षुः स शृणोम्यकर्णः ।
अहं विजानामि विविक्तरूपः, न चास्ति वेत्ता मम चित्सदाहम् ॥ २१ ॥

Apāṇipādo'hamacintyaśaktiḥ, paśyāmyacakṣuḥ sa śṛnomykarṇaḥ |
Ahaṁ vijānāmi vivikatrūpaḥ, na cāsti vettā mama citsadāham || 21 ||

अहम् अपाणिपादः – **aham apāṇpādaḥ** - I am without hands and legs; अचिन्त्यशक्तिः – **acintyaśaktiḥ** - (yet) I am endowed with incomprehensible power. पश्यामि – **paśyāmi** - I see अचक्षुः – **acakṣuḥ** - without eyes. शृणोमि – **śṛnomi** - I hear अकर्णः – **akarṇaḥ** - without ears. विविक्तरूपः – **viviktarūpaḥ** - Endowed with a distinct nature, सः अहं विजानामि – **saḥ ahaṁvijānāmi** - I know (everything). च अस्ति न – **ca asti na** - But there is no one वेत्तामम – **vettāmama** - who is the knower of me. अहम् – **aham** - I am सदाचित् – **sadā cit** - ever the pure consciousness.

I am without hands and legs; (yet) I am endowed with incomprehensible power. I see without eyes. I hear without ears. Endowed with a distinct nature, I know (everything). But there is no one who is the knower of me. I am ever the pure consciousness.

Having given the *mahāvākya upadeśa*, Prajāpati, the teacher now discusses the *nididhyāsana sādhana* to be followed by the student, who has received and understood the *mahāvākyas*. *Nididhyāsanam* will work only when my knowledge of the *mahāvākyas* is doubt-free. It should not be mere conditioning of the mind through belief or brainwashing. The purpose of the Vedānta is not to change the world or even my body and the mind. The purpose is to understand very clearly that my true nature is Brahman and revise my original thinking that I am this miserable and limited body-mind complex. I should not only learn to look at myself as Brahman, but also align all the other thoughts in my day to day life with this basic fundamental thought – *ahaṁ brahma asmi*.

I give you an example: I have a temperature chart that shows the temperature in different cities - Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Ernakulam etc. At the top of the chart, it is indicated that the temperatures are in degrees Celsius. If I want to change the temperatures to Fahrenheit, it is not sufficient just to change from Celsius to Fahrenheit at the top, but all the numbers must be correspondingly changed.

Similarly, change or revision of my opinion about myself should also bring about the change in my opinion regarding family, world, and events. If the corresponding change does not take place, it will be *aham brahma asmi* during Vedānta class, but *jīvosmi* during my transactional life. I will be stuck in *saṁsāra* in spite of my knowledge. Therefore, *nididhyāsanam* is extremely important. This means that the description of Brahman we have seen the Upaniṣad must translate to description of me.

अहम् अचिन्त्य शक्तिः – *aham acintya śaktiḥ* - I am Brahman with unimaginable (infinite) power called *māyā,* with which I create, sustain and resolve the world (*sṛṣṭi-sthiti-laya-śakti*). With *sattva pradhāna māyā*, I play the role of *Īśvara*, with *rajaḥ pradhāna māya*, I am *jīva* and with *tamaḥ pradhāna māyā*, I act as *jagat*.

अपाणिपादः – *apāṇipādaḥ* - I enjoy all these powers even without the instruments like hands and legs. The powers are not derived from hands and legs because I had these powers even before these hands and legs were born. I create the world without these instruments.

पश्यामि अचक्षुः – *paśyāmi acakṣuḥ* - I am aware of everything without the eyes because I am behind the seeing power of the eyes - I see everything through these eyes that I give the power to.

शृणोमि अकर्णः – I am the earless hearer of everything. The commentators give the example: I hear the sounds in dream, without using these ears. Similarly I see the dream objects without eyes because the eyes are closed. How do I experience dream *śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa, gandha*, even when the *panchendriyas* are shut? It is because of the unique power of consciousness.

अहं विजानामि विविक्त रूपः – *ahaṁ vijānāmi vivikta rūpaḥ* - I know everything taking the form of different *jīvas* or *pramātās* (*vivikta rūpaḥ*). I experience everything just as we do in dream.

मम वेत्ता न अस्ति – *mama vettā na asti* – This is the greatest wonder - I know everything, but there is none who can know me. The objectifier cannot be objectified. What is my nature?

सदा अहं चिद्रूपः अस्मि – *sadā ahaṁ chidrūpah asmi* - I am ever of the nature of Consciousness.

Mantra 22

वेदैरनेकैरहमेव वेद्यः, वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ।
न पुण्यपापे मम नास्ति नाशः, न जन्मदेहेन्द्रियबुद्धिरस्ति ।
न भूमिरापो न च वह्निरस्ति, न चानिलो मेऽस्ति न चाम्बरं च ॥ २२ ॥

