

# THE PRINCIPAL UPANISHADS

Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Taittiriya,  
Aitareya and Svetasvatara Upanishads with  
Text, Meaning, Notes and Commentary by

***Sri Swami Sivananda***



*Published by*

**THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY**  
P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192  
Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand, Himalayas, INDIA  
[www.sivanandaonline.org](http://www.sivanandaonline.org), [www.dlshq.org](http://www.dlshq.org)

First Edition: 1942  
Second Edition: 1950  
Third Edition: 1981  
Fourth Edition: 1998  
Fifth Edition: 2008  
Sixth Edition: 2012

[ 1,000 Copies ]

©The Divine Life Trust Society

ISBN 81-7052-001-0

ES124

**PRICE: ₹230/-**

Published by Swami Padmanabhananda for  
The Divine Life Society, Shivanandanagar, and printed by  
him at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Press,  
P.O. Shivanandanagar, Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand,  
Himalayas, India  
For online orders and Catalogue : visit [dlsbooks.org](http://dlsbooks.org)

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OM  
DEDICATED TO  
THE SEERS OF THE UPANISHADS  
AND  
JAGAT-GURU SRI SANKARACHARYA  
OM

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10<sup>th</sup> October 1941,

Beloved aspirants,

There is no book in the whole world that is so thrilling, soul-stirring and inspiring as the Upanishads.

The philosophy taught by the Upanishads has been the source of solace for many both in the East and the West.

The Upanishads teach the philosophy of absolute unity. They contain the sublime truths of Vedanta and practical hints and clues which throw much light on the pathway of Self-realisation.

Sivananda

## SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

Born on the 8th September, 1887, in the illustrious family of Sage Appayya Dikshitar and several other renowned saints and savants, Sri Swami Sivananda had a natural flair for a life devoted to the study and practice of Vedanta. Added to this was an inborn eagerness to serve all and an innate feeling of unity with all mankind.

His passion for service drew him to the medical career; and soon he gravitated to where he thought that his service was most needed. Malaya claimed him. He had earlier been editing a health journal and wrote extensively on health problems. He discovered that people needed right knowledge most of all; dissemination of that knowledge he espoused as his own mission.

It was divine dispensation and the blessing of God upon mankind that the doctor of body and mind renounced his career and took to a life of renunciation to qualify for ministering to the soul of man. He settled down at Rishikesh in 1924, practised intense austerities and shone as a great Yogi, saint, sage and Jivanmukta.

In 1932 Swami Sivananda started the Sivanand-ashram. In 1936 was born The Divine Life Society. In 1948 the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy was organised. Dissemination of spiritual knowledge and training of people in Yoga and Vedanta were their aim and object. In 1950 Swamiji undertook a lightning tour of India and Ceylon. In 1953 Swamiji convened a 'World Parliament of Religions'. Swamiji is the author of over 300 volumes and has disciples all over the world, belonging to all nationalities, religions and creeds. To read Swamiji's works is to drink at the Fountain of Wisdom Supreme. On 14th July, 1963 Swamiji entered Mahasamadhi.

## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The greatness and the sublimity of the Upanishads are well known to all students of philosophy. There have been many attempts to approach the books through various standpoints. Much has been written over the knotty problems of interpretation, by Eastern and Western scholars. And yet, the lay reader has not understood the central teachings fully well. In this volume, Sri Swamiji has stressed such points clearly and truly, explaining the abstruse ideas in his own inimitable style, thus laying bare the sacred doctrine not only before the eligible pupil but also the lay reader.

The present volume contains the Text, Translation, important Notes and exhaustive Commentary on Nine Principal Upanishads. Originally, these Principal Texts appeared in two volumes in earlier editions, and sometime after the publication of the same, these works of His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj went out of print for many years. For some reason or other, the reprinting of these famous Scriptures with the Commentary of His Holiness could not become possible, though students of the Prasthanatraya,—the triple foundation of Indian Philosophy, viz., the Upanishads, the Brahmasutras and the Bhagavadgita,— were eager to see the coming out of these treasures of writing and were actually communicating to us their requests in this regard incessantly.

The holy event of the Centenary of His Holiness, however, became a noble incentive to the Management of The Divine Life Society for considering the reprinting of all the major works of the saintly Founder, and it was thought that the Upanishads should certainly receive preference, considering the immense value of these original masterpieces with the touching exposition from the Master's pen. So, the third edition of the Eight Principal Upanishads was published in 1983 in a single volume. Now, we have added the Mandukyopanishad in this edition.

The Upanishads are the cream of the Vedas. Each of the four Vedas, the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the

Atharvaveda, has its own philosophical and mystical crowning teachings which go by the name of the Upanishads. The breadth of vision, the profundity of insight and the marvellous gamut of inclusiveness revealed in these holy writings, considered as Sruti, or revealed Divine Messages, are remarkable and breath-taking. The other two among the triple foundations of Indian Culture and Spirituality mentioned, are the Brahmasutras and the Bhagavadgita, the former directly concerning interpretation of specific points occurring here and there in the Upanishads, and the latter known as the sweet milk extracted from the milch-cow of the Upanishads. Thus, the present publication should be an almost unexpected satisfaction and joy and a welcome to the heart of everyone who has found it possible to recognise the unavoidable necessity of living the Inner Life.

Shivanandanagar,  
1st January, 1998

**—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY**

ॐ

## श्री गुरु-वन्दना

ॐ नमो ब्रह्मादिभ्यो ब्रह्मविद्यासंप्रदायकर्तृभ्यो वंशर्षिभ्यो महद्द्वयो नमो  
गुरुभ्यः । सर्वोपप्लवरहितः प्रज्ञानघनः प्रत्यगर्थो ब्रह्मवाहमस्मि ॥१ ॥

ॐ नारायणं पद्मभवं वशिष्ठं  
शक्तिं च तत्पुत्रपराशरं च ।  
व्यासं शुकं गौडपदं महान्तं  
गोविन्दयोगीन्द्रमथास्य शिष्यम् ॥२ ॥

श्रीशंकराचार्यमथास्य पद्मपादं च  
हस्तामलकं च शिष्यम् ।  
तं तोटकं वार्तिककारमन्या-  
नस्मद्गुरुन्संततमानतोऽस्मि ॥३ ॥

श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणानामालयं करुणालयम् ।  
नमामि भगवत्पादं शंकरं लोकशंकरम् ॥४ ॥  
शंकरं शंकराचार्यं केशवं बादरायणम् ।  
सूत्रभाष्यकृतौ वन्दे भगवन्तौ पुनः पुनः ॥५ ॥  
ईश्वरो गुरुरात्मेति मूर्तिभेदविभागिने ।  
व्योमवद्व्याप्तदेहाय दक्षिणामूर्तये नमः ॥६ ॥

## PREFACE

### UPANISHADS—A TREASURE OF WISDOM

Prostrations to Satchidananda Parabrahman, who is the prop, basis and source for everything! Salutations to all Brahmavidya-Gurus or the preceptors of the knowledge of the Brahman!

There is no book in the whole world that is so thrilling, soul-stirring and inspiring as the Upanishads. The philosophy taught by the Upanishads has been the source of solace for many, both in the East and the West. The human intellect has not been able to conceive of anything more noble and sublime in the history of the world than the teachings of the Upanishads.

The Upanishads contain the essence of the Vedas. They are the source of the Vedanta philosophy. Profound, original, lofty and sublime thoughts arise from every verse. They contain the direct spiritual experiences or revelations of seers, or sages, the Rishis. They are the products of the highest wisdom, supreme divine knowledge. Hence they stir the hearts of people and inspire them.

The glory or grandeur of the Upanishads cannot be adequately described in words, because words are finite and language is imperfect. The Upanishads have indeed greatly contributed to the peace and solace of mankind. They are highly elevating and soul-stirring. Millions of aspirants have drawn inspiration and guidance from the Upanishads. They are the cream of the Vedas. They are treasures of incalculable value. They are rich in profound philosophical thought. They are regarded as the very acme of philosophical thought. Their intrinsic value is very great. There is immense depth of meaning in the passages and verses. The language is beautiful.

The Upanishads give a vivid description of the nature of the Atman, the Supreme Soul, in a variety of ways, and expound suitable methods and aids to attain the immortal Brahman, the Highest Purusha.

Ages have passed since they were first presented to the world. Even now they are remarkably sweet and charming. Their freshness is unique. Their fragrance is penetrating. Many cannot live today without the study of the Upanishads daily. They provide supreme food for the soul.

It is said that Schopenhauer, the renowned philosopher of the West, always had a book of the Upanishads on his table, and was in the habit, before going to bed, of performing his devotions from its pages. He said, "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death".

The Upanishads have undoubtedly exercised and will continue to exercise a considerable influence on the religion and philosophy of India. They present a view of reality which would certainly satisfy the scientific, the philosophic, as well as the religious aspirations of man.

### ORIGIN OF THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads are metaphysical treatises which are replete with sublime conceptions of Vedanta and with intuitions of universal truths. The Indian Rishis and seers of yore endeavoured to grasp the fundamental truths of being. They tried to solve the problems of the origin, the nature and the destiny of man and of the universe. They attempted to grasp the meaning and value of *knowing* and *being*. They endeavoured to find a solution for the problems of the means of life, and the world, and of the relation of the individual to the 'Unseen', or the Supreme Soul. They sought earnestly satisfactory solutions to these profound questions: Who am I? What is this universe or Samsara? Whence are we born? On what do we rest? Where do we go? Is there any such thing as immortality, freedom, perfection, eternal bliss, everlasting peace, Atman, Brahman, or the Self, Supreme Soul, which is birthless, deathless, changeless, self-existent? How to attain Brahman or Immortality?

They practised right living, Tapas, introspection, self-analysis, enquiry and meditation on the pure, inner Self and attained Self-realisation. Their intuitions of deep truths are

subtle and direct. Their inner experiences, which are direct, first-hand, intuitive and mystical, which no science can impeach, which all philosophies declare as the ultimate goal of their endeavours, are embodied in the sublime books called the Upanishads.

Some Western scholars have fixed the age of the Upanishads as B.C. 600, or so. They regard that all of them belong to the pre-Buddhistic period. This is a sad mistake indeed. The Upanishads are the knowledge portion, or Jnana-Kanda, of the Vedas. They are eternal. They came out of the mouth of Hiranyagarbha, or Brahman. How can one fix the date of the Upanishads? They existed even before the creation of this world.

The Upanishads are a source of deep mystic divine knowledge which serves as the means of freedom from this formidable Samsara, earthly bondage. They are world-scriptures. They appeal to the lovers of religion and truth in all races, and at all times. They contain profound secrets of Vedanta, or Jnana-Yoga, and practical hints and clues which throw much light on the pathway of Self-realisation.

### **SIGNIFICANCE AND IDEAL**

There are four Vedas, viz., Rig, Yajur, Saman and Atharvan. The word "Veda" comes from the root "Vid", "to know". It means a book of wisdom. The Vedas are eternal, not the books but the Ideas contained in the Vedas. They have come out of the mouth of the Lord.

Each Veda consists of Mantras, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads. The Mantras are hymns in praise of the gods such as Indra, Varuna, Agni, etc. They are all collected, and the collections are known as the *Samhitas*. The *Brahmanas* deal with the performance of sacrificial rites. The Upanishads contain the philosophy of Vedanta or ancient wisdom of the Rishis (Jnana).

Knowledge of the Upanishads destroys ignorance, the seed of Samsara. "Shad" means to "shatter" or "destroy". By having knowledge of the Upanishads, one is able to sit near Brahman, i.e., to attain Self-realisation. Hence the name 'Upanishad'. Knowledge of Brahman is called 'Upanishad', because it leads

to Brahman and helps the aspirants to attain Brahman. The term 'Upanishad' is applied to the book also in a secondary sense, by courtesy.

The following two ideas dominate the teaching of all the Upanishads: (1) Final emancipation can be attained only by knowledge of the Ultimate Reality, or Brahman (Brahma-jnana); (2) He who is equipped with the four means of salvation, viz., Viveka (discrimination), Vairagya (dispassion), Shad-sampat (the sixfold treasure—self-control, etc.) and Mumukshutva (yearning for liberation), can attain Brahman. The Upanishads teach the philosophy of absolute unity.

The goal of men, according to the Upanishads, is realisation of Brahman. Self-realisation alone can dispel ignorance and bestow immortality, eternal bliss, and everlasting peace. Knowledge of Brahman alone can remove all sorrows, delusion and pain.

### ANUBANDHA CHATUSHTAYA

The subject matter of the Upanishads (*Vishaya*) is the highest Brahman, or the Supreme Soul. The fruit (*Prayojana*) of this knowledge is the attainment of immortality, or Moksha, the consequent freedom from the bondage of Samsara (*Atyanta-Samsaranivritti* and *Brahmaprapti*). The connection (*Sambandha*) has also been stated by the declaration of this result. The person (*Adhikari*) entitled to study the Upanishad, to practise the enquiry of Brahman and meditation on the Self, is the one who is equipped with the four means of salvation. This is the *Anubandha-Chatushtaya*.

### ADHIKARI

The Upanishads are rightly called the Vedanta, the end of the Vedas, that which is reserved for those who have freed themselves from the bonds of formal religion.

The Upanishads are not meant for the masses, as they contain the highest speculations of philosophy. They are meant only for the select few, who are fit and worthy to receive the instructions. Hence the term 'Upanishad' signified at first, 'secret teaching' or 'secret doctrine'. As already stated, *Sadhana-Chatushtaya* (the fourfold means) is the primary

qualification for an aspirant of Jnana-Yoga, or one who seeks the knowledge of the Upanishads.

### CONCLUSION

In the preparation of this book, I have very closely followed the commentary of Bhagavan Sri Sankaracharya and have explained his view in regard to the usage of certain technical terms occurring in the text. The views of the Dvaita School of philosophy and other commentators have also been included here and there to give the reader a comprehensive understanding of the philosophy dealt with herein.

Glory to the Upanishads! Glory to the Seers of the Upanishads! May their blessings be upon us all!!

Ananda Kutir,  
Rishikesh,  
1st March, 1942

Sivananda

## CONTENTS

Dedication - - - - -	(5)
Publishers' Note - - - - -	(8)
Guru-Vandana - - - - -	(10)
Preface- - - - -	(11)

### ISAVASYA UPANISHAD

Introduction- - - - -	21
Isavasya Upanishad - - - - -	22

### KENOPANISHAD

Introduction- - - - -	35
Prathama Khanda (Section I) - - - - -	37
Dvitiya Khanda (Section II) - - - - -	47
Tritiya Khanda (Section III) - - - - -	56
Chaturtha Khanda (Section IV) - - - - -	61

### KATHOPANISHAD

Introduction- - - - -	68
Chapter I—Prathama Valli - - - - -	72
Chapter I—Dvitiya Valli - - - - -	89
Chapter I—Tritiya Valli - - - - -	107
Chapter II—Prathama Valli - - - - -	120
Chapter II—Dvitiya Valli - - - - -	131
Chapter II—Tritiya Valli - - - - -	143

### PRASNO PANISHAD

Introduction- - - - -	156
Prathama Prasna (Question I) - - - - -	157
Dvitiya Prasna (Question II)- - - - -	171

Tritiya Prasna (Question III) - - - - -	179
Chaturtha Prasna (Question IV) - - - - -	188
Panchama Prasna (Question V) - - - - -	196
Shashtha Prasna (Question VI) - - - - -	202

### **MUNDAKOPANISHAD**

Introduction- - - - -	209
First Mundaka—Prathama Khanda - - - - -	213
First Mundaka—Dvitiya Khanda- - - - -	221
Second Mundaka—Prathama Khanda - - - - -	232
Second Mundaka—Dvitiya Khanda - - - - -	240
Third Mundaka—Prathama Khanda - - - - -	253
Third Mundaka—Dvitiya Khanda - - - - -	264

### **MANDUKYOPANISHAD**

Mandukyopanishad - - - - -	275
----------------------------	-----

### **TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD**

Introduction- - - - -	297
Siksha-valli - - - - -	299
Brahmananda-valli - - - - -	336
Bhrigu-valli - - - - -	386

### **AITAREYA UPANISHAD**

Introduction- - - - -	409
Prathama Khanda (Section I) - - - - -	413
Dvitiya Khanda (Section II) - - - - -	419
Tritiya Khanda (Section III) - - - - -	424
Chaturtha Khanda (Section IV) - - - - -	433
Panchama Khanda (Section V) - - - - -	441

### **SVETASVATARA UPANISHAD**

Introduction- - - - -	449
-----------------------	-----

Chapter I - - - - -	449
Chapter II - - - - -	462
Chapter III - - - - -	473
Chapter IV - - - - -	487
Chapter V - - - - -	500
Chapter VI - - - - -	509
<b>APPENDIX - - - - -</b>	<b>527</b>

# **THE PRINCIPAL UPANISHADS**



# ISAVASYA UPANISHAD

## INTRODUCTION

The following are the major Upanishads:

1. Isavasya Upanishad, or Vajasaneyi Upanishad
2. Kena Upanishad, or Talavakara Upanishad
3. Katha Upanishad
4. Prasna Upanishad
5. Mundaka Upanishad
6. Mandukya Upanishad
7. Taittiriya Upanishad
8. Aitareya Upanishad
9. Chhandogya Upanishad
10. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

These ten have sometimes been called the old and genuine Upanishads. They are the classical Upanishads or the fundamental Upanishads of the Vedanta Philosophy. Some include the Kaushitaki Upanishad and Svetasvatara Upanishad also under the classical Upanishads. Sri Sankara and other Acharyas have written commentary on the ten Upanishads only.