Vedairanekairahameva vedyaḥ, vedāntakṛdvedavideva cāham I

Na puṇyapāpe mama nāsti nāśaḥ, na janmadehendriyabuddhirasti I

Na bhūmirāpo na ca vahnirasti, na cānilo me'sti na cāmbaraṁ ca II 22 II

अहम् एव – **aham eva** - I alone am वेद्यः – **vedyaḥ** - to be known अनेकैः वेदैः –**anekaiḥ vedaiḥ** - through all the Vedas. वेदान्तकृत – **vedāntakṛt** - I am the initiator of the Vedānta. अहम् एव च–**aham eva ca** - I alone am वेदवित् – **vedavit** - the knower of the Vedas. पुण्यपापेन – **puṇyapāpena** - Puṇya and pāpa do not मम – **mama** - belong to me. अस्ति न नाशः – **asti na nāśaḥ** - There is no death (for me). जन्मदेहेन्द्रियबुद्धिः – **janmadehendriyabuddhiḥ** - Birth, body, sense organs, and intellect न अस्ति – **na asti** - do not belong (to me). भूमिः च आपः – **bhūmiḥ caāpaḥ** Earth and water न –**na** - do not belong (to me). वह्निः च न अस्ति –**vahniḥ ca na asti** - Fire also does not belong (to me). अनिलः च न –**anilaḥ ca na** - Air also does not belong (to me). अम्बरं च न अस्ति – **ambaraṁ ca na asti** - Space also does not belong मे –**me** - to me.

I alone am to be known through all the Vedas. I am the initiator of the Vedānta. I alone am the knower of the Vedas. Puṇya and pāpa do not belong to me. There is no death (for me). Birth, body, sense organs, and intellect do not belong (to me). Earth and water do not belong (to me). Fire also does not belong (to me). Air also does not belong (to me). Space also does not belong to me.

Continuing with the topic of *nididhyāsanam*, the student says,

अनेकैः वेदैः अहम् एव वेद्यः–*anekaiḥ vedaiḥ aham eva vedyaḥ* – I am the subject matter of all the Vedas or the scriptures. Through the four Vedas I am the ultimate truth to be known – *ahaṁ brahma asmi.*

वेदान्तकृत – *Vedānta kṛt* - I am the author of the Vedas when I take the role of *Īśvara*. I am the student of Vedas when taking the role of a *jīva*. As Brahman, I am the content of the Vedas. Taking the role of the guru, I am the teacher of the Vedas. So, I am the author, the teacher, the student and the content. [Tamil movie song: பாட்டும் நானே பாவமும் நானே…). The scriptures influence every walk of life in India – even there is a scolding: you are sitting like Brahman – which means you are doing nothing! We have to work hard to reject the Vedas in India. The idea *sarvam brahmamayam* – everything is Brahman is directly or indirectly saturated in our minds. Śaṅkarācārya writes in Māyā pañcakam:

घटयति जग्दीशजीवभेदं त्वघटितघटनापटीयसि माया ॥
ghaṭayati jagdīśajīvabhedaṃ tvaghaṭitaghaṭanāpaṭīyasi māyā

The indivisible "I" is divided into *jīva-jagat-Īśvara*, which are nothing *but nāma-rūpa* of that divisionless Brahman.

Since these divisions are only *nāma-rūpa*, they do not have their own independent existence. They are *mithyā* and therefore, are as good as non-existent.

As a waker, I claim, I am manifesting in the form of this universe, but as a *mahā* waker, I can say that all this is only (*mahā*) dream, which is as good as non-existent.

न भूमिः आपः न च वह्निः अस्ति न च अनिलः मे अस्ति न च अम्बरं च – *na bhūmiḥ āpaḥ na ca vahniḥ asti na ca anilaḥ me asti na ca ambaraṁ ca* - As the *mahā* waker, the *pañca bhūtas* (earth, water, air, fire and space) themselves are as good as nonexistent to me. The universe made of these five elements (*pañcabhūtaprapañca*) is a *mahā* dream from the standpoint of *mahā* waker. So, from the *mahā* waker angle, this universe is a *mahā* dream, but as good as not there.

न जन्मदेहेन्द्रिय बुद्धिः अस्ति - *na janmadehendriya buddhiḥ asti* – If the *pañca bhūtas* are not there, how can their products, *pañca bautikas* exist? Therefore, the body-mind complex consisting of the body, sense organs, mind and intellect do not exist. Then, when am I born? When body itself is not there, where is the question of birth?

न पुण्य पापे मम नास्ति नाशः - *na puṇya pāpe mama nāsti nāśaḥ* - Then what about death? There is no death (*nāśaḥ*) because there is no birth. What about rebirth (*punarjanma*)? Rebirth is caused by *puṇya* and *pāpa*. When *bhūta-bhautika*

prapañca is not there, where is the question of *puṇya* and *pāpam* and rebirth? They are all nothing but a cosmic dream when I am under the spell of cosmic *nidrā* called *māyā*.

What about Brahman? We cannot negate Brahman because *mithyā* cannot exist without the *adhiṣṭhānam - satyam*. If the duality has borrowed existence, then there must be someone to lend existence. If the entire dream is possible because of the waker, but the waker is not one of the entities in the dream. Similarly, I lend existence to the world, but I am not one of the entities of the world. I am *viśva ādhāram*.

In fact, even time and space are located in me. It is worth remembering this now and then so that when the *vyavahāra* problems are overwhelming, this awareness that they are all part of the cosmic dream, can reduce the impact of the problems. Only *mithyātva darśanam* can reduce the impact of choiceless problems. When there are choices we can solve the problem; the choiceless problems like old age, disease, separation, death etc. have only remedy: see *mithyātvam* in them. *Mithyātvam* can be seen only when I revise my opinion about myself: I am not a *jīva*; I am Brahman. That is why *nididhyāsanam* is required.

Nididhyāsanam should be practiced when the *prārbdha* is favorable, so that in times of unfavorable *prārabdha*, it comes handy. This is like exercising for health when you are fairly healthy.

Mantra 23

एवं विदित्वा परमात्मरूपं, गुहाशयं निष्कलमद्वितीयम् ।
समस्तसाक्षिं सदसद्विहीनं, प्रयाति शुद्धं परमात्मरूपम् ॥ २३ ॥

Evaṁ viditvā paramātmarūpaṁ, guhāśayaṁ niṣkalamadvitīyam I
Samastasākṣim sadasadvihīnaṁ, priyāti śuddhaṁ paramātmarūpam II 23 II

एवं विदित्वा – **evaṁ viditvā** - Thus, having known परमात्मरूपम् –**paramātmarūpam** - the nature of the supreme Self गुहाशयम् – **guhāśayam** - which resides in the heart, – **niṣkalam** - (which is) partless, अद्वितीयम् – **advitīyam** - nondual, समस्तसाक्षिम् – **samastasākṣim** - the witness of all, सदसद्विहीनम् – **sadasadvihīnam** - without cause and effect, शुद्धम् – **śuddham** - and pure, प्रयाति –**prayāti** - one attains परमात्मरूपम् – **paramātmarūpam** - the nature of the supreme Self.

Thus, having known the nature of the supreme Self which resides in the heart, (which is) partless, nondual, the witness of all, without cause and effect, and pure, one attains the nature of the supreme Self.

Now, Prajāpati concludes his *mahāvākya upadeśa* pointing out that *mahāvākyam* must be absorbed in this manner by following *śravaṇam, mananam* and *nididhyāsanam. Śravaṇam* and *mananam* are meant for the revising the conclusion about myself that I am not a *jīva* but am Brahman. *Nididhyāsanam* is meant for the revised mind set; that is changing the mindset from the triangular to the binary format. Revised conclusion must be followed by the revised mind set. Revised conclusion plus the revised mindset is *jñānaniṣṭhā*.

एवं विदित्वा – *evaṁ viditvā* - Having absorbed this self-knowledge in this manner through *śravaṇam, mananam* and *nididhyāsanam*

What is the nature of the self?

गुहाशयम् – *guhāśayam* - it is resident in the mind witnessing my thoughts (*sākṣī*).

समस्तसाक्षिम् – *samastasākṣim* - I am the witness of everything – *jāgrat, svapna* and *suṣupti avasthās* and *prapañcas.*

निष्कलम् – *niṣkalam* – I am division-less and part-less like space. Therefore, I am formless and all-pervading.

अद्वितीयम् – *advitīyam* – I am without a second. Consciousness is only one and therefore, there is no second.

सद् असद् विहीनम् – *sadasadvihīnam* - I am beyond *kārya* (*sad*) and *kāraṇa* (*asad*). So, I am beyond cause and effect. *Māyā* is *kāraṇam*, while *prapañca* is *kāryam*. I am beyond *māyā* and *prapañca* (*māyā prapañca atītaḥ*).

शुद्धम् – *śuddham* – I am free from *māyā* and *prapañca* because they are *mithyā* (as good as not there). Therefore, I am absolutely pure – there is no second thing to contaminate me. The Cooum water in the dream cannot contaminate the waker.

परमात्मरूपम् – *paramātmarūpam* - I am of the nature of *Paramātmā* and not *jīvātmā* – this is the most important statement.

Having known and absorbed this teaching in manner, what will happen to me?

परमात्मरूपं प्रयाति – *Paramātmarūpaṁ prayāti* - The knower merges and becomes one with *Paramātmā* - *Paramātmarūpam viditvā Paramātmarūpam prayāti*. It is like the famous Muṇḍaka mantra - *brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati* - knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. Becoming *Paramātmā* is dropping the notion that I am *jīvātmā*. This is called *jīvanmukti* and *videhamukti*. So with this, the discussion of *jñānaphalam* is also complete.

Mantra 24

यः शतरुद्रियमधीते सोऽग्निपूतो भवति, सुरापानात्पूतो भवति ।
ब्रह्महत्यात्पूतो भवति, कृत्याकृत्यात्पूतो भवति, तस्मादविमुक्त माश्रितो भवति । अत्याश्रमी सर्वदा सकृद्वा जपेत् ॥ २४ ॥

Yaḥ śatarudriyamadhīte so'gnipūto bhavati, surāpānātpūto bhavati /
Brahmahātyāpūto bhavati, kṛtyākṛtyātpūto bhavati, tasmādavimukta-
Māśrito bhavati / atyāśramī sarvadā sakṛdvā japet II 24 II

सः यः – **saḥ yaḥ** - One who अधीते – **adhīte** -recites शतरुद्रियम् – **śatarudriyam** - Śrī Rudram भवति अग्निपूतः – **bhavati agnipūtaḥ** - becomes purified by (the sacred) fire (as it were). भवति –**bhavati** - He becomes पूतः सुरापानात् – **pūtaḥ surāpānāt** - free from the sin of drinking. भवति – **bhavati** - He becomes पूतः ब्रह्महत्यात् – **pūtaḥ brahmahātyāt** - free from the sin of killing a brahmin. भवति – **bhavati** - He becomes पूतः कृत्याकृत्यात् – **pūtaḥ kṛtyākṛtyāt** - free from the sin of omissions and commissions. तस्मात् – **tasmāt** - Thereafter, भवति आश्रितः – **bhavati āśritaḥ** - he comes under the shelter of अविमुक्तम् – **avimuktam** - Lord Śiva. अत्याश्रमी – **atyāśramī** - A *sannyāsī* जपेत् – **japet** - should recite (Rudram) सर्वदा – **sarvadā** all the time वासकृत् – **vā sakṛt** - or (at least) once a day.