The Isavasya Upanishad is a beautiful Upanishad. The very first line of the first Mantra, "*Isavasyamidam sarvam*—This whole world is covered by the Lord", induces a thrilling inspiration in the minds of the readers. Meditation on this idea alone will lead to the attainment of the Knowledge of the Self. He who contemplates on the significance of the first line will become a Seer of Oneness, a Knower of the Self. He will have a direct vision of the Reality and inner Illumination. The Upanishad, though apparently simple and intelligible, is in reality one of the most difficult to understand properly.

The aspirant should sit at the lotus-feet of an experienced teacher, a Shrotriya, a Brahma-Nishtha, and study this

Upanishad with one-pointed and pure mind. Then everything will become quite clear. The reader should try to grasp clearly the meanings of the terms Vidya, Avidya, Sambhuti, Asambhuti, Vinasha, Death, Immortality, Krato, etc. Immortality here means relative immortality, not absolute Immortality.

This Upanishad prescribes two paths, viz., the path of renunciation or Jnana Yoga for Sannyasins, and the path of action or Karma Yoga for those who cannot renounce the world. The desirability of combining Karma with the worship of deity (inferior knowledge of god), and of combining worship of Hiranyagarbha with the worship of Avyaktam or unborn Prakriti is mentioned in this Upanishad. Live in the spirit of this Upanishad. Realise the Self. Rejoice in Sat-Chit-Ananda Atman. May the blessings of the seers of the Upanishad be upon you all!



ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।  
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

The Whole is all That. The Whole is all This. The Whole was born of the Whole. Taking the Whole from the Whole, what remains is the Whole.

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

Every Veda has its particular peace-chant for its Upanishads. These chants are recited in the beginning and at the end of the Upanishad. The oneness of the universe with the Brahman is beautifully described in this chant.

ॐ ईशावास्यमिद् सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् ।  
तेन त्यक्तेन भुज्जीथा मा गृथः कस्य स्विद्धनम् ॥१॥

1. All this—whatsoever moves in this universe (and those that move not)—is covered (inhabited, pervaded, enveloped or

clothed) by the Lord. That renounced, enjoy. Do not covet the wealth of any man.

### Notes and Commentary

This first Mantra deals with Jnana-nishtha. It is addressed to those who struggle for the attainment of Knowledge of Brahman or Atma-Jnana. This is the Nivritti Marga of Sannyasins or the path of renunciation.

The word *Isa* comes from the verb *Ishte*, to rule. It means 'by the Lord'. The Lord or Isvara rules the whole world. He is the Supreme Ruler. *Vasyam* means 'to be covered' or 'to be inhabited'. Sankara explains that one should lose the sense of this unreal world in realising Brahman with the idea, 'I alone am all this as being the inner Self of all'.

This world of *Nama*, *Rupa*, *Kriya* and *Guna* (name, form, action and quality), is superimposed upon the Atman, on account of *Avidya* or nescience. Therefore duality has cropped up. There are the doer, enjoyer, knower, known, seer, seen, subject, object, etc. He, who contemplates on the Self as the Paramatman, or pure Brahman, will surely renounce the three kinds of desires, *viz.*, son, wealth, name and fame (*Putreshana*, *Vitteshana* and *Lokeshana*). *Tena tyaktenā* means 'by such renunciation'. *Tyaktena* means 'renunciation'. Sankara takes this as a noun. *Svit* is a participle which has no meaning. As the world is unreal and as the objects are worthless, what is the use of coveting others' wealth? Further, you will get the supreme, imperishable wealth of Atman by Self-realisation.

Renounce (the desires of) the world. Renounce (the desires of) the other world. Renounce egoism, selfishness, *Deha-adhyasa* (body-idea). Renounce the desire for liberation. Renounce the renunciation itself (*Tyaga Abhimana*). Then you will become That. You will be in Itself. "*Brahmavit Brahmaiva Bhavati*—The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman". Desire for liberation will destroy all earthly desires. You must renounce the desire for liberation also. "*Na karmana na prajaya dhanena tyagenaike amritatvam-anasuh*—Neither by works nor by progeny, nor by riches, but by renunciation alone one attains immortality".

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छत् समाः ।  
एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥२॥

2. Performing verily works in this world, one should wish to live a hundred years. Thus it is right for thee and not otherwise than this. Action will not bind that man.

### Notes and Commentary

The first Mantra lays down the rule for Knowledge. This Mantra lays down the rule for works. This gives advice to those who cannot get themselves liberated from the bonds of the world. Karmanishta is prescribed here for those who are unable to take up Sannyasa. *Kurvanneva* means certainly doing, only by doing and not refraining from them. *Eva* gives definite force. *Karmani* means works enjoined by the Vedas such as Agnihotra and other rites. The omission of these works causes sin.

*Jijivishet* means 'should wish to live'. *Satam samah* means 'a hundred years'. This is the longest period of life for a man in Kaliyuga. One should wish to live for one hundred years continually doing Karma and not otherwise. Leading an idle, easy-going life will not do. He should do the religious rites daily, and also do constant, selfless, disinterested service to the humanity with Atma-Bhava. Then only will he get purification of heart (Chitta-suddhi). Then only Atma-Jnana will dawn in his heart. By such performance of works without any motive, one will not be bound to works. This is the path of action or Pravritti Marga.

असूर्या नाम ते लोका अन्धेन तमसाऽऽवृताः ।  
ताऽ स्ते प्रेत्याभिगच्छन्ति ये के चात्महनो जनाः ॥३॥

3. Sunless (godless) are those worlds covered over with gloomy darkness. Those people who are slayers of their souls go to these (worlds) after they leave their bodies.

### Notes and Commentary

There are two readings. *Asoorya*, sunless and *Asurya*, undivine. In comparison with the state of Supreme Self, the

most exalted worlds of the gods are also godless. *Andhena tamasa*, blind darkness, i.e., ignorance which stands in the way of realising one's Self. *Avrutah* means 'covered'; *Pretya* means 'leaving the body'; *Abhigachhanti* means 'attain'; *Atmahanah* means 'slayers of the Atman', i.e., those who kill their Self.

Those who have drawn the veil of ignorance over the Atman are not able to perceive their Self. They move about self-deluded in this world and run after perishable sensual objects. Their minds are filled with passion, greed, wrath, pride and egoism. They do all sorts of evil actions when they are under the influence of lust, greed and anger. They are caught up again and again in the Samsaric wheel of birth and death. They have mistaken the body as the imperishable Self. They worship the perishable body like Virochana and his followers, the Asuras. They have entirely forgotten the glory and splendours of immortal Sat-Chit-Ananda Atman. Hence they are called *Atmahanah*, slayers of the Atman.

अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो नैनदेवा आप्नुवन्पूर्वमर्षत् ।  
तद्वावतोऽन्यानत्येति तिष्ठत्स्मिन्नपो मातरिश्वा दधाति ॥ ४ ॥

4. It (Atman) is motionless, one, swifter than mind. The Devas (the senses) could not overtake It which ran before them. Sitting, It goes faster than those who run after It. By It, Matarisvan (the air, Sutratman) supports the activity of all living beings.

#### Notes and Commentary

Here is a description of the nature of the Atman. *Na* and *Ejat* make up *Anejat*. The root *ejri* means 'to shake'. *Anejat* means 'unagitated', i.e., steady.

"It is motionless, but swifter than the mind." This seems to be an apparent contradiction or paradox. But it is not so. Because the Atman is all-pervading and all-full (Paripurna), it is said that the Atman is swifter than mind. Before the mind reaches a place, the Atman is already there, as it is all-pervading. So the mind can never be in advance of It. Here, *Devas* means the senses such as ear, eye, etc. It comes from the root which

means to 'illuminate'. *Tishtat*, i.e., sitting, means that the Atman is Nishkriya. It keeps quiet.

Matarisva is the ruler of the atmosphere. He is the divine life-power in all forms. Sankara explains: "Matari antarikshe svayati gachhatiti vayu—he who moves in the mother, the air, which is the upholder or sustainer of the whole world, the Sutratman, Hiranyagarbha, the universal Soul. *Matarisva* means air. This air supports the fire, sun, rain, etc.

*Apas* means all Karmas or actions. Water stands for acts, because all sacrificial acts are performed with water.

तदेजति तन्नैजति तद्दूरे तद्वन्तिके ।  
तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः ॥५॥

5. It (the Atman) moves and It moves not. It is distant and It is near. It is within all this and It is also outside all this.

#### Notes and Commentary

The ideas of the fourth Mantra are continued here. *Ejati* means 'moves'. *Najati* means 'does not move'. Apparently, it seems that this Mantra also is full of contradictions and paradoxes. But it is not so for the thinker. The meaning is quite clear. The Atman is the *primum-mobile* (prime mover). It gives a push to the Prakriti and the Prakriti moves. The Atman is motionless by Itself but It makes the Prakriti move by simple gazing, by Its simple presence. So it is said, 'It moves'. When It is all-pervading and all-full, where can It move? Hence it is motionless. 'It moves not'.

It is distant for the ignorant. It is very far for those who are immersed in worldliness, who have plunged themselves in Samsara. It is very, very far for those who are very selfish, proud, egoistic, hot-tempered and passionate. It is near for the enquirer. It is very, very near for those who are equipped with purity of mind (Chitta-Suddhi) and the four means of salvation and who have started hearing at the feet of Guru, reflecting and meditation (Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana), because It is their Inner Self or the Atman (Antar-Atman). It is very subtle (Ati-sukshma). It transcends Akasa (ether). It fills and covers everything. It is all-full (Paripurna). Hence It is within and

without. 'All' means 'the objects of this whole world'. Brahman is the substratum or support (Adhishthana) of all beings, as It is inside all and pervades all.

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।  
सर्वभूतेषु चाऽऽत्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्तते ॥६ ॥

6. He who sees all beings in the Self (Atman) and the Self in all beings, shrinks not from anything thereafter.

### Notes and Commentary

The thoughts of this Mantra are found in the two Slokas of the Bhagavad Gita (VI-29 & 30). "The Self, harmonised by Yoga, seeth the Self abiding in all beings and all beings in the Self; everywhere he seeth the same." "He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me, of him I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me." Mantras 6 and 7 give a description of the state of a Jnani who has full Self-realisation. *Sarvani Bhutani* ordinarily means all creatures. Literally it means 'all things that have become', i.e., from the unmanifested (Avyakta) down to the immovable objects. You will also find in the Sruti, "He who sees the Supreme Self as pervading all, and everything in the Supreme Self, does not wish to guard himself, because he has no fear from anyone. Being fearless, he is never anxious about preserving his little self".

The sage who has realised his Atman beholds that all objects and all beings are not distant from his own Self, and that his Atman is the Atman of all. The Atman is the common consciousness for all beings. The Atman is common in the king and the peasant, the saint and the rogue, the cobbler and the barber, the ant and the elephant, the tree and the stone. How can that great soul who is resting in his own Atman, and who has such an exalted cosmic consciousness, shrink from any being or object with a feeling of revulsion? How can he dislike anything? How can he hate anybody? Absolutely impossible.

यस्मिन्सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।  
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥७ ॥

7. When, to the knower, all beings become one with his own Atman, how shall he be deluded, what grief is there when he sees everywhere oneness?

### Notes and Commentary

This Mantra further explains the idea contained in Mantra 6. Both the words *Vijanata* in Mantra 7 and *Anupasyati* in Mantra 6 have the same significance. Mere intellectual assent that the one Self abides in all beings will not do. Actual Self-realisation or direct perception (Aparoksha Anubhuti) is indispensably requisite. In verse 6 it is said that the Knower of Brahman becomes fearless. Here it is said that the same Knower transcends delusion and sorrow. These are the fruits of attaining Brahma-Jnana.

*'Tarati sokam atmavit'*—The Knower of Atman crosses over 'grief', is the emphatic declaration of the Srutis. The three knots (Hridaya-granthi) are Avidya, Kama, Karma (ignorance, desire and action). A worldly man is drowned in delusion and sorrow on account of the three knots. When these three knots are destroyed by realising unity or oneness, by realising that all the Bhutas have become one with the Atman, how can there be delusion and grief in the Knower of the Atman? Absolutely impossible. He always rejoices in the bliss of the Atman. Even heaviest sorrow cannot shake him a bit. He stands adamantine. Gita says: "Yasmin sthito na duhkhenā gurunāpi vichalyate—Wherein established, he is not shaken even by heavy sorrow."

स पर्यगाच्छुक्रमकायमव्रणमस्नाविरँ शुद्धमपापविद्म् ।  
कविर्मनीषी परिभूः स्वयंभूर्याथातथ्यतोऽर्थान्व्यदधाच्छाश्वतीभ्यः  
समाभ्यः ॥८॥

8. He (Atman) is all-pervading, bright, bodiless, scatheless, without muscles, pure, untouched by sin (evil), wise (seer), omniscient, transcendent, self-sprung. He duly allotted to the various eternal creators their respective functions.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sah* means 'the Atman described above'. *Paryagat* means 'gone abroad or went round'. The real meaning is, 'The Atman

is all-pervading'. *Sukram* means pure or brilliant. *Akayam* means without a body. Here it means that the Atman has no subtle body or Linga Sarira. The terms *Avranam* and *Asnaviram* denote that the Atman has no gross physical body. The term *Suddha* (pure) indicates that the Atman has no causal body, and that He is free from the impurity of ignorance. *Apapaviddham* means that the Atman is not affected by good and bad actions (Nirlipta, Asanga, Asakta). Sankara takes the subject to be the Self and explains the neuter adjectives as masculine, because the beginning *Sah* and the ending *Kavih* are masculine. *Kavih* means a seer who has direct vision and illumination. *Manishi* means 'Lord of the mind', 'prompting the mind'. *Paribhu* means 'being above all'. 'The Atman is the best of all'. *Svayambhu* means 'self-existent'. The Atman never depends upon another. The 'years' means here the Prajapatis or the creators.

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते ।  
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ विद्यायाऽर्ताः ॥९॥

9. They who worship Avidya alone fall into blind darkness; and they who worship Vidya alone fall into even greater darkness.

### Notes and Commentary

*Avidya* means here Karmas or Vedic rites such as Agnihotra, etc., that are performed with expectation of fruits. Performers of such Karmas enter into blind darkness. The abode of the manes or Pitriloka is obtained by those who do such kinds of Karmas. When the fruits of their Karmas are exhausted, they are hurled down back to Mrityuloka. *Vidya* means here inferior knowledge, i.e., the knowledge of the deities. By such knowledge Devaloka is attained. When the fruits of worship of *Vidya* are exhausted, they also come back to this Samsara. Those who have abandoned Karmas, and who are seeking after the knowledge of deities alone, fall into still greater darkness. Karma and *Vidya* bear different fruits when each is done separately. A combination of Karma and *Vidya* is recommended in this verse. In Kurma Purana it is said: "Undoubtedly the worshippers of deities other than Vishnu go

to blind darkness, but undoubtedly to greater darkness they go who do not censure and condemn such persons and fail to try to correct their mistakes. Therefore those who know Lord Narayana in His true form, as free from all evils and who also condemn the worshippers of false deities are truly the good people. Such persons, by condemning the falsehood, whose nature is grief and ignorance, cross over grief and ignorance, and by knowing the truth whose nature is Joy and Knowledge attain such Joy and Knowledge.”

अन्यदेवाहुर्विद्ययाऽन्यदाहुरविद्यया ।  
इति शुश्रम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विच्चक्षिरे ॥१०॥

10. One thing, it is said, is obtained from Vidya (knowledge of the deities), and another from Avidya (ignorance, performance of ritualistic Karmas). Thus we have heard from the wise who taught (both) to us.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Anyat* means something distinct. By worship of Vidya, Devaloka, or the world of gods, is attained. By Avidya or Karmas, the abode of the manes, or the world of Pitrīs or forefathers is attained. This is the view or opinion of the spiritual teachers, who taught us both knowledge and Karma. Thus it is handed down from Guru to Chela (disciple).

विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वदोभयँ सह ।  
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमशनुते ॥११॥

11. He who knows at the same time both Vidya and Avidya overcomes death by Avidya and obtains Immortality by Vidya.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Mrityu* or death means work and worldly knowledge. *Tirtva* means having got over. *Asnute* means attains. To have communication with the deities is Amritam or immortality.

अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसंभूतिमुपासते ।  
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ संभूत्याँ रताः ॥१२॥

12. They fall into blind darkness, who worship the unborn Prakriti. They fall into greater darkness, who devote themselves to the Karya Brahman alone.

### Notes and Commentary

*Asambhutih* is that which is not Sambhutih (born of another); uncreated nature, i.e., nature which has no cause; this is Avyakta or Avyakrita, the unmanifested nature, wherein the three Gunas exist in a state of equilibrium (Guna-samya Avastha); matter and energy and the different kinds of sounds exist in an undifferentiated state. This is the cause of all. The whole world exists in a seed state in Avyaktam, just as the tree exists in the seed. Worship of this unmanifested Prakriti is known as Avyakta-upasana. Avyakta is also ignorance. It contains the seed of all desires and Karmas. Hiranyagarbha is Sambhuti or Karya Brahman. He is born of Avyakta. He is the effect of unmanifested Prakriti. Here is a beautiful interpretation of verses 12 to 14 by Dr. Paul Deussen:—

“Into dense darkness he enters  
 Who has conceived becoming to be naught,  
 Into yet denser he  
 Who has conceived becoming to be aught.  
 Different is it from coming into being;  
 Different also from not coming into being.  
 Thus have we from the ancient seers  
 Received the doctrine.  
 He who knows (as non-existent)  
 Both becoming and not-becoming  
 He passes through both  
 Beyond death, and has immortality.”

अन्यदेवाहुः संभवादन्यदाहुरसंभवात् ।  
 इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विच्चक्षिरे ॥१३॥

13. One thing, it is said, is obtained from the worship of Hiranyagarbha and another from the worship of unborn Prakriti. Thus we have heard from the wise who taught us this.

### Notes and Commentary

He who worships Sambhuti, or Hiranyagarbha (Karya Brahman), obtains Anima (the state of becoming like an atom), and other Siddhis. He who worships the unborn Prakriti, gets absorption (Laya) into the Prakriti. He becomes a Prakriti- laya (vide Patanjali Yoga Sutras, Chap. I, Samadhipada). Thus we have heard from the wise preceptors who taught us the fruits of the worship of Hiranyagarbha and Prakriti separately.

संभूतिं च विनाशं च यस्तद्वेदोभय् सह ।  
विनाशेन मृत्युं तीर्त्वाऽसंभूत्याऽमृतमशनुते ॥१४॥

14. He who worships the unborn Prakriti and Hiranyagarbha (destruction) together, overcomes death through the worship of Hiranyagarbha and obtains immortality through the worship of unborn Prakriti.

### Notes and Commentary

Here the word *Sambhuti* is an aphesis for *Asambhuti*. The taking away of a letter or syllable at the beginning of a word is aphesis. The letter 'A' in *Asambhuti* is taken away. Here *Sambhuti* really means *Asambhuti*. *Vinasa* means Hiranyagarbha. The abstract is used here for the concrete. 'Death' here means limited powers, desires, vices. By worship of Hiranyagarbha, he gets Aisvarya (Siddhis). Immortality here means absorption into Prakriti. The desirability of combining the worship of Hiranyagarbha and unborn Prakriti is mentioned in this verse, just as the desirability of combining the worship of Avidya and Vidya is declared in verse 11.

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।  
तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥१५॥

15. The face of Truth is covered by a golden vessel. Remove, O Sun, the covering, for the law of the Truth, that I may behold It.

### Notes and Commentary

*Hiranmayena* means 'by the golden'. *Patrena* means 'as if by a disc or lid'. The phrase 'golden disc' means 'the solar orb'. *Hiranya* means 'like a golden', i.e., 'full of light, effulgent'. *Satyasya* means 'of the Brahman who is inside the orb of the Sun'. *Apithitam* means 'covered'. *Mukham* means 'face'. *Apavrunu* means 'open'. *Satyadharma*—to me who have been worshipping Satya or the Truth (Brahman), or who have been practising Satya, i.e., virtue in accordance with the injunctions of the Sastras. "O Pushan (Fosterer or nourisher), remove the veil from Thy face that I may see Thee, that I may have Self-realisation—I, who am a Satya-Dharma—who constantly meditates on Thee, the Satya." *Pushan* means 'the nourisher' and is another name for the deity of the Sun.

पूषनेकर्षे यम सूर्य प्राजापत्यव्यूहरश्मीन्समूह तेजो यत्ते रूपं  
कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥१६॥

16. O Pushan (Sun, nourisher), only seer (sole traveller of the Heavens), controller of all (Yama), Surya, son of Prajapati, disperse thy rays and gather up thy burning light. I behold thy glorious form. I am He, the Purusha within thee.

### Notes and Commentary

Verses 15-18 have little connection with the previous verses. These are a dying man's prayers, added at the end. The four last Mantras 15-18 do not give a description of the nature of the Knowledge of the Self. Pushan is vocative case. It means 'O Sun!' The Sun nourishes the world. So He is called Pushan. *Ekarshi* means 'One who travels alone'. *Sohamasmi*—here the identity of Jiva and Brahman, is established. *Purusha*—because He pervades everything or He occupies the city of Brahman, i.e., body.

वायुरनिलममृतमथेदं भस्मान्त् शरीरम् ।  
अँ क्रतो स्मर कृत् स्मर क्रतो स्मर कृत् स्मर ॥१७॥

17. (Let my) Prana melt into the all-pervading Air, the eternal Sutratman, and let this body be burnt by fire to ashes. Om! O

mind! remember, remember, my deeds! O mind! remember, remember, my deeds!

### Notes and Commentary

The dying man, who has led a virtuous life, who has done holy works, by remembering his actions gets bliss in the next world. He says: "Let my Prana leave this body and join the all-pervading Sutratman". *Krato*—vocative case—means 'O mind!' Uvata, in his commentary, holds that Agni (Fire), who has been worshipped in youth and manhood is here invoked in the form of mind, or that *Kratu* means sacrificial Fire. "Remember! Remember my deeds. Remember all Karmas which I have done from childhood." The repetition of the same words *Krato smara* denotes anxiety or uneasiness of mind.

अग्ने न य सुपथा राये अस्मान्विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् ।  
युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठां ते नम उक्तिं विधेम ॥१८॥

18. O Agni! Lead us on to wealth (bliss, Mukti, beatitude) by a good path, as Thou knowest, O God! all the ways. Remove the crooked sin from within us. We offer Thee our best salutations.

### Notes and Commentary

He requests Agni to take him by a good path, i.e., the northern route (*Uttarayana*—the Devayana), from which there is no return. This is the path of Archis (light). *Naya*—lead; *Supatha*— by a good path. *Raye* means 'wealth', i.e., spiritual bliss or bliss of the Self or Mukti. *Visvani*—all; *Deva*—God; *Vayunaani*— thoughts, knowledge, efforts for salvation; *Vidvan*—knowing; *Yuyodhi*—destroy; *Asmat*—from us; *Juhuranam*—degrading, crooked; *Enah*—sin.

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।  
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

# KENOPANISHAD

## INTRODUCTION

The Kenopanishad belongs to the Sama Veda. Like the Isavasya Upanishad, the Kenopanishad also derives its name from the first word of its beginning verse namely *Kena* (by whom). This is also called Talavakara or Jaimini Brahmana of the Sama Veda to which this belongs. The name of the recension or Sakha is Talavakara. It has another name, Jaiminiya Brahmana. Sri Sankaracharya, in his Bhashya, says that the Upanishad begins from the ninth chapter of the Talavakara Brahmana; but in the MSS. copy of the Brahmana found by Dr. Burnell, the Upanishad begins from the 10th section (Anuvaka) of the fourth chapter. Two different Bhashyas of Sankaracharya on this Upanishad are known and both are printed. They are Pada-bhashya and Vakya-bhashya.

The Kenopanishad is a small text in four parts or sections (Khandas). It deals essentially with the nature of Brahman and knowledge of the Self. Brahman is depicted in the Upanishad beginning with *Keneshitam*, etc., appearing in the form of questions and answers. Brahmavidya, or the supreme science of the Soul, is indeed a very difficult science. It is very difficult to comprehend the nature of Brahman or the Supreme Self. For the sake of easy understanding, this Upanishad is presented in the form of a dialogue between the preceptor and the disciple.

The first two parts are in the form of a dialogue. How one can realise Brahman by transcending mind and senses, is explained here. The nature of Brahman is also dealt with. Atman or Brahman is beyond the reach of senses and mind. He is the Mind of the mind, Ear of the ear. Behind the breath and the senses there is the Supreme Brahman. By the light of Brahman alone, the mind, Prana and senses function. The third part contains the well-known Deva Yaksha Samvada or the dialogue between the Devas and the Yaksha. In the fourth part, the methods of meditation on Brahman and the fruits of meditation are explained.

When Karma is done without expectation of fruits, it purifies the mind and generates in the aspirant a strong desire for the final emancipation.

The desire to know Brahman and attain freedom from births and deaths can arise only in the person who is endowed with a pure and calm mind, who is free from desires, and who is disgusted with the sensual objects of this illusory world.

Brahman cannot be obtained by logical discussion. Srutis say: "In order to know Brahman, let the aspirant approach a preceptor who is well-versed in the Vedas and who is centred in Brahman, with sacrificial sticks (Samit) in hand". "He knows who has studied under a preceptor." Such knowledge, only as is acquired by studying under a preceptor, does good.

When one attains knowledge of Brahman, Avidya or ignorance, which is the seed of bondage and cause of Karma performed for the attainment of objects of desire, is totally destroyed. The Srutis say: "There is neither sorrow nor delusion for the knower of Self who beholds the one Atman everywhere"; "He who knows the Atman goes beyond sorrow".

Moksha cannot be obtained by Karma or Knowledge combined with Karma. The Knowledge of the Atman is antagonistic to Karma and cannot therefore co-exist with Karma. There is no duality in Knowledge. In Karma there are agent, fruits, etc. The performance of Karma will take one to the world of manes only. It cannot make one Immortal. Brahman, the only real entity, cannot be attained by any means other than the removal of ignorance through knowledge of the Self.

That Supreme Brahman, who is unborn, unchanging, birthless, undecaying, immortal, fearless, eternal, self-luminous, all-blissful and all-pervading, is covetable by all. When this Brahman is attained, only then one is freed from births and deaths. Some aspirant who was disgusted with the illusory sensual pleasures of this world, who had a burning desire to know Brahman and to attain the final emancipation, approached a preceptor who is well-versed in Vedas and centred in Brahman, and questioned the preceptor as expressed in the Mantras *Keneshitam*, etc.

## PRATHAMA KHANDA (SECTION I)

ॐ आप्यायन्तु ममाङ्गानि वाक्प्राणश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रमथो  
 बलमिन्द्रियाणि च सर्वाणि सर्वं ब्रह्मौपनिषदं माहं ब्रह्म निराकुर्या मा  
 मा ब्रह्म निराकरोदनिराकरणमस्त्वनिराकरणं मेऽस्तु तदात्मनि निरते य  
 उपनिषत्सु धर्मास्ते मयि सन्तु ते मयि सन्तु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

Hari Om! May my limbs, speech, eye, ear, strength and all my senses grow vigorous. All (everything) is Brahman of the Upanishads. May I never deny Brahman. May Brahman never spurn me. May there be no denial of Brahman. May there be no spurning by Brahman. Let all the virtues recited by the Upanishads repose in me delighting in the Atman. May they in me repose!

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

ॐ केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रैति युक्तः ।  
 केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुः श्रोत्रं क उ देवो युनक्ति ॥१॥

1. Disciple: Who impels the mind to alight on its objects? At whose command does Prana proceed to function? At whose command do men utter speech? What intelligence directs the eyes and the ears (towards their respective objects)?

#### Notes and Commentary

The eight Mantras of this Khanda are very elevating and inspiring. They will take you gradually to the goal if you meditate on these ideas. They will make you realise that the Self is very close to you. These Mantras are good for constant repetition, reflection and meditation. They will turn the mind inwards. They will take you to the door of intuition very quickly, if you meditate on these ideas with concentration at Brahmamuhurta (4 a.m.), when the mind is free from the currents of Rajas and Tamas.

*Kena*—by whom, by what agent; *Ishitam*—wished, desired, directed; *Patati*—falls, lights upon, proceeds or goes (towards its objects); *Preshitam*—sent forth.

The questioner is an intelligent man who is endowed with discrimination. He is a real enquirer. He is thirsting for real knowledge. He is eager to know that Supreme Entity which is unchangeable and eternal. He thinks that some superior, independent Intelligence controls and guides the mind, life (Prana) and the senses.

श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मनो यद्वाचो ह वाच् स उ प्राणस्य प्राणः।  
चक्षुषश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥२॥

2. Preceptor: It is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, tongue of the tongue (the speech of speech) and also life of the life and eye of the eye. Having abandoned (the sense of self or I-ness in these) and rising above sense-life, the wise become Immortal.

#### Notes and Commentary

This verse is an answer to the questions in the first verse. The preceptor gives the answer to the worthy disciple who had questioned him. Behind the mind, breath and the senses there is Brahman or the Supreme Self. He who knows this Brahman attains immortality.

Ignorant people identify themselves with the body, mind, Prana and senses on account of nescience or Avidya. They mistake these false perishable limiting adjuncts or vehicles for the pure immortal Atman, and so they are caught in the round of births and deaths. But some wise people abandon this false identification, separate themselves from these limiting adjuncts through enquiry, discrimination and Anvaya-vyatireka Yukti and practice of Neti-neti doctrine (I am not this body, I am not this Prana, I am not this mind, I am not the senses), identify themselves with the all-pervading, immortal, pure Brahman, obtain knowledge of Brahman and attain immortality.

*Atimuchya*—being free; having renounced I-ness in the limiting vehicles such as body, mind, Prana, senses; having renounced the false notion that the ear, mind, Prana, etc., is the Atman. *Pretya*—on departing, having turned away; *Asmat*—from this; *Lokat*—world or body.

Some commentators take *Asmallokat pretya* to mean 'departing from this world' or 'having left this mortal body'. It may mean also 'rising above sense-life', because they attain immortality as soon as they rise above sense-life and live in the Atman. They become immortal while living in this body. They need not wait till they leave the body or the world to become immortal. This rendering is more appropriate.

Just as the water in a cup borrows its heat from the sun or fire, so also the mind, Prana and senses borrow their light and power from the Atman. The Atman is the source for all these organs. The ear hears through the light of the Atman, the tongue speaks through the power of the Atman, the mind thinks through the intelligence of the Atman and Prana performs its function through the power of the Atman only. Mind and these organs are inert and non-intelligent. They appear to be intelligent through the light and power of the Atman. Brahman or the Atman gives to the ear the power of hearing, gives to the mind the power of thinking, gives to the tongue the power of speaking, gives the power of life to the first Prana, gives to the eye the power of seeing. It is, therefore, said that It is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, etc.

There is a director of the ear, eyes, tongue, mind, life-force who is distinct from the ear, mind, Prana and others. The ears, eyes, mind, Prana, etc., exist for His use, just as the house exists for the use of the owner. The director is Brahman or the Atman.

The Srutis say: "Brahman shines by His own light," "By His light all this universe is illuminated", "The sun, the moon, the stars, the fire and the lightning shine by His light", "Who could live and breathe if there was not the self-luminous Brahman," "He leads Prana up and Apana down". The Bhagavad Gita (XIII-33) says: "As the sun illuminates the whole world, so does the Atman (Kshetri), O Bharata, illumine all the bodies (Kshetra) ."

One becomes immortal by renouncing all desires. In this world, man always talks about 'my son', 'my wife', 'my house', etc. The wise abandon all such worldly talks and worldly desires (*Pretya asmallokat*), and attain immortality by meditating on Brahman, who is the ear of the ear, the mind of

the mind, etc. The Sruti says: "Not by works, not by offspring, not by wealth, but by renunciation alone did some attain immortality". "When all desires are abandoned, here they attain the Brahman". "Having turned his senses inwards for desire of immortality".

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वागच्छति नो मनो न विद्यो न विजानीमो  
यथैतदनुशिष्यादन्यदेव तद्विदितादथो अविदितादधि । इति शुश्रुम  
पूर्वेषां ये नस्तद्व्याच्चक्षिरे ॥३॥

3. The eye does not go there, nor speech, nor the mind. We do not, therefore, know how to instruct one about It. It is different from what is known and It is beyond what is unknown. Thus we have heard from the ancient preceptors who taught us that.

#### Notes and Commentary

The eye and the organs cannot go to Brahman. They cannot approach Him, for one cannot go to one's own Self. How can the eyes see the seer of sight? The eye is an object of perception for the mind and the Atman. However clever an acrobat may be, he cannot jump on his own shoulders. So is the case with the senses. The eye can only see the external objects of the universe. That is its only function. How can it know or reach its source which is extremely subtle? For, it is not possible to go to one's own Self. Similarly, speech cannot go there. When you utter the word cow, that word enlightens the object cow denoted by it. Then it is said that the word goes to the object. The source or support or abode or resting place for the word, and the organ that utters it, is Brahman. Therefore, the speech or the mouth does not go there, i.e., approach Brahman.

The mind also cannot go there. How can it know the knower? Just as fire that burns and enlightens other objects, cannot either burn or enlighten itself, so the mind which knows the external objects through the avenues of the senses, cannot know the Atman or Brahman, because Brahman is the source for the mind also, and the mind is gross, inert and finite. How can the finite know the Infinite? The gross impure mind cannot

approach Brahman; but the subtle, pure mind can go there, for pure mind is Brahman itself.

Brahman cannot be an object of perception, because He is partless, attributeless, extremely subtle. He is beyond the reach of the senses (Atindriya, Adrisya). He can only be intuitively realised through meditation. The senses and the mind can perceive only the external objects of this universe.

You can explain to others about objects that are cognised by the senses by giving a description of their attributes, class, modes of activity, etc. But, Brahman is without attributes, class, etc. So, it is not possible to teach about Brahman to the disciples. To define Brahman is to deny Brahman. Sat-Chit-Ananda is only a provisional definition. That is the reason why Srutis explain Brahman through the neti-neti doctrine. The preceptor should exert every effort in giving instruction. The disciple should possess a subtle, sharp, pure and one-pointed intellect.