One who recites Śrī Rudram becomes purified by (the sacred) fire (as it were). He becomes free from the sin of drinking. He becomes free from the sin of killing a brahmin. He becomes free from the sin of omissions and commissions. Thereafter, he comes under the shelter of Lord Śiva. A sannyāsī should recite (Rudram) all the time or (at least) once a day.

For the teaching to be complete, the teacher must also provide a solution to those who find it difficult to accept the Vedānta. Many do not find it logical; many others, find it logical, but not practical. Prajāpati recommends *Sri Rudra pārāyaṇam* as a means to purify the mind so that one can get ready for jñāna yoga. The one he recommends is *śata rudriyam*. This doesn't mean one has to do only this *pārāyaṇam*; one can do any prayer as long as it is done for *citta śuddhi*.

यः शतरुद्रियम् अधीते – *yaḥ śatarudriyam adhīte* – They do *pārāyannam* of *śatarudriyam* as part of karma yoga and *upāsanā* to purify their mind. Whether he understands the meaning or not, daily *pārāyaṇam* will bless a person. If he knows the meaning, his involvement will be more. Although both mechanical and involved *pārāyaṇam* will give *puṇya*, the latter will be more beneficial.

सः अग्निपूतः भवति – He becomes freed from all his *pāpams* related to ritualistic fire. Agni here stands for ritualistic fire. Kindling the fire for ritual like *Agni-hotram* is a fundamental religious duty of a Hindu. At the very least, one should light a lamp in the morning before lighting fire for cooking. Omission of this is a fundamental *pāpam*. One should properly light the fire. Once the fire is lit, it should be treated with respect. For example, blowing air with the mouth is considered a mark of disrespect because saliva might fall in to the fire. This is *pāpam*. All these *pāpams* will manifest as obstacles to spiritual progress. *Rudra pārāyaṇam* counters these *pāpams* and helps negate them.

सुरापानात् पूतः भवति – *surāpānāt pūtaḥ bhavati* – The scriptures prohibit us even from smelling the liquor. Therefore, consuming liquor (and eating meat), without a doubt, produces *pāpam* and obstruct spiritual growth. We need to perform *prāyaścittam* to counter the *pāpams* of our past acts. The teacher says that *Rudra pārāyaṇam* is an effective *prāyaścittam*.

ब्रह्महत्यात् पूतः भवति – *brahmahatyāt pūtaḥ bhavati* - *Brahmahatyā* means killing a *brāhmaṇa*, a cultured person, who is a follower of the Vedas. It is considered to be one of the five great sins (*pañca mahā pātakam*). Even this gets neutralized by *Rudra pārāyaṇam* .

कृत्य अकृत्यात् पूतः भवति – *kṛtya akṛtyāt pūtaḥ bhavati* – these are *pāpams* from omission and commission. *Kṛtyam* means duty. *Kṛtya akaraṇam* means not doing the

prescribed duty. *Akṛtya karaṇam* means doing what should not be done. *Rudra pārāyaṇam* frees one form these.

Pāpam is an invisible (*adṛṣṭa*) force. Then how do I know that I accrue *pāpam* by committing these prohibited acts? It functions as an invisible obstacle to the reception of the knowledge from the guru. For spiritual progress, one must give up these acts and do *Rudrapārāyaṇam* to neutralize the *pāpams* from the acts of the past.

तस्मात् अविमुक्तम् आश्रितः भवति – *tasmāt avimuktam āśritaḥ bhavati* – Such a person comes under the shelter of Lord Śiva (Sri Rudra). Lord Śiva in Kāśi is called Avimukteśvara. *Vimukthaḥ* means animal (*paśu*) – it gets this name because the animals are freed from rules and regulations. *Avimuktaḥ* means one who is other than the *paśu*. The controller of *paśu* is one who is not a *paśu* – Paśupatiḥ and therefore, Lord Śiva. In summary, by doing *Rudrapārāyaṇam*, you come under the protection of Lord Śiva.

अत्याश्रमी सर्वदा सकृत वा जपेत्–*atyāśramī sarvadā sakṛt vā japet* - *Atyāśramī* means a *sannyāsī*, who cannot perform any rituals (*pañca mahā yajña*) like a *gṛhasthā* because he has renounced the sacred thread, tuft etc. He cannot perform *Agnihotram*. For him, *Rudrapārāyaṇam* is considered to be an ideal *sādhana* for mental purification. Generally, only the one with a pure mind can take *sannyāsa*. If by chance, one who does not fully meet this qualification, he can purify his mind through *Rudra pārāyaṇam* (going back to *gṛhasthā* life is not an option). He should chant *Rudram* all the time or at least once a day.

Then, what will happen?

Mantra 25

अनेन ज्ञानमाप्नोति, संसारार्णवनाशनम् ।
तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं, कैवल्यं फलमश्नुते,
कैवल्यं फलमश्नुत इति ॥ २५ ॥

Anena jñānamāpnoti, saṁsārārṇvanāśanam I
Tasmādevam viditvainaṁ, kaivalyaṁ phalamaśnute,
Kaivalyaṁ phalamaśnuta iti II 25 II

अनेन– **anena** - By the (Rudrajapa), आप्रोति ज्ञानम् –**āpnoti jñānam** - one attains Self-knowledge संसारार्णवनाशनम् – **saṁsārārṇavanāśanam** - which is the destroyer of the ocean of saṁsāra. तस्मात् – **tasmāt** - Therefore, विदित्वाएनम् – **viditvā enam** - having known this (Self) एवम् – **evam** - thus, अश्नुते – **aśnute** - one attains फलंकैवल्यम् – **phalaṁ kaivalyam** - the fruit of liberation.; अश्नुतेफलंकैवल्यम् – **aśnute phalaṁ kaivalyam** - one attains the fruit of liberation (definitely). इति – **iti** - Thus (ends the Upaniṣad).