It is not possible to make the pupil believe in the Atman by instruction, by the evidence of the senses and other proofs, but it is quite possible to make him believe and understand by the aid of Srutis or scriptures.

Brahman cannot be known like the objects of the world. It cannot be explained also by mere words, just as you explain to others the nature of objects with words.

*Tat*—that, Brahman, the ear of the ear; *Viditat*—from the known Vyakta or the whole manifested universe, all objective phenomena; *Anyat*—something distinct; *Aviditat*—from the unknown or the Avyakta, the seed for all manifestation; *Adhi*—literally means above, superior, different or something different from.

Brahman is distinct from the known, from the whole manifested universe and the unknown (Avyakta).

When it is said 'Brahman is distinct from the known', people may take the Avyakta or the unknown as Brahman. To avoid this confusion or misconception, the text says, 'Brahman is beyond the unknown also.'

Ignorant people may think by going through the text, 'Brahman is different from what is known and it is beyond what

is unknown also', that Brahman is a non-entity or a curious imaginary product or substance of the Rishis and Vedantins only. We say it is not so. Brahman is the only reality. He is the basis or source for everything. Brahman is not an object. He is all-pervading, mysterious, incomprehensible, Chaitanya or pure consciousness. He must be known through intuition or self-cognition. It is very difficult to understand the nature of Brahman. It is very difficult to explain the nature of Brahman, because there is no means or language. The Rishis of yore have tried their level best to make the disciples understand Brahman by various ways of expression. Those who are endowed with pure and subtle intellect, can easily grasp the subtle ideas of the Upanishads. For the passionate and the worldly-minded who are endowed with an impure, outgoing mind, Upanishad is a sealed book. Everything is Greek and Latin for them.

As Brahman is beyond the reach of the senses and the mind, the aspirant should, at first, have a comprehensive understanding of Brahman through the study of the Upanishads and the instructions of an illumined preceptor. He should equip himself with the four means, and practise constant meditation. Then he will attain knowledge of Brahman. He will realise Brahman like an Amalaka fruit in his hand. Then all doubts and delusions will vanish.

That which is distinct from both the known and the unknown is Brahman or the Atman. The knowledge of Brahman has been traditionally handed down from preceptor to disciple. Gaudapada taught the Brahma Vidya to Govindapada; Govindapada to Sankara; Sankara to Padmapada, and so on. Brahman can be known only by instruction from an illumined teacher or realised sage and not by logical discussions, nor by intelligence, great learning, expositions, austerity or sacrificial rites, etc. We have heard this saying of the preceptors who clearly taught us Brahman.

यद्वाचाऽनभ्युदितं येन वागभ्युद्यते ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥४॥

4. What speech does not enlighten, but what enlightens speech, know That alone as Brahman, and not this which people here worship.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yat*—what, that which is intelligence itself, pure consciousness; *Yena*—by whom, by Brahman.

The disciple entertained the doubt that the Jivatma cannot be Brahman. He thought that the Jivatma is the performer of sacrifice and enjoyer of fruits of Karmas. The teacher found out the condition of his disciple from his looks and speech and said: 'Do not doubt thus, the Atman is Brahman.'

The soul of man is the Atman. The soul of the universe is Brahman. The Atman is identical with Brahman.

Speech cannot reveal or illumine Brahman. Brahman is beyond the range of speech. The tongue speaks through the power or light of Brahman. Speech is finite. How can the finite speech reveal the infinite Brahman! Brahman only illumines speech and its organ, Vak, which is presided over by fire (Agni). So Brahman is the speech of speech, the tongue of tongue. The Vajasaneyaka says: 'Brahman is within speech and directs speech'. This Atman is Brahman or Bhuma (Infinite or the unconditioned). Brahman is unsurpassable, big, great, highest of all, all-pervading. So He is called Brahman.

Brahman is eternal, unchangeable, self-luminous, formless, colourless, attributeless, timeless, spaceless, indivisible, unborn, undecaying, immortal.

*Idam*—this (Loka), people here. Brahman is not what people worship here such as Isvara and other extra-cosmic minor deities, for the satisfaction of desires.

Some may think that this text depreciates Bhakti or devotion. Vedanta is certainly not hostile to devotion. Here, it only depreciates worship of minor deities with selfish interests. A Vedantin or a sage is a perfect devotee. Para Bhakti or supreme devotion and Jnana are one. Vedanta says that Isvara whom people worship is your own Self. It teaches an expanded form of Bhakti or higher form of devotion.

Start your devotion by worshipping an image. Superimpose all the attributes of the Lord in the image, but do not end your devotion in that image alone. Expand. See God in every object. Feel that the world is the manifestation of the Lord. See the world as God. The image or the picture will stimulate divine love in your heart, and ultimately lead you to the realisation of oneness or unity of the Self. The image will serve as a prop to lean upon in the beginning. Some ignorant people think that the image only is the Lord. Vedanta deprecates only this sort of worship.

Brahman is the silent witness of the activity of the organ of speech.

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाऽऽहुर्मनो मतम् ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥५॥

5. What one cannot think with the mind, but by which they say that the mind is made to think, know that alone as Brahman, and not this which people here worship.

#### Notes and Commentary

He who cannot be comprehended by the mind, but who causes the mind to apprehend all objects, know Him alone as Brahman.

*Manah*—mind, that by which one thinks; not only Manas, the entire Antahkarana is meant here.

The mind is connected with all organs. It is the commander or the chief. The Sruti says: 'Desire, volition, deliberation, faith, negligence, courage, timidity, shame, intelligence, fear—all these are mind.'

Mind is the Drik or seer, the objects are the Drisya (visible objects). The Atman or Brahman is the Drik or Seer, mind is the Drisya. The mind cannot approach Brahman. The mind is enlightened by the intelligence of Brahman shining within. The mind functions through the light and power of Brahman. The mind is pervaded by Brahman. So say the knowers of Brahman. The interior intelligence of the mind is Brahman. The mind comprehends the world or objects through the power or light or intelligence of Brahman.

The senses carry the sense-impressions or images of objects to the mind. The mind presents them to the Self or the Atman or Purusha. The Purusha beholds them, gazes and fixes His seal and returns them back to the mind, just as the king, or Raja puts his seal on papers and returns them back to the Prime Minister or Dewan. Only then, the comprehension of objects becomes perfect or complete.

Brahman is the silent witness of the activities of the mind.

यच्चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षुँ षि पश्यति ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥६॥

6. What cannot be seen by the eye, but by which the eyes are able to see—know That alone as Brahman, and not this which people here worship.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Pasyati*—sees. 'See' means perceive as an object. Brahman directs the eye towards colours and forms. Brahman cannot be seen by the eye, as He is not an object of perception. Eye is a finite instrument that carries the impressions of objects, viz., colour, shape, form, size, etc., to the mind. Eye derives its power of seeing from Brahman only, its source. The eye is made to move towards its object by the enlightening intelligence of Brahman. Brahman is the real unseen Seer of sight. He is the silent Witness to the activities of the eye. By the light of the Brahman, connected with the activities of the mind, man beholds the activity of the mind. Brahman is the Lord or Proprietor of this mental factory. The eyes, ears, etc., are the ordinary clerks. Mind is the Head Clerk. Intellect (Buddhi) is the Managing Director.

यच्छ्रोत्रेण न शृणोति येन श्रोत्रमिद् श्रुतम् ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥७॥

7. What cannot be heard by the ear, but by which the ears are able to hear—know That alone as Brahman, and not this which people worship here.

### Notes and Commentary

Brahman directs the ear towards sound. Ear is a finite instrument. It carries the impressions of sound to the mind. The activity of the ear is connected with the activity of the mind. It derives its power of hearing from Brahman only, its source. The ear is made to move towards sound, music, etc., by the enlightening intelligence of Brahman.

Brahman is the real unheard Hearer. He is the silent Witness to the activity of the ear.

यत्प्राणेन न प्राणिति येन प्राणः प्रणीयते ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥८॥  
॥ इति प्रथमः खण्डः ॥

8. That which one breathes not with the breath, but by which breath is breathed, know That alone as Brahman, and not this which people here worship.

### Notes and Commentary

Prana may also mean smell. Then the translation will be: "What smell does not perceive, but directs smell to its object, know That alone as Brahman, and not this which people here worship."

He who is not enlivened by Prana but who gives Prana the power of enlivening all beings—know That alone as Brahman, and not this which people here worship.

The breath is made to move towards its objects by the enlightening intelligence of the Brahman.

'That which one breathes not with the breath' means, 'That which one does not perceive like odour, with the air filling the nostrils, and connected with the activity of the mind and the life.'

Here ends the First Section.

## DVITIYA KHANDA (SECTION II)

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति दध्रमेवापि नूनं त्वं वेत्थ ब्रह्मणो रूपं ।

यदस्य त्वं यदस्य च देवेष्वथ नु मीमांस्यमेव ते मन्ये विदितम् ॥१॥

1. Preceptor: If you think 'I know well', it is certainly but little—the form of the Brahman you have known, as also the form in the Devas. Therefore, you should enquire further about Brahman. Disciple: 'I think (Brahman) is known'.

## Notes and Commentary

*Yadi*—if perchance; *Suveda*—I know (Brahman) well (being taught by you); *Dabhrām*—little; *Vettha*—knowest; *Atha nu*—therefore now; *Mīmāṃsya*—worthy of enquiry.

You can only say of an object, 'I know this thing well'. You cannot say, 'I know Brahman well'. This is a wrong notion. A piece of wood can be consumed by fire, but the essence of fire itself cannot be so consumed. Brahman is not an object of perception. Knowledge of Brahman is intuitive self-awareness. There is no distinct objective and subjective consciousness for the sage. Subject and object are the same for him. He sees only Brahman everywhere. Therefore, the Upanishad says, 'It is unknown to those who know, and known to those who do not know'.

A pupil who has attentively followed the exposition which has been given on the nature of Brahman in the first section, is compelled to think, that he perfectly knows Brahman. It is the well-defined meaning of all the writings on the Vedānta, that the self or soul of everyone who knows is Brahman. Further, the idea of Brahman in this Upanishad is introduced by the passage: 'He who is the ear of the ear', and firmly established by the passage: 'That which is not manifested by speech, etc.' Lastly, the decision of the school of the Vedānta is given in the words: 'He is even different from what is known, etc.' Notwithstanding these apparent reasons, the pupil is wrong in supposing that he has obtained a perfect knowledge of Brahman. Of every thing which may become an object of knowledge, a perfect or definite knowledge is possible, but not so of a thing which cannot become such an object. This is

Brahman for he is the Knower, and the Knower may well know other things, but not make himself the object of his knowledge. To render this in modern phraseology, the 'I' who knows can never become the object, for having become object, it ceases to have the nature of subject. Nor can it be said that Brahman may be made the object of the knowledge of another, for beside Him, none that knows exists.

If here the pupil asks, 'Is the nature of Brahman manifold, as it appears implied in the words of the text, 'What thou knowest is little', which conveys the idea of a more or less', the answer is: In reality, there is but one notion of Brahman, as He is without form, colour, etc., but apparently, His nature is manifold which arises from the false notions under which His nature is represented.

If it is further said, the nature of everything is that by which it is defined; Brahman is especially defined by consciousness which does neither refer to the external senses nor to the internal sense, but merely refers to Brahman and therefore Brahman is consciousness; we admit that this is true, yet thereby no exact idea of Brahman is obtained, for what we understand by consciousness, knowledge, etc., is only accessible to us by means of the sense or intellect, and expresses, therefore, not Knowledge as it is itself, but as it is reflected by some medium. What has been said before, viz., 'He is even different from what is known, He is also beyond what is not known', is therefore true.

The preceptor thought that the disciple might have entertained the erroneous notion, 'I know Brahman well'. He wanted to dispel this wrong notion from his mind. So he said, 'If you think, you know Brahman well then you know little'. The knower cannot be known by the knower. There is no knower other than Brahman to whom Brahman can be a knowable, distinct from Himself. The Sruti says, 'There is no knower other than that'. The existence of another knower is denied. Therefore, it is quite obvious that the belief, 'I know Brahman well' is an illusion or an erroneous notion.

Those who are endowed with the four means, and who are pure and intelligent, can understand the teachings of the Upanishads. Many understand and mistake the limiting

adjuncts, viz., body, mind, egoism, etc., for the Atman, even though they study the Upanishads and hear the Srutis from sages, as they are not proper Adhikaris or qualified persons.

Prajapati instructed Virochana and Indra: 'This Purusha, who is seen in the eye, is the immortal and fearless Brahman.' Both misinterpreted this teaching and took the body for Brahman, as the faults in them were not purged, as their minds were impure and gross. Indra stayed with Prajapati for 101 years, removed his faults and impurities through Tapas, faith and celibacy, and comprehended the very Brahman that was taught to him for the first, second and third time, only the fourth time.

Even in the world, if fifty students receive instructions from the same teacher some understand him rightly, some misinterpret his teaching, some interpret it in a way contrary to the view of the teacher, and some do not understand it at all. If this is the case with secular science, what more need we say of the knowledge of Brahman which is subtle and beyond the reach of intellect?

The next point is, has Brahman then many forms, great and little, because it is said *Dabhrām*, little? The Srutis declare that Brahman is formless (Nirakara, Amurta). Brahman has forms from the relative viewpoint. Many forms of Brahman are produced by the conditioning factors of name and form. In reality Brahman has no forms. The attributes by which Brahman is defined may be said to be its form. Srutis say: 'Brahman is knowledge-bliss', 'Brahman is dense knowledge—Prajnana-ghana, Vijnanaghana, Chidghana,' 'Brahman is existence-knowledge-infinity—Satyam-Jnanam-Anantam-Brahma'. The form of Brahman has been defined thus. These attributes help the aspirants to practise meditation in the beginning. These attributes are the prop (Alambana) in the beginning. You will have to fix the mind on these attributes in the beginning of your spiritual practice. These attributes will drop by themselves gradually and you will merge yourself in Brahman eventually. The preceptor can make his disciples understand Brahman through these attributes, not on account of its own essence, but for the sake of the above two purposes.

According to its essence, it is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know.

The preceptor said to the disciple: 'You know very little of the form of Brahman as conditioned in man, also you know very little of the Brahman as conditioned in the Devas'. Brahman or the Bhuma who is infinite, eternal, one without a second, cannot be known well. Therefore, the preceptor said: 'O disciple, I think that you have yet to know Brahman by enquiry. You have got only a little intellectual knowledge of Brahman. You have not attained real intuitive knowledge of the Self'.

The disciple went to a solitary place, reflected on the teachings of his preceptor, then meditated and realised Brahman in himself. Then he went to his Guru and said: 'I think I know Brahman.'

Brahman is not the unknown and the unknowable of the agnostics, though it is said: 'Brahman is incomprehensible, Brahman cannot be known or seen, Brahman is beyond the reach of mind or intellect and senses'. It is more than the known as It is realised as one's own Atman or Self. Brahman is always the silent, witnessing Consciousness. He is the subject, knower and seer. Anything perceived by the senses and conceived by the mind cannot be Brahman. An object of the world only can be perceived by the senses, and thought of by the mind. The seer can never be seen. The knower can never be known (by the intellect or the mind). Brahman is unknowable in the objective sense. Brahman is unknowable by the mind, intellect and senses. He is certainly knowable through direct intuitive perception in Samadhi as the Self or the Atman by the pure mind which is Brahman Itself.

Till you attain the highest Nirvikalpa state, wherein you will find and feel, 'All indeed is Brahman, there is nothing but the Self', you will have to practise again and again, enquiry, reflection and meditation; you must feel His presence in all names and forms.

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च ।  
यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च ॥२॥

2. *Disciple*: I do not think I know (Him) well; but not that I do not know; I know too. He who among us knows It, knows It, and he knows not too that he does not know.

### Notes and Commentary

We cannot know Brahman, as we know other objects of this world by referring them to a class and showing other differences. On the contrary, we do not know that we know Him not, i.e., no one can assert that we know Him not, for we need to know Brahman in order to know anything. He, therefore, who knows this double peculiarity of the knowledge of Brahman, knows Brahman, as much as it can be known; and he does not know, nor can anybody prove it to him, that he does not know Brahman.

The disciple says: 'I do not think I know Him well, but not that I do not know. I know too'. Against this, the preceptor says: 'Then you do not know Brahman, because there is a contradiction when you say, 'I do not know Him well and I know Him.' If you do not think you know Him well, how can you think you know Him? If you, on the other hand, think that you know Him, why do you not think that you know Him well?' The disciple remains unshaken in his faith owing to the strength of his own experience. He shows the firmness of his knowledge of Brahman and says: 'He among us (my co-disciple) knows this, he knows it, etc.'

You cannot know Brahman just as you know an object. Brahman is known or realised not as an object, but as pure self-consciousness, through intuition or direct inner experience or illumination. In this spiritual experience, there is no objective consciousness just as you experience in this world. Subject and object are one in the spiritual experience. The Self or Brahman is everything. The sage beholds the Atman everywhere. *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*—everything is certainly Brahman. This is a sublime, soul-stirring experience that cannot be either imagined or described in words. You will have to experience it yourself in Samadhi, when the mind, intellect and the senses cease functioning.

यस्यामतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः ।

अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातमविजानताम् ॥३॥

3. *Preceptor*: It is known by him who thinks he knows not, he who thinks he knows, does not know. It is unknown to those who know, and known to those who do not know.