By the (Rudrajapa), one attains Self-knowledge which is the destroyer of the ocean of saṁsāra. Therefore, having known this (Self) thus, one attains the fruit of liberation; one attains the fruit of liberation (definitely). This (ends the Upaniṣad).

अनेन ज्ञानम् आप्रोति – *anena jñānam āpnoti* – Through daily *Rudra pārāyaṇa* (*anena*), the same Vedāntic teaching that looked so formidable, begins to appeal to my intellect. It builds up my self-confidence and the path of jñāna appears logical, practical and possible. It must be noted that it does not have to be just *Rudra pārāyaṇam*; it can be *Viṣṇu sahasranāma pārāyaṇam* or *Lalitā sahasranāma* etc. or a routine *pūja* or *japa* on any deity.

In summary, the mind will get qualified for the pursuit of jñāna and then eventually gains *jñāna*, which is graduating from the triangular format to the binary format (*jñāna = jñāna niṣṭhā*).

संसार अर्णव नाशनम् – *saṁsāra arṇava nāśanam* – This jñāna is the destroyer of the ocean of *saṁsāra* (*arṇava* = ocean) – like a meteor strike will dry up the ocean.

तस्मात् एनम् एवं विदित्वा – *tasmāt enam evaṁ viditvā* – Knowing Brahman in this manner – which is as "I am Brahman". Mere knowledge that "there is Brahman" is incomplete. It is extremely important to understand this.

कैवल्यं फलम् अश्नुते – *kaivalyaṁ phalam aśnute* - One will attain *kaivalyam*, which non- duality (there is no second) or *advaita bhāvaḥ* - this the same as mokṣa. Thus he attains *jīvanmukti* in this life and *videhamukti* after the death of his physical body. This statement is repeated to indicate the end of this Upaniṣad taught by Prajāpati to Āśvalāyana *ṛṣi*.

This Upaniṣad is called Kaivalya Upaniṣad because of this word *kaivalyam*.

We will chant the *Śānti pātha* and conclude:

ॐ भद्रंकर्णेभिः शृणुयामदेवाः । भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः । स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाꣳ सस्तनूभिः । व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः । स्वस्तिन इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः । स्वस्तिनः पूषा विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्ताक्ष्र्यो अरिष्टनेमिः । स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु । ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Oṁ bhadraṁ karṇebhiḥ śṛṇuyāma devāḥ / bhadraṁ paśyemākṣabhiryajatrāḥ / sthiraitaṇgaistūṣtuvāgṁ sastanūbhiḥ / vyaśema devahitaṁ yadāyuḥ / svasti na indro vṛddhaśravāḥ / svasti naḥ pūṣā viśvavedāḥ / svasti nastārkṣyo ariṣtanemiḥ / svasti no bṛhaspatirdadhātu / Oṁ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

15. Summary

Kaivalya Upaniṣad belongs to the Atharvaṇa Veda and it consists of only 25 mantras. Even though it is small, it is a complete Upaniṣad and therefore very significant. It is also worth memorizing it. It is also called a minor Upaniṣad, but this title should not confuse us. It is called minor because it is not one of the ten principal Upaniṣads that Ādi Śaṅkarācārya wrote a commentary on. This in no way reflects on the quality or greatness of the minor Upaniṣads. Kaivalya Upaniṣad is an ideal example of a complete teaching.

Mantra 1

This Upaniṣad is in the form of a dialogue between Brahmāji, the *ācārya*, also known as Prajāpati and his disciple Āśvalāyana *ṛṣi*. The Upaniṣad introduces the guru and *śiṣya* in the first mantra. The word *atha* indicates that the *śiṣya* has already gone through all the preliminary preparations namely, karma and *upāsana* yogas, to attain the eligibility to pursue jñāna yoga. Karma yoga purifies the mind and *upāsana* yoga quietness the mind – the former is for *citta śuddhi* and the latter is for *citta śānti*.

Karma and *upāsana* yogas result in two important benefits:

- It helps to significantly reduce the impact of *saṁsāra*. It is like a first-aid to contain the bleeding before giving the treatment for permanent cure (*jñāna*). This first-aid is extremely important for the final cure to work.

- It creates an interest in jñāna yoga. Without an interest in the Vedāntic study, the best guru cannot do anything. Even Bhagavan cannot help. Even a simple curiosity regarding the Vedānta requires *puṇyam*. This curiosity is generated by the *puṇyam* accrued through karma yoga and *upāsanā*.

From the question, the student appears to be an advanced student, who *citta śuddhi* and *citta śānti*. To put in the technical language, he is a *sādhana catuṣṭaya sampannaḥ*. He has also understood that jñāna is the only mean of liberation and that guru is the only means to gain jñāna. Therefore, he approaches Prajāpati with *śraddhā* and *bhakti* and asks for *brahmavidyā*:

अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मविद्यां वरिष्ठां,सदा सद्भिः सेव्यमानां निगूढाम् ।
ययाचिरात्सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य,परात्परं पुरुषं याति विद्वान् ॥ १ ॥

Adhīhi bhagavo brahmavidyāṁ variṣṭāṁ, Sadā sadbhiḥ sevyamānaṁ nigūḍhām I

Yayācirātsarvapāpaṁ vyapohya, Parātparaṁ puruṣaṁ yāti vidvān II 1 II

In verse 4.34 of the Gītā, Lord Krishna call such a question asked with *śraddhā* and *bhakti* as *paripraśna*.

Mantra 2 through 11

In these mantras, Prajāpati, the teacher gives various *sādhanas* for mokṣa. The primary *sādhana* for moksa is jñāna; the others are supportive disciplines that lead to jñāna and then to mokṣa. Prajāpati clears says in mantras 9 (*na anyaḥ panthā vimuktayē*) and 10 (*na anyena hetunā*) that other than jñāna, there is no other path to mokṣa. We should never again say there are many paths to mokṣa – jñāna is the only path.

Prajāpati highlights four *sādhanas* to attain jñāna.

Sannyāsa: One may take up *sannyāsa* formally after performance of a special ritual. However, the spirit behind *sannyāsa* is more important to grasp than the external renunciation. *Sannyāsa* consists of change in lifestyle and infrastructure in such a way that we have more time for the study of the Vedānta and less mental pre-occupation with the worldly and family affairs. A person changes his lifestyle this way is a *sannyāsī* even if he formally take up ritualistic *sannyāsa*.

On the other hand, if a person takes up *sannyāsa* formally, but has no time to devote to the study of the Vedānta because of time spent on worldly affairs such as *āśram* management, he makes no progress towards jñāna and therefore, his formal *sannyāsa* is useless. He is a karma yogi with a busy lifestyle performing *pañca mahā yajña* catering to the external world. Such a lifestyle is diagonally opposite to what is needed for the study of the Vedānta.

Thus, *sannyāsa* is changing the lifestyle and infrastructure to spend more on the Vedānta and less pre-occupation with worldly affairs. This is declared through mantras 3 and 4 which are chanted when welcoming a *sannyāsī*.

न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन, त्यागेनैक अमृतत्व मानशुः ।
परेण नाकं निहितं गुहायां, विभ्राजते यद्यतयो विशन्ति ॥ ३ ॥

Na karmaṇā na prajayā dhanena tyāgenaika amṛtatvamānaśuḥ I

Parēṇa nākaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ vibhrājate yadyatayo viśanti II 3 II

It is through renunciation that a few seekers have attained immortality – not through ritual, not through progeny, (not) through wealth. Sannyāsīs attain (the immortal Self) which shines beyond the heaven (and) which resides in the heart.

वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाःसंयासयोगाद्यतयःशुद्धसत्त्वाः।
तेब्रह्मलोकेषुपरान्तकाले, परामृताःपरिमुच्यन्तिसर्वे ॥ ४ ॥

Vedāntavijñānasuniścitārthāḥ sannyāsayogādyatayaḥ śuddhasattvāḥ I

Te brahmalokeṣu parāntakāle, parāmṛtāḥ parimucyati sarve II 4 II

Through renunciation, the pure-minded sannyāsīs have ascertained Brahman which is beyond the object of vedantic knowledge. Having become one with the infinite Brahman (while living), they all resolve completely into Brahman at the time of death.

Mantra 4 is also in Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.2.6). These mantras along with two others in Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad are chanted when welcoming a *sannyāsī.*

Śravaṇam – Our definition is consistent and systematic study of the Vedāntic scriptures for a length of time under the guidance of a competent and live *ācārya*. It is beautifully illustrated through a unique analogy in mantra 11:

आत्मानमरिणंकृत्वा, प्रणवंचोत्तरारिणम् ।
ज्ञाननिर्मथनाभ्यासात्, पाशंदहतिपण्डितः ॥ ११ ॥

Ātmānamariṇaṁ kṛtvā, praṇavam cottarāriṇam I

Jnānanirmathanābhyāsāt, pāśaṁ dahati paṇḍitaḥ II 11 II

Keeping in mind as the (lower araṇi), and Oṅkāra as the upper araṇi, (and) by the practice of churning which is in the form of enquiry, the wise man burns down the bondage.

Śravaṇam is compared to the production of fire through friction between two logs of wood. The student is the lower stationary log of wood called *adho-araṇi*, while the guru is the upper or *uttara-araṇi*. The teaching process is "rubbing" between the guru and the *śiṣya* producing the sparks of knowledge. Rubbing occurs until the sparks (of knowledge) are created – there is no rule for time limit. Just as the fire

burns down all the offered oblations (*haviḥ*), this knowledge destroys the *haviḥ* of all karmas – *sañcita, āgāmi* and even *prārabdha*. Lord Krishna declares this in verse 4.37 of the Gītā:

यथैधांसिसमिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन।
ज्ञानाग्निःसर्वकर्माणिभस्मसात्कुरुतेतथा ॥ ४.३७॥

yathaidhāṁsi samiddhō'gnirbhasmasāt kurutē'rjuna |
jñānāgniḥ sarvakarmāṇi bhasmasāt kurutē tathā ||4.37||

Oh Arjuna! The fire of knowledge reduces all Karmas to ashes just as a well-kindled fire reduces the fuel to ashes.