### Notes and Commentary

The sage or the knower of Brahman knows fully well that the Brahman is unknowable (by the mind or intellect or the senses like an object), but only is realisable through intuition as one's own innermost Self, *Antaratman*. So he knows Brahman well.

He knows that Brahman is not an object of thinking by the lower mind. He knows that Brahman can be meditated upon by the pure mind, which is endowed with the four means and the instructions of an illumined preceptor. He knows also that Brahman is the only seer, knower, silent, witnessing subject and ultimate source for everything. The thought, 'Brahman is known by me' never arises in his mind.

But he, whose conviction is that Brahman is known by him, certainly does not know Brahman. He is an ignorant man. He mistakes the body, mind, ego, the organs and the *Prana* as the pure Self, and identifies himself with these illusory limiting adjuncts and says that he knows Brahman. The latter half of the verse states these distinct conclusions of the sage and the ignorant man emphatically.

In ignorant persons who behold Brahman in body, mind and senses, the erroneous notion, 'I know Brahman' arises, because they cannot discriminate between Brahman and these illusory products or limiting conditions created by ignorance. It is to show that such false knowledge of Brahman is erroneous, that the latter half of the verse is stated. Further, it furnishes reason for the view propounded in the first half of the verse.

For an ordinary man, it may appear that the ideas are contradictory. It is not so. If you study over and over with attention and one-pointedness of mind, everything will be clear to you. The teacher makes comments on what he has said in

the above Slokas, so as to make the ideas very lucid to his disciple.

He who thinks that he does not know Brahman, does not fall into the error that Brahman can be made an object of complete mental apprehension. He who thinks that he knows Brahman, has got no knowledge of Brahman, because he has got the erroneous idea that Brahman can be completely thought out and he limits Brahman.

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।

आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् ॥४॥

4. Brahman is known well when it is known as the witness of every state of consciousness, because (by such knowledge) he attains immortality. By his Self he attains strength, and by knowledge, immortality.

#### Notes and Commentary

When it is completed as known in every cognition one attains, indeed, immortality.

*Pratibodhaviditam*—known as a witness of or behind every act of cognition, understood as an object of intuitive knowledge, realised by direct perception in Samadhi. *Pratibodham* is realisation through direct intuition (Aparoksha), direct beatific vision.

*Vindate*—he obtains; *Viryam*—power, strength, capacity; *Vidyaya*—by knowledge; *Amritam*—Immortality.

It has been stated in the previous verse that Brahman is unknown to those who know. This seems to be a contradiction or paradox. If Brahman be not known, then there is no difference between the ignorant man of the world and the knower of Brahman or sage. How then could Brahman be known? This is explained in this verse. The riddle is solved in this Sloka.

Brahman perceives and knows all states of consciousness, like objects, as He is absolute intelligence. He is the witnessing consciousness or subject. He is the witness of the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states. He perceives all the

modifications of all minds as He is Knowledge Absolute. He is blended with every thought or mental modification. Therefore when Brahman is known or realised as the witness of all states of consciousness, then He is known well. As He is the witness of all states of consciousness, He is intelligence in its essence; He is a mass of pure consciousness; He is birthless, deathless, decayless, eternal, pure, unconditioned, one without a second; He is the Self or the Atman of all beings.

The aspirant separates himself from the thoughts and mental modifications, and identifies himself with the witness of all cognitions, thoughts and all states of consciousness.

When the whole world merges in Brahman during Pralaya, there is no witness because all objects disappear. Brahman remains the same. In Nirvikalpa Samadhi also, when all mental modifications merge in Brahman, there is no witness.

Just as there is no difference in the essence of Akasa in a vessel, room or cloud, so also there is no difference in its (Brahman's) essence. Brahman is a homogeneous mass of pure consciousness.

This Atman is not connected with anything. It supports everything. A thing that has attributes may be connected with another which also has attributes. To say that Brahman without attributes, undifferentiated, subtle, formless, limitless, which has nothing in common with anything else, combines with another unequal in class, is certainly absurd and illogical.

Srutis emphatically declare, 'Brahman is eternal, pure, self-luminous, undecaying, existence absolute, knowledge absolute, bliss absolute'. This is possible only if Brahman be the witness of all states of consciousness. The knowledge that the Atman is the witness of all states of consciousness gives immortality.

The strength gained by wealth, position, retinue, soldiers, ammunitions and guns cannot overcome death, because this strength is produced by things themselves mortal. It is external and transient. The strength gained by knowledge of Brahman (the Soul-force) is real inexhaustible strength, because it does not require any other help. It is internal and eternal in itself.

The Mundaka Upanishad says, 'This Atman cannot be attained by one destitute of strength'.

The knower of Brahman only possesses tremendous spiritual strength. Real strength comes only through knowledge of the Self. The knower of Brahman becomes absolutely fearless. He knows that his Self will not be affected in the least by external conditions. He is fully aware that the Self is invulnerable and invincible. The knower of Brahman can move the whole world.

The hearts of rich people who possess man-power, money-power, but do not possess knowledge of the Self, are filled with all sorts of fears such as fear of loss, fear of disease, fear of death, fear of public criticism, fear of enemies, etc.

Immortality (Amritam) is the very nature of Brahman, just as heat is the very nature of fire. Brahma-Jnana, or knowledge of the Self, destroys ignorance, just as light destroys darkness and thus reveals one's inherent immortal nature.

इह चेदवेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टिः ।  
भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥५ ॥

॥ इति द्वितीयः खण्डः ॥

5. If one knows (That—Brahman) here, (i.e., in this world), then the true end (of all human aspiration) is (gained). If one knows not (That) here, great is the destruction. The wise, seeing the one Atman in all beings, rise from sense-life and become immortal.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Mahati*—great; *Vinashti*—destruction (new births and deaths), the region of the Asuras, the realm of blinding darkness, loss, calamity; *pretya asmat lokat*—on departing from this world, after death, throwing the mortal coil; *Amritah bhavanti*—become immortal.

The miseries of Samsara are beyond description. Ignorance is the root cause for all human sufferings. It is very hard to suffer birth, old age, death, disease. Therefore, if a man knows Brahman in the manner already explained, then there is truth,

i.e., there is immortality for him. If he does not know Brahman, he is caught in the round of births and deaths.

Therefore, real, thirsting aspirants abandon the erroneous notion of 'I' and 'mine', and turn away with disgust from this world, as everything here is perishable, illusory and transitory. They practise meditation on the Self and behold the one essence of the Atman, i.e., the Brahman in all objects of this world, movable and immovable. They realise the oneness of the Self, or unity of the Atman in all, and become immortal, i.e., become Brahman itself. The Mundaka Upanishad says, 'He who knows that highest Brahman becomes Brahman itself'.

He who lives in Brahman, he who has realised the Atman, really leads the true life. Mundane life or sense-life is untruth. It is illusory. Knower of Brahman attains liberation while living (Jivanmukti). As soon as ignorance, which is the cause of bondage, is dispelled by attainment of knowledge of Brahman, one gets liberation at once.

Here ends the Second Section.

### TRITIYA KHANDA (SECTION III)

#### BRAHMAN AND THE DEVAS

ब्रह्म ह देवेभ्यो विजिग्ये तस्य ह ब्रह्मणो विजये देवा अमहीयन्त ।

त ऐक्षन्तास्माकमेवायं विजयोऽस्माकमेवायं महिमेति ॥१॥

1. *Preceptor:* Brahman won a victory for the Devas (by defeating the Asuras). By the victory of Brahman, the Devas attained glory. They thought: 'To us belongs the victory, to us belongs the glory'.

#### Notes and Commentary

The Devas entertained the false notion that the victory in the battle was theirs, though the Lord defeated the Asuras. They became proud and conceited.

This section is generally represented as a later addition. Its prose style has more of a Brahmana character than the verses in the preceding Upanishadic section.

From the verse, 'It is not known to those who know' (Section II, 3), some may argue that whatever exists can be known by proofs, and whatever does not exist cannot be so known, and is, therefore, non-existent, like the horns of a hare, a barren woman's son, or the lotus in the sky. As Brahman is unknown, It does not exist. This parable is introduced in this Section in order that they may not entertain this erroneous notion. Or, it is related in order to praise the knowledge of Brahman. Agni and Indra attained pre-eminence among the Devas on account of their knowledge. Or, it shows that it is very difficult to know Brahman, because even Agni and Indra knew Brahman with great difficulty. Or, it is introduced to remove the false notion, 'I am the doer' in all beings.

The superiority of Brahman is brought out in this story. Brahman is the very life of all the gods. The gods derive their power from Brahman only. The story teaches that Brahman should be worshipped.

There is the real war inside, between good tendencies (Subha Vasanas) and the evil tendencies (Asubha Vasanas), between Sattva and Rajas-Tamas, between virtuous Samskaras and evil Samskaras, between the lower impure mind and the higher pure mind. This is the real war between the Devas and the Asuras.

The senses, the mind and the Prana begin to fight saying, 'We hold together and support this body'. Prana gains the victory. But Prana also is inert. The source for this Prana also is Brahman. The senses, the mind and the Prana, derive their light and power from Brahman only. They cannot have the knowledge of Brahman. There are presiding deities for the organs, the mind and Prana, viz., Agni, Vayu, Surya, etc. They (the Devas) tried to attain the knowledge of Brahman but failed.

But the Jivatman, the individual soul, the Indra, abandons pride, egoism and other faults and attains the knowledge of Brahman through the grace of Mother, Uma, the daughter of Himavan (the purified intellect). All dualities, distinctions, differences vanish for him then.

This is the esoteric significance of the parable of the Devas and Asuras.

तद्वैषां विजज्ञौ तेभ्यो ह प्रादुर्बभूव तत्र व्यजानत किमिदं  
यक्षमिति ॥२॥

2. He (Brahman) knows their idea (of being puffed up with vanity) and appeared before them (as a Yaksha to destroy their pride). They did not know Him.

### Notes and Commentary

Brahman obviously knew this false notion of the Devas as He is omniscient, and as He is the inner ruler and director of all beings, as He is the silent witness of all minds. In order to remove their false notion and bless the Devas, Brahman appeared before them in the form of a Yaksha or Great Spirit.

तेऽग्निमब्रुवज्जातवेद एतद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति ॥३॥

तदभ्यद्रवत्तमभ्यवदत्कोऽसीत्यग्निर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीज्जातवेदा  
वा अहमस्मीति ॥४॥

तस्मैस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीद् सर्वं दहेयं यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥५॥

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतद्दहेति तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन तत्र शशाक दग्धुं स  
तत एव निववृते नैतदशकं विजातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति ॥६॥

3. They spoke to Agni thus: 'O Jataveda! Find out what this Great Spirit is'.

4. He said: 'Yes'. Agni ran up to Him (Brahman).

He (Brahman) said: 'Who art thou?'

He replied: 'I am verily Agni. I am verily Jataveda'.

5. He (Brahman) asked him: 'What power hast thou, who art of such a nature?'

Agni replied: 'I can even burn whatsoever there is on earth'.

6. He (Brahman) placed a blade of grass before him saying: 'Burn this'.

He (Agni) approached it with all his power. He could not burn it. He immediately returned from thence to the Devas and said: 'I was not able to ascertain what this Great Spirit is'.

### Notes and Commentary

The Devas did not know what that Great Spirit was. They sent Agni to find out what that Great Spirit was. Brahman asked 'Who art thou?' Agni replied, 'I am Agni, well-known as Jataveda'. Brahman said: 'You say that you are well-known, what power do you possess?' Agni replied: 'I could reduce to ashes all this universe and all immovables on this earth'. Brahman placed a straw before Agni and said: 'Burn this straw. If you are not able to burn it, give up your vanity and conceit as the consumer of all'. Agni approached the straw with great confidence. He was not able to burn it. He bowed down his head in shame and came back to the Devas and said: 'I was not able to know what that Great Spirit was'.

अथ वायुमनुवन्वायवे तद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति ॥७ ॥

तदभ्यद्रवत्तमभ्यवदत्कोऽसीति वायुर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीन्मातरिश्वा  
वा अहमस्मीति ॥८ ॥

तस्मै स्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीद् सर्वमाददीय यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥९ ॥

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतदादत्स्वेति तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजनेन तत्रशशाका-  
ऽऽदातुं स तत एव निवृते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति ॥१० ॥

7. The Devas then said to Vayu, 'O Vayu! Find out what this Great Spirit is'.

8. He (Vayu) ran up to Him (Brahman).

He (Brahman) said: 'Who art thou?'

He (Vayu) answered: 'I am verily, Vayu. I am really Matarisvan'.

9. Brahman asked him: 'What power hast thou, who art of such a nature?'

Vayu replied: 'I can blow away all the universe and all that is on the earth'.

10. He (Brahman) placed a blade of grass before him, saying: 'Blow this away'. He approached it with all his power and was not able to blow it. He returned immediately from there

and told the Devas: 'I was not able to ascertain who this Great Spirit is'.

### Notes and Commentary

Vayu is also called *Matarisvan* because it travels (*Sva-yati*) in space (*Matari*).

अथेन्द्रमनुवन्मध्यवन्नेतद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति तदभ्य-  
द्रवत्तस्मात्तिरोदधे ॥११॥

स तस्मिन्नेवाकाशे स्त्रियमाजगाम बहुशोभमानामुमां हैमवतीं  
ताऽहोवाच किमेतद्यक्षमिति ॥१२॥

### ॥ इति तृतीय खण्डः ॥

11. Then they spoke to Indra: 'O Maghavan! find out what this Great Spirit is'.

Indra said: 'Yes.'

He (Indra) ran up to Him.

He (Brahman) disappeared from his view.

12. He saw in that very spot a woman, Uma, very beautiful and of golden colour, the daughter of Himavan.

He asked her: "What is this Great Spirit?"

### Notes and Commentary

Indra, Lord of the Devas, Maghavan (being the most powerful of them), ran to the Great Spirit. The Great Spirit did not even talk to him, because He wanted to destroy altogether his pride. Indra did not return to the Devas like Agni and Vayu. He was seriously reflecting. Knowledge, in the form of a woman (Uma, daughter of Himalayas, and consort of Lord Siva) adorned in gold, appeared before Indra to dispel his ignorance. The manifold powers, and particularly the knowledge and wisdom of the gods, are represented by their wives. Indra approached her and asked: 'Who is this Great Spirit who showed Himself and vanished?'

Why did Brahman vanish at the approach of Indra? Indra was not so advanced as to be taught the true nature of Brahman by Brahman Himself. So Brahman vanished leaving Uma behind to answer all questions of Indra.

As Indra is the most powerful of the gods, Brahman vanished to show how to little avail his power was, to obtain the knowledge of Brahman.

*Haimavatim*—adorned with gold, the daughter of Himavan.

Here ends the Third Section.

#### CHATURTHA KHANDA (SECTION IV)

##### UMA AND INDRA

सा ब्रह्मेति होवाच ब्रह्मणो वा एतद्विजये महीयध्वमिति ततो हैव  
विदांचकार ब्रह्मेति ॥१॥

1. *Preceptor*: She said: 'It is Brahman indeed; for verily through the victory of Brahman you attained glory'. From the words of Uma only, he (Indra) learnt that it was Brahman.

##### Notes and Commentary

*Ha*—verily; *Eva*—only.

'Your notion that the victory and glory are yours is false'—said Uma. Indra learnt that it was Brahman from the words of Uma only. The force of 'only' denotes that Indra did not know of it himself.

तस्माद्वा एते देवा अतितरामिवान्यान्देवान्यदग्निर्वायुरिन्द्रस्ते ।  
ह्येनन्नेदिष्टं पस्पर्शस्ते ह्येनत्प्रथमो विदांचकार ब्रह्मेति ॥२॥

2. Therefore, verily, these Devas, Agni, Vayu and Indra became excellent before the other gods; for they came closest to Brahman; they first knew that Spirit to be Brahman.

##### Notes and Commentary

The Devas, Agni, Vayu and Indra, came nearest to Brahman by conversing with Him and seeing Him also, and so they

excelled the other gods in the matter of power, quality and prosperity. They were the first who knew Brahman and so they are pre-eminent.

तस्माद्वा इन्द्रोऽतितरामिवान्यान्देवान्स ह्येनत्रेदिष्टं पस्पर्शं स  
ह्येनत्रथमो विदांचकार ब्रह्मेति ॥३॥

3. Therefore also, Indra verily became excellent before the other gods; for he came nearest to Brahman; he first knew that Spirit to be Brahman.

#### Notes and Commentary

Agni and Vayu knew Brahman from the words of Indra. Indra first heard of Brahman from the words of Uma. Therefore, he excels the other gods. He came nearest to Brahman, because he was the first who knew Brahman.

तस्यैष आदेशो यदेतद्विद्युतो व्यद्युतदाऽ इतीन्यमीमिषदाऽ  
इत्यधिदैवतम् ॥४॥

4. This is a declaration in illustration of Him—He shone forth like the splendour of the lightning; He disappeared like the twinkling of the eye. This is the comparison of Brahman with reference to the Devas.

#### Notes and Commentary

Sri Sankara says: 'Of the Brahman the subject discussed, this is the Adesa.' Adesa is instruction by means of illustrations. The illustrations by which Brahman is explained is said to be its Adesa. Brahman showed Himself to the Devas and disappeared from their sight like the flash of lightning. He shone for a moment like a dazzling flash of lightning. He appeared and disappeared as the eye winks. His appearance was like the eye opening and closing to see and turn away from its objects. Brahman suddenly appeared and vanished like lightning and winking. Thus is the teaching concerning the gods.