Mananam–This is not discussed in this Upaniṣad, but we add this for completion of the *sādhanas*. Mananam is the removal of all doubts until this knowledge is transformed to conviction. Jñāna gets converted to *dṛḍha jñāna* and *prajñā* gets converted to *sthiraprajñā*. A doubtful knowledge is as good as ignorance because doubtful knowledge cannot be employed for my benefit. The knowledge (only) in the book is just as good money in someone else's hands because neither of them will be available when you need it.

The definition of conviction is that the content of the knowledge is a fact for me. The content of that conviction is: *brahma satyam jagan mithyā jīvo brahmaiva na paraḥ*. In other words, *ahaṁ satyam jagan mithyā* must be a fact for me.

Dhyānam – Prajāpati discusses *dhyānam* as the fourth discipline. *Dhyānam* is beautifully brought out in Kaivalya Upaniṣad; a unique topic that is not found in the *Daśopaniṣad*. Chapter 6 of the Bhagavad Gītā is based on this beautiful portion. Preparations for *dhyānam* is given nicely in the following mantra 5:

विविक्तदेशेचसुखासनस्थः, शुचिःसमग्रीवशिरःशरीरः ।
अत्याश्रमस्थःसकलेन्द्रियाणि, निरुध्यभक्त्यास्वगुरुंप्रणम्य ॥ ५ ॥

Viviktadeśe ca sukhāsanasthaḥ, śuciḥ samagrīvaśiraḥśarīraḥ I
Atyāśramasthaḥ sakalendriyāṇi, nirudhya bhaktyā svaguruṁ praṇamya II 5 II

Remaining in the highest order (of sannyāsa, one should be) seated in a comfortable posture with purity in a secluded place. Keeping the body, neck and head erect, one should restrain all the sense organs (and mentally) salute one's own guru with devotion.

After going through the preparatory stages, Kailvaya Upaniṣad describes the three types of meditations coherently in mantras 6 and 7. Generally, in other scriptures, these are scattered. The three types of *dhyānam* are:

Eka-rūpa Īśvara dhyānam - otherwise known as *iṣta-devatā dhyānam*. Meditation on *iṣta devatā* is very helpful for for spiritual growth. In Hinduism, we have 330 million *devatās* to choose from. This is the first stage of *dhyānam*.

Aneka-rūpa Īśvara dhyānam - otherwise called *viśvarūpadhyānam*. This is the intermediary stage of dhyānam. The scriptural portions such as the 11th chapter of the Gītā, *Puruṣasūktam*, *Sri Rudram* etc. can assist us in this meditation. Another beautiful śloka from *Viṣṇusahasranāmam* can also help us with this:

भूः पादौ यस्य नाभि-र्वियदसु-रनिल-श्चन्द्रसूर्यौ च नेत्रे
कर्णावाशाः शिरो द्यौ-र्मुखमपि दहनो यस्य वास्तेयमब्धिः ।
अन्तस्तं यस्य विश्वं सुर-नर-खग-गो-भोगि-गन्धर्वा दैत्यैः
चितं रंरम्यते तं त्रिभुवन-वपुषं विष्णु-मीशं नमामि ॥

bhūḥ pādau yasya nābhi-rviyadasu-ranila-ścandrasūryau ca netre
karṇāvāśāḥ śiro dyau-rmukhamapi dahano yasya vāsteyamabdhiḥ l
antastaṃ yasya viśvaṃ sura-nara-khaga-go-bhogi-gandharvā daityaiḥ
citaṃ raṃramyate taṃ tribhuvana-vapuṣaṃ viṣṇu-mīśaṃ namāmi ll

Vapuṣam means body; *tribhuvana vapuṣam* = the three lokas are the bodies of Bhagavan.

Arūpa-Īśvara dhyānam – otherwise called *nirguṇa Īśvara dhyānam*. This is the third and the final one which should come only after the study of the Vedānta. This meditation is also called *nididhyāsana dhyānam* where Bhagavan has no form; It is *aśabdam, asparśam, arūpam, arasam and agandham*- which is nothing but me. It is *advaita* or *abedhadhyānam*.

Mantra 6 describes *arūpam* and *aneka rūpam,* while and mantra 7 discusses the *iṣta devathādhyānam.* Kaivalya Upaniṣad suggests *Umāsahāyam Paramaśivam* – Lord Śiva accompanied by Pārvati as the *iṣta devatā*. One can take any *devatā*.

Mantras 12 through 23

These mantras contain the central teaching of the Upaniṣad: *jīvātma-Paramātma-aikyam*. I, the creature, am essentially the creator – creature-creator *aikyam*. Kaivalya Upaniṣad brilliantly reveals this *aikyam* in several *mahāvakyas*. Thus this portion of the Upaniṣad is *mahāvākya upadeśa*.

The Upaniṣad takes the example of a dream and equates it to this universe based on the similarities. Five stages of this process are examined:

Stage 1: As a waker, I come under the spell of sleep.
Stage 2: Under the spell of sleep, I create the dream.
Stage 3: I enter the dream
Stage 4: I become the dreamer.
Stage 5: I then lose the dream status of the dream – I think it is real. This is the beginning of saṁsāra.

Once I lose the dream status of the dream, I am empower the dream to disturb and hurt me and burden me with *saṁsāra*.

The only way to get liberation from *saṁsāra* is to reinstate the dream status to the dream. This can be done only waking up – i.e. discovering my waker status. Once the dream status is re-instated, the dream is disempowered. I empower the dream by becoming a dreamer and I disempower it by becoming waker. Empowering is *saṁsāra* and disempowering is mokṣa.