अथाध्यात्मं यदेतद्गच्छतीव च मनोऽनेन चैतदुपस्मरत्यभीक्षणं  
संकल्पः ॥५॥

5. Then follows a comparison of Brahman with reference to the Atman within the body—as speedily as one thinks of Brahman with the mind, and as speedily as the mind wills.

### Notes and Commentary

Next, there is the illustration of Brahman from the Self within the body.

*Atha*—next, after describing the Adhidaivic aspect; *Adhyatmam*—psychological, the teaching through illustration of Brahman from within the Self; *Gacchati*—goes to, perceives in an object; *Abhikshnam*—very much, constantly, again and again.

Brahman, as bounded by the mind, is perceived as an object by the volition and recollection of the mind. Therefore, this is an illustration of Brahman taken from within the body, as lightning and winking are taken from the activity of the external powers. In the illustration in the previous verse, it was shown that Brahman flashes instantaneously and disappears suddenly like the lightning and winking. In this verse, the illustrations show that Brahman's appearance and disappearance are as quick as the perceptions of the mind. Brahman cannot be comprehended by dull persons of inferior intellect. So, these illustrations are given in order to help them to comprehend Brahman.

When these enigmatic sayings were first delivered by the seers, they were accompanied by oral explanations. It is very difficult to explain these sayings with certainty.

तद्व तद्वनं नाम तद्वनमित्युपासितव्यं स य एतदेवं वेदाऽभि हैनं  
सर्वाणि भूतानि संवाज्ञन्ति ॥६॥

6. Brahman is verily to be adored by all and is therefore called Tadvana. He is to be adored as *Tadvana*. Who thus knows Brahman, is loved by all living beings.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tat*—Brahman; *Ha*—as is well-known, verily.

*Tadvanam*—which deserves to be worshipped i.e., meditated as the one Atman of all living beings; 'desire of it', derived from *Van*, to desire.

Then the fruit obtained by one who contemplates Brahman by this name. *Tadvana* is described. All beings love him who know Him thus. He also loves all beings. They pray to him as they would to Brahman.

उपनिषदं भो ब्रूहीत्युक्ता त उपनिषद्ब्राह्मीं वाव त उपनिषद-  
मन्त्रमेति ॥७॥

7. The disciple says: 'O preceptor, teach me the Upanishad'. The preceptor replies: 'We have told thee the Upanishad. We have certainly told thee the Upanishad, about Brahman'.

### Notes and Commentary

The disciple wants to know whether the whole of the Upanishad has been imparted to him. He meant to say: "Does the Upanishad already explained stand in need of anything else which should combine with it in order to attain the desired end, or does it not stand in need of any such thing? If it does, teach me about what is so required. If it does not, assert emphatically like Pippalada in the words, 'There is nothing beyond this'."

The preceptor's answer means that it does not. The disciplines mentioned in the next verse are only the means to that end. They are already included in the Upanishad.

The question and answer were intended only to make sure. The meaning is: 'What was explained is all the Upanishad. This is not in need of anything else for ensuring the final salvation'.

Upanishad means knowledge of Brahman, or secret doctrine. Disciples sit devotedly round the preceptor for instruction; *Upa*—nearby, *ni*—devotedly and *shad*—sitting. Upanishad means also the book that treats of Brahman.

तस्यै तपो दमः कर्मेति प्रतिष्ठा वेदाः सर्वाङ्गानि सत्यमायतनम् ॥८॥

8. Austerity, self-restraint and Karma, the Vedas with all their members are its foundation, and Truth is its abode.

### Notes and Commentary

Austerity, self-control and Karma are auxiliaries or aids to the acquisition of the knowledge of Brahman.

*Tapas*—control of the body, the senses and the mind; *Dama*—self-restraint, freedom from passions; *Karma*—Agnihotra, etc.

Knowledge of Brahman arises in those persons who have purified their minds through austerity, self-restraint and works either in this birth or in many previous births. Those who have not removed the impurities of the mind, either disbelieve or misbelieve Brahman when It is explained, as in the cases of Indra and Virochana. The Sruti says: 'These secrets explained become illumined to that great soul whose devotion to the Lord is great and whose devotion to his preceptor is as great as that of the Lord.' The Smriti says: 'Knowledge dawns in men by destruction of the evil actions.'

The word *Iti* is used to indicate that the mention of Tapas, etc., is only by way of illustration, because there are other auxiliaries than these, such as freedom from pride, egoism, jealousy, hatred, etc., for the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman.

'Austerity etc., are its support, the Vedas are all its limbs, Truth is its abode.'—this is another rendering.

*Pratishtha*—legs, basis or foundation, feet on which Brahma-vidya or knowledge of Brahman rests or stands. This knowledge has firm basis in those persons only who possess Tapas, etc.

When austerity, self-restraint, etc., exist, knowledge is firmly seated, just as a man goes about steadily on his legs.

As the Vedas throw light on the knowledge of Karma, as the supplementary scriptures (Vedangas) protect the Vedas, they are called the legs of the knowledge of Brahman. The study of the Vedas helps one to attain the knowledge of Brahman. The understanding and application of the Vedas are effected through the Vedangas, or the six limbs of Vedas.

*Ayatanam*—abode; *Satyam*—truth or the true which remains unchanged through all times, i.e., Brahman.

Truth is freedom from deceit and fraud in speech, mind or deed. Knowledge of Brahman will arise only in a person who is free from conceit and fraud in speech, mind and deed, who is good-natured, and not in deceitful men who are of Asuric or diabolical nature. The Sruti also says: 'Knowledge of Brahman does not arise in a man who is deceitful, and utters falsehood'. Therefore, it is said that Truth is the abode or resting place of Knowledge.

Truth is already implied in austerity, self-restraint, etc., as the 'leg on which Knowledge stands'. Why is it separately mentioned again as the abode or resting place of Knowledge? This is to show that Truth excels others as an aid to Knowledge; for the Smriti says: 'If a thousand Asvamedha sacrifices and Truth are weighed in a balance, one Truth spoken will outweigh the thousand sacrifices'.

यो वा एतामेवं वेदापहत्य पाप्मानमनन्ते स्वर्गे लोके ज्येये  
प्रतितिष्ठति प्रतितिष्ठति ॥९॥

॥ इति चतुर्थः खण्डः ॥

9. He who knows this thus, after having shaken off all sins, abides firmly seated in the endless, blissful and highest Brahman. He is established in Him.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Etam*—this, the knowledge of Brahman as explained in *Keneshitam*, etc. Although, it has already been said in the verse 5, Section II, that one attains immortality by knowledge of Brahman, the fruit of knowledge of Brahman is again stated at the end.

*Papmanam*—sins, evil, the seed of Samsara whose nature is ignorance, desire and Karma; *Anante*—endless, boundless, that which is never destroyed at the end of Kalpas, even above time, space, causation; *Svarga loka*—in Brahman who is all bliss, and not heaven, because of the adjunct 'boundless'.

It may be stated that the word 'boundless' is used in its secondary sense. Therefore, the Sruti adds *Jyeye*—the greatest or the highest of all. The meaning is, that he is firmly established in the unconditioned Brahman and he does not again revert to *Samsara* (worldly existence).

*Pratitishthati*—stays for good, does not return to their world of death.

Here ends the Fourth Section.

ॐ आप्यायन्तु ममाङ्गानि वाक्प्राणश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रमथो  
बलमिन्द्रियाणि च सर्वाणि सर्वं ब्रह्मौपनिषदं माहं ब्रह्म निराकुर्या मा  
मा ब्रह्म निराकरोदनिराकरणमस्त्वनिराकरणं मेऽस्तु तदात्मनि निरते य  
उपनिषत्सु धर्मास्ते मयि सन्तु ते मयि सन्तु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

OM PEACE! OM PEACE! OM PEACE!

# **KATHOPANISHAD**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Salutations to Lord Yama, son of Vivasvan (Surya)!

The Kathopanishad is divided into six Vallis. Valli literally means a creeper. A Valli, like a creeper, is attached to the Sakhas or Branches of the Veda. Valli is used in the same sense as Parvam, joint, shoot, branch, i.e., a division. This Upanishad is also divided into two Adhyayas (chapters) of three Vallis each.

This is one of the most beautiful Upanishads in which the eternal truths are given in the form of a narrative. The narrative is taken from Taittiriya Brahmana (3-11-8) with some variation. The same story is told in the Taittiriya Brahmana, only with this difference, that in the Brahmana, freedom from death and birth is obtained by a peculiar performance of a sacrifice, while in the Upanishad, it is obtained by knowledge only. The story is as follows:

Vajasravasa, wishing for reward, sacrificed all his wealth. He had a son, called Nachiketas. While he was still a boy, faith entered into him at the time when the cows, that were to be given by his father as presents to the priests, were brought in. He said: "Father, to whom wilt thou give me?" He said so a second and a third time. But father turned round and said to him: "To Death I give thee."

Then a voice said to young Nachiketas as he stood up: "He (thy father) said, 'Go away to the house of Death, I give thee to Death'. Go therefore to Death, when he is not at home, and dwell in his house for three nights without eating. If he should ask thee 'Boy, how many nights hast thou been here?', say, 'Three'. When he asks thee, 'What didst thou eat the first night?', say, 'Thy offspring'; 'What didst thou eat the second night?', say, 'Thy cattle'; 'What didst thou eat the third night?', say, 'Thy good works'."

He went to Death, while he was away from home, and he dwelt in his house for three nights without eating. When Death returned, the following took place: 'Boy, how many nights hast thou been here?' He answered, 'Three'. 'What didst thou eat the first night?'—'Thy offspring'. 'What didst thou eat the second night?'—'Thy cattle'. 'What didst thou eat the third night?'—'Thy good works'.

Then Death said: 'My respect to thee, O venerable sir, choose a boon'. 'May I return living to my father?'—said Nachiketas. 'Choose a second boon', said Death. The boy replied: 'Tell me how my good works may never perish'. Death then explained to him the Nachiketa fire (sacrifice), and hence his good works do not perish.

'Choose a third boon', said Death. Nachiketas said: 'Tell me how to conquer death'.

Then Death explained to him this (chief) Nachiketa fire (sacrifice), and hence he conquered death.

This Upanishad has become very popular not only in India but everywhere in the world. It has been translated into many languages. It is a branch or recension of the Krishna Yajurveda. It forms part of the Katha-Sakha Brahmana of the Krishna Yajurveda. A few verses from this Upanishad occur in the Bhagavad Gita. It deserves the most careful consideration of all who are interested in the growth of religious and philosophical ideas. The sublime doctrines of Vedanta are presented in this Upanishad in a very attractive and charming manner.

The Katha Upanishad has always been considered as one of the best Upanishads. It has won the appreciation of many English, French and German writers also. They regard this Upanishad as the best book on philosophy and poetry of ancient Hindus. In elevation of thought, depth of expression, beauty of its imagery, no Upanishad is equal to the Kathopanishad.

The comparison of the body with a car or chariot, the soul with the Lord of the chariot, the intellect with the rider, the mind with the rein, the senses with horses, the five objects of the senses with the roads, is indeed very beautiful.

In this Upanishad, the way to attain Self-realisation is fully treated.

From such passages as, "This Atman is difficult to be known, It is very subtle, It cannot be obtained by arguing", it is quite evident that revelation or direct intuition (Aparoksha-anubhuti) is the source of the knowledge of the Self.

From such passages as, "A wonderful teacher is required", "Arise, awake, having reached the excellent teacher, learn" (III-14), "How can this Atman be realised otherwise than from those who say that It exists" (VI-12), it is quite clear that a realised Guru is necessary to lead the aspirants in the spiritual path.

From the 11th Mantra of the 6th Valli, you will understand that this Upanishad recognises the necessity of Yoga as well. This Mantra says: "The firm control of the senses they regard as Yoga. At that time one becomes vigilant, for Yoga is acquired and lost".

Some writers complain that Kathopanishad is not the production of an original thinker or a seer, as there is little connection between the thoughts or verses in some places, there is no progress from one idea to another, there is neither arrangement nor connected sequence in some places, and that it is a mere compilation. This is a sad mistake. The seers of the Upanishads had direct revelations during communion or meditation. They expressed their experiences. Their inspired thoughts were scattered in different Sakhas or Branches of the Vedas. In days of yore, the thoughts of the seers, or their compositions, were handed over orally from teachers to their disciples. The original composers, the compilers, the repeaters, or lastly, the writers of the Upanishads might not have taken care to arrange them in an orderly manner. In some places, the text might have been corrupted by later compilers, copyists or printers.

This Upanishad was first introduced to the knowledge of European scholars by Raja Ram Mohun Roy. It has been translated into the German by Windischmann, by Poley. Dr. Weber has also written a commentary. Swami Ananda Giri has written a gloss on the commentary of Sri Sankara. Muir,

Rignaud, Gough and many others have translated this Upanishad.

May the truths of the Upanishads be revealed unto you all! May you all be endowed with right understanding, discrimination and pure subtle intellect! May you all be freed from the knots of ignorance and ties of Samsara, and the trammels of birth and death! May you all be blessed with a Srotriya Brahma-Nishtha Guru to lead you on in the spiritual path! May you all shine as Jivanmuktas or Brahma-Jnanis in this very birth!

## CHAPTER I

## VALLI i

ॐ सहनाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै । तेजस्वि  
नावधीतमस्तु । मा विद्विषावहै ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

OM! May He protect us both (teacher and pupil). May He cause us both to enjoy the bliss of Mukti. May we both exert to find out the true meaning of the scriptures. May our studies be fruitful. May we never quarrel with each other.

Om Peace! Om Peace! Om Peace!

ॐ उशन्ह वै वाजश्रवसः सर्ववेदसं ददौ ।

तस्य ह नचिकेता नाम पुत्र आस ॥१॥

1. Once, desirous of heaven, the son of Vajasrava (Gautama) gave (in a sacrifice) all that he possessed. He had a son Nachiketas by name.

## Notes and Commentary

*Usan*—desirous (of heavenly rewards); *Vajasravasah*—‘Vaja’ means food, ‘Srava’ means fame. It literally means a person who has attained fame by making charitable gift of food. Or it may be a proper name. The son of Vajasrava is Vajasravasah.

Vajasravasah performed the Visvajit sacrifice. ‘Visvajit’ is a kind of sacrifice in which the performer is required to make a gift of all his possessions and wealth.

This sacrifice was generally performed by kings when they returned after conquering kingdoms (Digvijaya). It could also be performed by Brahmanas.

तँ ह कुमारँ सन्तं दक्षिणासु नीयमानासु श्रद्धाऽऽविवेश सोऽमन्यत ॥२॥

2. When the presents were being distributed, filial anxiety (about the welfare of his father) entered into the heart of Nachiketas, who was still a boy, and he thought.

### Notes and Commentary

Though Nachiketas was very young, his heart was filled with Sraddha or faith. He wanted to do good to his father. When the Dakshina or the final gifts, such as cows, were brought to be distributed among the Ritviks or the priests, Nachiketas thought thus.

**Sraddha**—Unswerving faith in the words of the Guru, teachings of the scriptures and one's own Self. This is one of the sixfold virtues or Shad-sampat. Every aspirant should be equipped first with this important virtue. Without Sraddha no spiritual progress is possible. Without Sraddha no one will be able to place his foot on the spiritual path, or to start the spiritual life. You can develop Sraddha by constant Satsanga, or association with the sages, and service of your Guru.

Nachiketas had intense Sraddha or unshakable faith. So he was a fit student to receive the spiritual instructions from Yama. He was not carried away by the temptations offered by Yama. Yama also thought that Nachiketas was a proper Adhikari to receive his instructions. So he initiated Nachiketas into the mysteries of the Atman.

पीतोदका जग्धतृणा दुग्धदोहा निरिन्द्रियाः ।

अनन्दा नाम ते लोकास्तान्स गच्छति ता ददत् ॥३॥

3. Joyless, verily, are those worlds to which a man goes by giving (presents in a sacrifice) cows which have drunk water, eaten grass, given their milk, and are barren.

### Notes and Commentary

He, who gives to the Ritviks for their rewards, useless, decrepit and old cows which have drunk their water, eaten their grass, given their milk for the last time, and are barren, attains those worlds which are devoid of happiness.

*Pitodakah*—which had finished drinking their water; *Jagdhatrinah*—which had finished eating their grass (but cannot eat now); *Dugdhadohah*—which had given their milk (but cannot yield any more as they are too old); *Nirindriya*—barren, which are incapable of breeding.

स होवाच पितरं तत् कस्मै मां दास्यसीति ।

द्वितीयं तृतीयं तँ होवाच मृत्युवे त्वा ददामीति ॥४॥

4. Nachiketas said to his father: "O father, to whom wilt thou give me?"; he said this again, and at the third time, the (enraged) father said: "Unto Death I will give thee".

### Notes and Commentary

Nachiketas thought that his father did not give away all his possessions at the sacrifice, and therefore would not attain the heavenly rewards or the happy worlds. He thought that it was the duty of a good son to remove the undesirable consequences, which might befall his father, on account of the sacrifice being performed in an improper manner. Therefore, Nachiketas voluntarily offered himself in order to fulfill the vow which his father was paying very grudgingly. He was quite afflicted when he found that his father presented only useless cows to the priests.