The same concept can be extended to understand the world, the *jāgrat prapañca* also as a dream – a super dream. I am the super waker. The super dream becomes the cause of saṁsāra in the following manner:

Stage 1: I come under the spell of super sleep called *māyā*.
Stage 2: I create the super dream called *jāgrat prapañca*.
Stage 3: I enter the super dream
Stage 4: I become the super dreamer
Stage 5: I lose sight of the dream status of the super dream – I think it is real. This is the cause of *saṁsāra*.

Once I lose the dream status of the super dream, I empower the world to disturb me. My life becomes MBBS - **M**eaningless, **B**urdensome, and a **B**oring, **S**truggle. The life becomes a burden.

The solution is to discover that I am not a super dreamer, but the super waker. This is the otherwise called *aham brahma asmi*. As the student says in mantra 19,

मय्येव सकलं जातं, मयि सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
मयि सर्वं लयं याति, तद्ब्रह्माद्वयमस्म्यहम् ॥

Mayyeva sakalaṁ jātaṁ, mayi sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam
Mayi sarvaṁ layaṁ yāti, tad brahmādvayamasmyaham

Everything is born in me alone; everything is based on me alone; everything resolves into me alone. I am that nondual Brahman.

There are two main differences between the ordinary dream and the super dream:

- Waking up from the ordinary dream happens naturally and automatically, but waking up from super dream is never a natural event. It requires a deliberate effort. We require the help of a guru and the *śāstras* as mantra 1.3.14 of Kaṭhopaniṣad points out.

- When I wake up from ordinary dream, discovering my waker status, the ordinary dream disappears from my experience. In other words, I longer experience the dream after I wake up. When I wake up from the super dream and discover that I am the super waker, I understand this is also a dream, but the super dream does not disappear; I continue to experience the world. This is called *jīvanmukti*.

Jīvanmukti is a peculiar state in which the dream continues even after waking up. This is a dream with the awareness that it is a dream. That is exactly what happens to a *jñānī*. For him there is the duality with the body-mind complex due to *prārabdha*, but he is aware of the binary fact: *ahaṁ satyaṁ jagan mithyā*.

If I am the super waker known as Brahman, what is my nature? Kaivalya Upaniṣad beautifully defines the nature as *sat-cit-ānandam*. *Sat* means pure Existence, *cit* means pure Consciousness and *ānanda* means pure happiness – the word pure is important. What do you mean by pure?

- I am not a part, product or property of the body.
- I am an independent principle which pervades and enlivens the body.
- I am not limited by the boundaries of any object.
- I continue to exist even after the world collapses
- Once the world is gone, I continue to exist as Brahman, but not available for transaction because a transaction requires time, space and world.

So, *ahaṁ satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ brahma* – my power to create, sustain and resolve the world is called *māyā śaktiḥ*. I am Brahman with *māyā śaktiḥ*. What is the purpose of *māyā śaktiḥ*? This is the only way I can claim my glory – with *nāma-rūpa* in the transactional (*vyāvahārika*) world.

These *mahāvākyams* explaining *aikyam* are beautifully given in the form of *upadeśa* in mantras 12 through 17. The very same teaching is given as received by the student in mantras 18 through 22. The former is called *upadeśa vākyam* and the latter, *anubhava vākyam*. These *anubhava* mantras are very useful for the practice of *nididhyāsanam*. Therefore, verse 18 through 22 are worth memorizing.

I did not deal with the following point in the class. In this Upaniṣad, the *adyāropa apavāda* method of teaching is beautifully employed. With this method, the *mithyātvam* of the world is beautifully established. In mantra 15, the Upaniṣad clearly gives that world – ie., *pañca bhūtas* and *pañca bhautikas* - emerges from *Brahmātma* or *ekātmā*. Then, at the end, the Upaniṣad should have concluded that the world exists. However, in mantra 22, the Upaniṣad, peculiarly says that the world does not exist. Mantra 15 is called *adyāropa* mantra and mantra 22 is *apavāda* mantra. Joining these two mantras, we can conclude that the world has seemingly emerged. If it had emerged really, the Upaniṣad would have said there is a world. Instead, it negates everything – earth, water, air, fire, sense organs, mind, intellect, *puṇya*, *pāpams* etc. It introduces them first and negates them, which indicates that the world has not really emerged. Thus, *adyāropa apavāda nyāya* is extremely important for us to indicate *ahaṁ satyaṁ jagan mithyā*. Only when I understand and assimilate *mithyātvam* of the world, can I say that this *mithyā* world can never touch me. With this, the teaching of this Upaniṣad is complete.

Mantra 24 and 25

These are mantras are for the students who are not prepared to take up jñāna yoga because they find it difficult to understand and assimilate. The teacher gives additional *sādhanas* for *citta śuddhi* to prepare such students for jñāna.

Continue *śravaṇam* and *mananam* as karma yoga
Rudra pārāyaṇam or any other pārāyaṇam for citta śuddhi

As the mind gets more and more prepared, the Upaniṣadic study will become more meaningful and more relevant. Such a person will ultimately attain mokṣa. Mokṣa is called *kaivalyam* here. *Kaivalyam* means *advaitam* – the non-dual truth. Since mokṣa is called *kaivalyam*, this Upaniṣad itself is called Kaivalya Upaniṣad.

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ओं शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः॥

oṃ pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidaṃ pūrṇāt pūrṇamudacyate

pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate

oṃ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