He thought that his father did not properly keep his vow and that this gift of useless cows will not take him to heaven. Filial anxiety, about the welfare of his father, penetrated the heart of Nachiketas, though he was very young.

The son also is the possession of the father. Therefore, the son also should be given as a reward to the priests, if the vow is to be kept up rigidly. Nachiketas, therefore, pressed his father indirectly to keep to his vow. He approached his father and said: "Father, to whom, to which of the Ritviks will you give me as Dakshina (reward)?" The father did not reply at first. Nachiketas repeated the question a second time and a third time, "To whom will you give me?", "To whom will you give me?" The father got angry at the impertinent behaviour of the boy and replied: "Unto Death I shall give thee".

बहूनामेमि प्रथमो बहूनामेमि मध्यमः ।

किं स्विद्यमस्य कर्तव्यं यन्मयाऽद्य करिष्यति ॥५॥

5. Nachiketas thought: "Among many I go as the first; among many I go in the middle. What will be the work of Yama which today he has to do unto me?"

### Notes and Commentary

At this, Nachiketas reflected within himself: "Among many of his disciples I am the first in doing service. Of many I am the first in performing filial duty. Of many I am a middling disciple in the possession of good qualities, but I have never been the worst. Yet, my father has said that he would give me unto Death. What work will Yama accomplish now through me? My father has spoken thus in anger; still my father's words should, on no account be broken".

अनुपश्य यथा पूर्वे प्रतिपश्य तथाऽपरे ।  
सस्यमिव मर्त्यः पच्यते सस्यमिवाऽऽजायते पुनः ॥६॥

6. Nachiketas said: "Remember how our forefathers acted; consider also how others now act. Like corn, the mortal decays and like corn he is born again". (Nachiketas entered into the abode of Yama Vaivasvata. There was no one to receive him. Yama had gone out.)

### Notes and Commentary

Remember, beloved father, how your ancestors conducted themselves. They stuck to their words and spoke the truth at any cost. Sages, saints and virtuous men of the present time also never swerve from the path of truth. They never utter falsehood under any circumstance or condition, whatsoever. They will abandon their lives even, for the sake of Truth. Nothing can tempt them to deviate from the truth. Truth is their goal. Brahman is Truth, and one can realise Truth by speaking the truth only. No one who has broken his word can become immortal. This world is transitory. Man decays and dies like a corn. He is again born like a corn. What will one gain in this impermanent world by breaking his word? The seed is thrown in the soil. The corn ripens and falls. Again it grows. In the same manner, there is the cycle of births and deaths for man. He who takes birth, must die, and he who dies, must take his birth again. Nachiketas wanted his father to keep his word and send him to Death. This is the drift of this Mantra.

वैश्वानरः प्रविशत्यतिथिर्ब्रह्मणो गृहान् ।

तस्यैतां शान्तिं कुर्वन्ति हर वैवस्वतोदकम् ॥७॥

7. A Brahmin guest enters a house like fire. For him, men give this peace-offering (to quench the fire or quiet him). Bring water, O Vaivasvata (O son of Vivasvan, the Sun).

### Notes and Commentary

Nachiketas' father sent Nachiketas to Yama to keep his word. Yama was not at home then. So Nachiketas fasted for three nights. When Yama returned, his wife and ministers told him thus: "A Brahmin guest enters the house like fire. Good householders propitiate him by giving water to clean his feet (Padya), seat to sit upon (Asana), food and other gifts. Therefore, O Vaivasvata, bring water to wash his feet. If this is not done, evil results will follow". As fire consumes the house, so also the anger of a Brahmin guest destroys the happiness of a householder, if he is not treated properly.

*Santim tasya*—This has a double significance, 'extinguishment of fire' and 'appeasement of the fire of indignation of a Brahmin guest' by bringing water.

*Vaivasvata*—Another name for Yama (Death). This is a Vedic epithet.

आशाप्रतीक्षे सङ्गत्तं सूनृतां चेष्टापूर्ते पुत्रपशुं श सर्वान् ।

एतद्वृड़क्ते पुरुषस्याल्पमेधसो यस्यानशनन्वसति ब्राह्मणो गृहे ॥८॥

8. Hope, expectation, company with good men, friendly discourse, sacrifices, pious gifts, sons and cattle—all these are destroyed in the case of the ignorant man, in whose house a Brahmin guest stays without taking food.

### Notes and Commentary

*Asa*—(hope) wish for something unknown such as heavenly enjoyments; *Pratiksha*—(expectation), looking forward to obtain a known object such as wealth, etc.; *Sangatam*—the merit obtained from the association with virtuous men; *Sunrutam*— sweet discourse, i.e., the merit acquired by

speaking true and pleasing words to others; *Ishtam*—the fruit of a sacrifice; *Purtam*—the merit obtained by doing charitable works such as building of hospitals, rest-houses, laying out of a garden, digging a well, etc.; *Putrapasum*—children and cattle.

All these are destroyed in the case of that foolish man in whose house a Brahmin stays without food. Therefore, a guest must be properly treated. He should under no circumstances be neglected.

A guest is Atithi Narayana or an embodiment of God. Feeding the guest with Narayana Bhava is one of the five Yajnas (Pancha Maha Yajna) which a householder ought to perform.

तिस्रो रात्रीर्यदवात्सीर्गृहे मेऽनशनन् ब्रह्मन्नतिथिर्नमस्यः । नमस्तेऽस्तु  
ब्रह्मन्स्वस्ति मेऽस्तु तस्मात्प्रति त्रीन्वरान्वृणीष्व ॥९॥

9. (Yama said): "O Brahmin, as thou a venerable guest, hast dwelt in my house three nights without eating, therefore choose now three boons in return. O Brahmin, my prostrations unto thee. May good befall me".

#### Notes and Commentary

Yama approached Nachiketas with great reverence and said: "As you have been living in my house for three nights without taking food, choose, therefore, now three boons, one for every night you fasted. O Brahmana! you are an honourable guest. My prostrations to you. Be good unto me. You fasted for three nights. This is a great sin. Let me be freed from this sin. All auspiciousness may come to me by your mere grace. I want to serve you nicely. Therefore, ask me for three boons".

शान्तसंकल्पः सुमना यथा स्याद्वीतमन्युगाँतमो माऽभि मृत्यो ।  
त्वत्प्रसुष्टं माऽभिवदेत्प्रतीत एतत्रयाणां प्रथमं वरं वृणे ॥१०॥

10. (Nachiketas said): "O Death! as the first of the three boons, I choose that Gautama, my father, be pacified, kind and free from anger towards me, and that he may know me and greet me, when I shall be sent away by thee".

### Notes and Commentary

"Let my father be freed from anxiety about me, as to what his son would be doing after reaching the abode of Yama. Let him have a peaceful mind. Let him be free from anger towards me. Let him recognise and welcome me when I shall be sent back home by thee". This is the first of the three boons.

यथा पुरस्ताद् भविता प्रतीत औद्दालकिरारुणिर्मत्प्रसृष्टः ।  
सुखं रात्रिः शयिता वीतमन्युस्त्वां ददृशिवान्मृत्युमुखात्  
प्रमुक्तम् ॥११॥

11. (Yama said): "Through my favour, Auddalaki, the son of Aruni, will recognise you as before. He will sleep peacefully at night, and when he sees you released from the mouth of death, he will lose his anger."

### Notes and Commentary

As your father Auddalaki Aruni loved thee before, so also he will love thee even now. You will be recognised by your father as a person returning home from another city. He will have pleasant sleep at nights. He will be free from anger when he sees you released from the jaws of Death. Nachiketas' father has three names, viz., Gautama, Auddalaki Aruni and Vajasravasah.

स्वर्गे लोके न भयं किंचनास्ति न तत्र त्वं न जरया विभेति ।  
उभे तीर्त्वाऽशनायापिपासे शोकातिगो मोदते स्वर्गलोके ॥१२॥

12. (Nachiketas said): "In the heaven there is no fear; thou art not there, O Death, and no one is afraid on account of old age. Having conquered both hunger and thirst, one rejoices in heaven, being above sorrow".

### Notes and Commentary

In heaven there is no fear at all caused by disease. You do not rule there. There is no fear of old age and death in heaven. People of this world are afraid of you when they become old, but the Devas are not afraid of you. Further, they never suffer

from hunger and thirst, because they drink the celestial nectar, the Soma juice. They rejoice in heaven, as they are free from disease, hunger and thirst.

स त्वमग्निं स्वर्गमध्येषि मृत्यो प्रब्रूहि तं श्रहधानाय मह्यम् ।

स्वर्गलोका अमृतत्वं भजन्त एतद्द्वितीयेन वृणे वरेण ॥१३॥

13. "O Death! thou knowest the fire-sacrifice which leads us to heaven; explain it to me, for I am full of faith. Those who live in the world attain immortality—this I ask as my second boon".

### Notes and Commentary

*Agni*—fire, i.e., the sacrifice that leads to heaven, wherein there is neither disease, nor hunger, nor thirst, the fire by which the heaven is attained. *Amritatvam*—immortality. This is not the absolute immortality of Jivanmuktas or liberated sages. This is the relative immortality, or long life, of the Devas who hold their office in the cosmic hierarchy, or the inner divine Government, till the end of the Kalpa, or one cycle of creation.

O Yama, teach me the knowledge of the fire-sacrifice, by which men attain heaven or relative immortality or become Devas. This is my second boon.

प्र ते ब्रवीमि तदु मे निबोध स्वर्गमग्निं नचिकेतः प्रजानन् ।

अनन्तलोकाप्तिमथो प्रतिष्ठां विद्धि त्वमेतं निहितं गुहायाम् ॥१४॥

14. (Yama said): "I will tell thee well, learn it from me, O Nachiketas. I know the fire that leads to heaven; know the fire which leads to heaven (which is the cause of acquiring infinite worlds), and which again is the support of the universe and which is seated in the cavity (of the heart)".

### Notes and Commentary

Yama said: "O Nachiketas! I know the fire which leads to heaven. I will tell thee. Attend to what I say, with one-pointed mind".

*Pratishtam*—the foundation of all regions; the fire is the support of the universe in its form of Virat, the macrocosmic physical life and as located in the Buddhi or intellect of knowing

men. *Guhayam*—in the cavity, i.e., in the heart of the learned; cavity or heart is the Buddhi or intellect.

लोकादिमप्निं तमुवाच तस्मै या इष्टका यावतीर्वा यथा वा ।  
स चापि तत्प्रत्यवद्यथोक्तमथास्य मृत्युः पुनरेवाह तुष्टः ॥१५॥

15. Yama then explained to him that fire-sacrifice, the source of the worlds, what bricks are required for the altar, how many and how they are to be placed, and Nachiketas repeated all as explained. Then Yama, being pleased with him, said again.

#### Notes and Commentary

Yama explained to Nachiketas that fire (sacrifice) which is the source of the world, which is the first embodied existence in the form of Virat, and also what kind of bricks and how many of them are required for the altar, and how the sacrificial fire is to be lit. Nachiketas also sincerely repeated what was told to him by Yama. Then Yama was very pleased by his repetition. He wanted to grant Nachiketas a boon other than the three promised. He said again.

Fire here is equivalent to the Virat, the first production of Brahma.

*Ishtakah*—bricks; signify also the Devatas to be invoked.

*Yavatih*—how many in number, i.e., 360.

The altar is made in the form of a circle consisting of 360 bricks, each being an arc of one degree. The entire circle is called Vishnu, and each brick as Ishtaka or Devata.

तमब्रवीत्प्रीयमाणो महात्मा वरं तवेहाद्य ददामि भूयः ।

तवैव नामा भवितायमग्निः सृङ्कां चेमामनेकरूपां गृहाण ॥१६॥

16. Satisfied, magnanimous Death spoke to him: "I give thee here this other boon, this fire-sacrifice shall be named after thee, and take thou this many-coloured chain".

#### Notes and Commentary

*Anekarupam srimkam*—the garland set with precious gems of various hues, or many-coloured chain or necklace. According to Sri Sankaracharya, this may also mean the

knowledge of Karmas (sacrifices) that confers various fruits or results. Yama taught Nachiketas the secret of performing sacrifice also.

त्रिणाचिकेतस्त्रिभिरेत्य सन्धिं त्रिकर्मकृत्तरति जन्ममृत्यू ।  
ब्रह्मजं देवमीड्यं विदित्वा निचाय्येमा शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ॥१७॥

17. Whoever performs three times this sacrifice of Nachiketas fire, and has been united with the three (father, mother and teacher), and has performed the three duties (study, sacrifice and alms-giving), overcomes birth and death. When he has understood this adorable bright, the omniscient fire born of Brahman and realised him, then he obtains everlasting peace.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Trinachiketah*—the threefold Nachiketas, i.e., he who has performed thrice the Nachiketa fire-sacrifice; or he who knows, studies and performs the Nachiketa fire.

*Tribhīh sandhim etya*—united with the three, i.e., he who has been duly instructed by mother, father and preceptor, or by the Vedas, the Smritis and virtuous men; one who has acquired knowledge from the three Pramanas (sources of right knowledge), viz., direct perception (Pratyaksha), inference (Anumana) and the scriptures (Sabda).

Three kinds of duties: the study of Vedas, performance of sacrifices and alms-giving.

*Brahmaja*—born of Brahma, i.e., Hiranyagarbha; *Brahmajna*—he who is born of Brahma and is omniscient; *Devam*—the resplendent, etc.; *Idyam*—adorable.

One attains the abode of the Virat by the constant practice of worship (Upasana) and Karma.

त्रिणाचिकेतस्त्रियमेतद्विदित्वा य एवं विद्वा श्चिनुते नाचिकेतम् ।  
स मृत्युपाशान्पुरतः प्रणोद्य शोकातिगो मोदते स्वर्गलोके ॥१८॥

18. He who knows the three Nachiketa fires, and propitiates the Nachiketa fire with this knowledge, throws off the chains of death, goes beyond sorrow and rejoices in heaven.

### Notes and Commentary

*Trayam viditva*—knowing the three, i.e., the kinds of bricks that are needed for the altar of the sacrifice, the number of bricks, and how the fire of sacrifice is to be lit.

*Mrityupasan*—chains or meshes of Death, in the form of vice, ignorance, desire, greed, attachment, hatred, etc.

*Svargaloke modate*—rejoices in heaven by realising himself as the Virat. He enjoys the bliss of the cosmic life, having realised Virat in his own self. Virat is the macrocosmic physical life. The whole world is the body of Virat. The sum total of all physical bodies of beings is the body of Virat.

(Slokas 16-18 are not quite apt here. They may be an irrelevant interpolation or a later addition.)

एष तेऽग्निर्नचिकेतः स्वर्ग्यो यमवृणीथा द्वितीयेन वरेण ।

एतमग्निं तवैव प्रवक्ष्यन्ति जनासस्तृतीयं वरं नचिकेतो वृणीष्व ॥१९॥

19. "This, O Nachiketas, is thy fire which leads to heaven and which thou hast chosen as thy second boon; people will call this fire thine alone. Choose now, O Nachiketas, thy third boon".

### Notes and Commentary

Yama concludes in this Mantra the present topic on fire-sacrifice: "This is the fire that leads to heaven. Your second boon has been granted. People will call this fire by your name Nachiketa Agni. I have granted to you this boon, because I am very pleased with you".

'Thy fire'—This is the fire-sacrifice which you have chosen as your second boon, and about which you asked me to explain.

O Nachiketas, choose now your third boon.

Yama thought that he would be a debtor to Nachiketas if this third boon was not granted.

येयं प्रेते विचिकित्सा मनुष्येऽस्तीत्येके नायमस्तीति चैके ।

एतद्विद्यामनुशिष्टस्त्वयाऽहं वराणामेष वरस्तृतीयः ॥२०॥

20. (Nachiketas said): "There is that doubt when a man is dead—some say he is and some he is not—this I should like to know, taught by thee. This is the third of my boons".

### Notes and Commentary

The first two boons are not of any philosophical importance, but the third boon is of great philosophical importance. This relates to the mystery of the Soul. Nachiketas wants to know whether there is any entity called 'Soul' or immortal Atman, or Brahman, which exists separate from body, senses, mind and intellect. He wishes to have the knowledge of the real nature of the Atman or the Absolute. Nachiketas said: "O Yama! The attainment of the *summum bonum*, or Moksha, depends upon a clear knowledge of the Self. Therefore, please impart to me this knowledge. Some say that there is the Atman or the immortal Soul, which is distinct from body, senses, mind and intellect; some say that there is no such Atman. Please remove this doubt. This is a subject, which we cannot know either through perception or reasoning. Hence, the necessity of revelation about this. This is my third boon".

Yama gives prompt answers to the first and second questions, but answers the third question with reluctance.

देवैरत्रापि विचिकित्सितं पुरा न हि सुविज्ञेयमणुरेष धर्मः ।  
अन्यं वरं नचिकेतो वृणीष्व मा मोपरोत्सीरति मा सृजैनम् ॥२१॥

21. (Yama said): "On this point, even the gods of olden times had doubt. Verily, it is not easy to understand it—subtle is its nature. O Nachiketas, choose another boon; do not press me on this; give this up for me".

### Notes and Commentary

Yama wanted to test Nachiketas, whether he was fit or not to acquire Brahma-Jnana, the knowledge of the Self, which leads to Moksha, salvation. So he said: "This subject is very subtle and incomprehensible. Do not press me as a creditor presses a debtor. Choose another boon. Give up this one for me".

देवैरत्रापि विचिकित्सितं किल त्वं च मृत्यो यन्न सुविज्ञेयमात्थ ।  
वक्ता चास्य त्वादृगन्यो न लभ्यो नान्यो वरस्तुल्य एतस्य

कश्चित् ॥२२॥

22. (Nachiketas said): "Thou sayest, O Death, that even the gods had doubts here, and that this is not easy to know. Another teacher like thee is not to be found; surely, there is no other boon like this".

#### Notes and Commentary

Nachiketas said: "O Lord Yama! I do not want any other boon. Other boons bear only temporary fruits. There is no other boon that is equal to this. This boon is a means to the attainment of freedom or salvation. I cannot find a better teacher than you, to explain transcendental matters, or the life beyond, or the state of men after death. You know the secret of life. You are the Lord of Death. You control the destiny of man".

"About this, certainly, the Devas even were in doubt, and thou also sayest that it is not easy of understanding; no other teacher like thee can be obtained; therefore like this, there is no other boon".

शतायुषः पुत्रपौत्रान्वृणीष्व बहून्पशून्हस्तिहरण्यमश्वान् ।

भूमेर्महदायतनं वृणीष्व स्वयं च जीव शरदो यावदिच्छसि ॥२३॥

23. Yama said: "Choose sons and grandsons who may live a hundred years, herds of cattle, elephants, gold and horses. Choose the wide abode of the earth, and live for as many years as you like".

#### Notes and Commentary

Yama wanted to tempt Nachiketas again. So he said: "Ask for sons and grandsons who shall live a hundred years, cows, elephants, gold, horses and sovereignty over a vast dominion". All these possessions would be of no use at all if he were short-lived. So Yama added: "Live as many years as thou wishest, with a strong and healthy body".

*Satayushah*—those who live for hundred years, i.e., centenarians.

एतत्तुल्यं यदि मन्यसे वरं वृणीष्व वित्तं चिरजीविकां च ।  
महाभूमौ नचिकेतस्त्वमेधि कामानां त्वा कामभाजं करोमि ॥२४॥

24. "If you can think of any boon equal to that, choose wealth and a long life. Be a king, O Nachiketas, of the wide earth, I shall make thee the enjoyer of all desires".

#### Notes and Commentary

If you think of any other boon equal to this, ask for that also. Demand wealth and longevity. Be a king of the wide earth. Further, I shall make you enjoy all your desires; because I am a Deva, whatever I will, will come to pass.

ये ये कामा दुर्लभा मर्त्यलोके सर्वान्कामां श्छन्दतः प्रार्थयस्व ।  
इमा रामाः सरथाः सतूर्या न हीदृशा लभनीया मनुष्यैः ।  
आभिर्मत्प्रत्ताभिः परिचारयस्व नचिकेतो मरणं माज्ञप्राक्षीः ॥२५॥

25. "Whatever desires are difficult to attain in the world of mortals, ask for them according to thy wish. These fair maidens with their chariots and musical instruments—such are indeed not enjoyable by mortals; be attended by them, I will give them to thee; but, O Nachiketas! do not ask the question of the state of the Soul after death".

#### Notes and Commentary

"Ask, as you like, for objects of desire which are not easily attainable in this world of mortals. I bestow upon thee celestial damsels with chariots and musical instruments. These celestial nymphs cannot be obtained by mortals, without the grace of beings like me. They will serve you nicely. Get services from them, such as cleaning the feet with water, fanning, etc. But, do not ask anything about Death, i.e., whether there is any real entity called Immortal Soul, which survives death. This question is really as unprofitable as that of counting the number of leaves on a tree, or examining the number of crows' teeth". Yama tested Nachiketas again and again. He wanted to find

out whether Nachiketas was a proper Adhikari, a qualified person to receive the knowledge of the Self. He tempted Nachiketas in a variety of ways. Yama wanted to find out whether Nachiketas was endowed with real lasting dispassion and discrimination. Nachiketas stood adamant. He was very firm in his resolve. Nothing could tempt him as he possessed strong dispassion and discrimination. He had an intense desire to realise the truth. He had a clear understanding of the illusory and transitory nature of life on this earth plane. He had a strong conviction that the sensual pleasures are worthless.

श्वोभावा मर्त्यस्य यदन्तकैतत्सर्वेन्द्रियाणां जरयन्ति तेजः ।  
अपि सर्वं जीवितमल्पमेव तवैव वाहास्तव नृत्यगीते ॥२६॥

26. (Nachiketas said): "These things last till tomorrow (ephemeral). O Death, they wear out the vigour of all the senses. Even the longest life is verily short. Keep thou thy chariots, the dance and music".

#### Notes and Commentary

*Svabhavah*—ephemeral, existing only for a day, short-lived, enjoyments whose existence is uncertain or doubtful, even till tomorrow, or the next day.

Though Yama tempted Nachiketas, the latter remained unagitated like the ocean. Nachiketas said: "O Lord Yama, these sensual enjoyments destroy the vigour of the senses. These celestial damsels and enjoyments destroy virtue, strength, intellect, vigour and fame. They make a man worldly-minded, and take him away from God. What is longevity on this earth plane? Even Brahma's life is short. What is long life, after all, when compared with Eternity? Even Maha Kalpas are insignificant moments only when compared with Eternity. From the Absolute viewpoint, time is nothing. Nothing is eternal here. Eternity, Immortality, Infinity is the most covetable thing. Consciously or unconsciously, man thirsts for this only. However charming and magnanimous an object may appear here, it is perishable and transitory. I do not want finite, perishable objects. I do not want finite life. I want to attain

Immortality. Therefore, keep the chariots, horses, damsels, dance and music for thyself alone”.

Look at the resolute nature of Nachiketas, though he was a small boy! Nothing could shake his firm determination. He had an iron will and fiery determination. Such must be the nature of an aspirant. Only then is he eligible for Amritatvam, Immortality.

न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्यो लप्स्यामहे वित्तमद्राक्षम चेत्त्वा ।  
जीविष्यामो यावदीशिष्यसि त्वं वरस्तु मे वरणीयः स एव ॥२७॥

27. “No man can be made happy by wealth. If we should obtain wealth and behold thee, we would only live as long as thou shalt sway. Only that boon, which I have chosen, is fit to be longed for by me”.

#### Notes and Commentary

“O Lord Yama, wealth cannot give eternal satisfaction, everlasting peace and abiding bliss to man. It is only a means to obtain the objects of desire in this world. It is a source of evil. It brings countless miseries. How can I be poor and short-lived when I have seen thee? Why should I ask then, for wealth and long life? Please do not tempt me any more. I am above temptations. Grant me that boon alone, i.e., the knowledge of the Atman (Atma-Jnana), the immortal Soul which survives after death”.

अजीर्यताममृतानामुपेत्य जीर्यन्मत्त्वः क्वथःस्थः प्रजानन् ।  
अभिध्यायन्वर्णरतिप्रमोदानतिदीर्घे जीविते को रमेत ॥२८॥

28. “What decaying mortal, living in the world below, and possessed of knowledge, after having approached the company of the undecaying and the immortal, will rejoice in long life, after he has pondered over the nature of the pleasures produced by song and sport (beauty and love)?”

#### Notes and Commentary

How could a mortal, having approached the immortal ones, ask for transitory and worthless things such as sons, wealth and damsels? Reaching the presence of the undecaying and

the undying, and knowing that higher gifts than wealth and son can be obtained from them, how can a decaying mortal, living in the world below, ask for small gifts? These ephemeral objects are coveted only by the ignorant or the worldly-minded. Aspirants who thirst for liberation should ask for Immortality only. No sensible man who knows the transitory nature of earthly life, and who has realised that sensual pleasures are illusory, fleeting, and are mere sensations or tickling of nerves, will rejoice in longevity. However long may be the duration of man's life in this world, he must perish in the end.

यस्मिन्निदं विचिकित्सन्ति मृत्यो यत्सांपराये महति ब्रूहि नस्तत् ।  
योऽयं वरो गूढमनुप्रविष्टो नान्यं तस्मान्नचिकेता वृणीते ॥२९॥

॥ इति प्रथमेऽध्याये प्रथमा वल्ली ॥

29. "O Death! tell us that in which men have this doubt, and which is about the great hereafter. Nachiketas does not choose any other boon but that (concerning the Soul), of which the knowledge is hidden".

#### Notes and Commentary

"O Yama! do not tempt me with ephemeral objects. Teach me the knowledge of the Atman. Let me attain Immortality. Give me instructions on Brahma-Vidya. Let me know the life beyond. Let me have eternal life. Let me abide in the eternal Soul for ever. Why do you hide this secret from me? I am endowed with the four means of salvation. You have already tested me in various ways. I want to know about the Supreme Self which exists in the past, present and future".

"Tell me, O Yama, what it is which people enquire about, on the great question, concerning the next world, in respect of which they doubt thus, 'what there is in that great hereafter'? Nachiketas asks for no other boon but that (concerning the Soul), of which the knowledge is hidden. This boon which penetrates into the hidden, none other than this will Nachiketas choose. As this has been kept a secret for so long, no other boon will Nachiketas choose".

Thus ends the First Valli of the First Chapter.

## CHAPTER I

## VALLI ii

अन्यच्छ्रेयोऽन्यदुतैव प्रेयस्ते उभे नानार्थे पुरुषं सिनीतः ।

तयोः श्रेय आदानस्य साधु भवति हीयतेऽर्थाद्य उ प्रेयो वृणीते ॥१॥

1. (Yama said): "One is good, while another is pleasant. These two, having different objects, chain a man. Blessed is he, who between them, chooses the good alone, but he who chooses what is pleasant, loses the true end".

## Notes and Commentary

The Upanishadic philosophy begins from the second Valli of this book. Nachiketas was very firm. Yama tested Nachiketas and found out that he was a proper Adhikari, a qualified student to receive instructions on Brahma-Vidya. He began to explain the great secret to Nachiketas.

*Sreya*—the good, the knowledge which leads to Moksha, the final emancipation; *Preya*—pleasant, the sensual pleasures.

As men have to do acts to obtain what is good and what is pleasant, all men are said to be bound by these. Brahman, or the Supreme Self, is ever free (Nitya Mukta), and actionless (Nishkriya). From the viewpoint of the Absolute, or the transcendental standpoint, the desires for sensual pleasures, and efforts for emancipation are bondages, although the latter helps the deluded Jiva to destroy his ignorance, and attain the *summum bonum*.

Jiva (the individual soul), is identical with Brahman (the Supreme Soul). Through illusion or ignorance, he imagines that he is bound, is doing actions, and is attempting to get deliverance or emancipation. He, who treads the path of Truth, who accepts the good, attains Immortality and eternal Bliss; but he, who chooses the pleasant, i.e., the sensual pleasures, loses the goal of life, undergoes various sorts of miseries, sorrows and troubles, and is caught in the wheel of births and deaths. These two paths are opposed to each other. *Sreya Marga* is the path of knowledge. *Preya Marga* is the path of ignorance, the path of pleasure. You will have to abandon,

ruthlessly, sensual pleasures, if you wish to attain everlasting bliss of the Soul, the Atman.

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्तौ संपरीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः ।

श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभि प्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद्वृणीते ॥२॥

2. The good and the pleasant take hold of man; the wise man examines and distinguishes them. The wise man prefers the good (Sreya) to the pleasant, but the ignorant man chooses the pleasant (Preya) for the sake of the body.

### Notes and Commentary

The path of knowledge and the path of pleasure are thrown open to man. He can choose any path he likes. The wise man examines and distinguishes them. Just as the swan separates milk from a mixture of milk and water, and drinks milk alone, so also the wise man separates the good, and follows the good alone. He knows that the Sreya Marga leads to the attainment of Immortality, freedom or eternal bliss, and the Preya Marga to transitory sensual enjoyments and bondage. Therefore, he prefers the good to the pleasant, but the fool or ignorant man, who has no intelligence to discriminate between the good and the pleasant, who has no idea of the goal, the means of attaining it and its fruits, chooses the pleasant through greed and avarice, for fattening and preserving his body, and for enjoying carnal pleasures.

स त्वं प्रियान्प्रियरूपांश्च कामानभिध्यायन्नचिकेतोऽत्यस्ताक्षीः ।

नैतां सृङ्कां विज्ञमयीमवाप्तो यस्यां मज्जन्ति बहवो मनुष्याः ॥३॥

3. O Nachiketas, thou hast renounced objects of desires (such as sons and grandsons), and desirable objects of pleasant shape (such as the heavenly nymphs), judging them by their real value. Thou hast not chosen the road of wealth, in which many men perish.

### Notes and Commentary

O Nachiketas! You, though repeatedly tempted by me, have renounced objects of desires (Priyan), such as sons and

grandsons, and also objects of pleasant shape (Priyarupan), such as celestial damsels with their chariots and musical instruments, having pondered over their faults, i.e., their ephemeral nature. How thoughtful and intelligent you are! You are endowed with dispassion and discrimination.

*Vittamayim etam srinkam*—the path (or garland) of wealth; *Srinkam*—the path or garland. This word occurs in I-16 also. Its meaning is obscure and only conjectural. Sankara interprets it differently in the two places, here as way or path.

You have not selected the path of the worldly, where the goal is wealth, mammon is worshipped, wealth is valued as the highest, and people strive day and night to obtain wealth only. You have certainly not chosen the path of wealth trodden by the ignorant, in which many fools come to grief, sink and perish.

दूरमेते विपरीते विषूची अविद्या या च विद्येति ज्ञाता ।  
विद्याभीप्सिनं नचिकेतसं मन्ये न त्वा कामा बहवोऽलोलुपन्त ॥४॥

4. These two, ignorance and knowledge, are wide apart and lead to different points, or goals. I believe Nachiketas to be one who desires for Knowledge, for even many desires have not shaken thee.

### Notes and Commentary

The two paths are certainly opposing and wide apart. The two paths lead to different results. They are laid at a great distance from each other. They are distant and different-pointed. They are opposing like light and darkness. Avidya or ignorance is the path of the pleasant. It leads to misery, grief and bondage. Whereas Vidya or Knowledge is the path of the good. It is beneficial. It confers freedom and final emancipation.

I regard Nachiketas as an aspirant of Knowledge, or seeker of Truth, Wisdom, because all these temptations did not shake him, or divert him, from the path of good, by creating in him a desire for sensual enjoyments. He is a deserving student for being initiated into Brahma-vidya. He is worthy of attaining the knowledge of the Self.

This verse recurs in Maitrayani Upanishad 7-9.

अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितमन्यमानाः ।

दन्द्रम्यमाणाः परियन्ति मूढा अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः ॥५॥

5. The ignorant, who live in the midst of darkness, but fancy themselves as wise and learned, go round and round, deluded in many crooked ways, as blind people led by the blind.

### Notes and Commentary

Yama gives a description of the nature and fate of those who have no belief in life beyond, in the 5th and 6th verses.

*Avidyayam*—in ignorance, in objects like sons, wives, etc.; *Pariyanti*—go round and round, wander.

Those men who live in Samsara, are in the midst of ignorance or thick darkness. They have neither right understanding nor discrimination. They are held in bondage by a thousand and one ties of expectation. They are entangled in a thousand and one meshes, formed by attachment (Asakti or Raga) for sons, wife, wealth, property, house, etc. They are ignorant, but regard themselves as intelligent and well-versed in the Sastras. They do not attain salvation. They are caught over and over again in the wheel of births and deaths.

They undergo the pains and miseries of Samsara, such as birth, death, old age, disease, sorrow, pain, etc. Just as the blind, led by the blind in rough and uneven roads, suffer, even so, the ignorant people undergo sufferings. They are tossed about hither and thither, like a straw or a piece of paper in the wind.

With a variation, this verse recurs in Mundaka Upanishad I-ii-8, and Maitrayani Upanishad 7-9.

न सांपरायः प्रतिभाति बालं प्रमाद्यन्तं वित्तमोहेन मूढम् ।

अयं लोको नास्ति पर इति मानी पुनः पुनर्वशमापद्यते मे ॥६॥

6. The way to the hereafter is not apparent to the ignorant man, who is foolish, deluded by the delusion of wealth. 'This is the world', he thinks, 'there is no other'—thus he falls over and over again under my sway.

### Notes and Commentary

*Samparayah*—Moksha, the other world or the hereafter, the spiritual means pointed out by the Sastras for attaining Moksha, or the final emancipation.

The hereafter never rises before the eyes of the careless child, deluded by the delusion of wealth. The way to Moksha, or the final emancipation, does not appear to the ignorant man deluded by the illusion of wealth. The necessary means for attaining liberation are not apparent to the careless man, who is ever thinking of his sons, wife and wealth, and who is enveloped by the darkness of ignorance caused by wealth. Wealth is the most powerful intoxicant in the world. It generates pride and vanity. It produces turbidity in the mind and clouds the understanding. It veils the intellect. So a wealthy man does not know what he is exactly doing.

He thinks that this world alone, which consists of women, children, food and drink, exists. This world is the be-all for him. There is nothing beyond this world. Sensual pleasure only is his goal. Money is his God and goal. 'Eat, drink and be merry'—this is his supreme philosophy. He not only puts this sublime philosophy of his in daily practice, but preaches also this philosophy to those who come in contact with him. Such a foolish man is born again and again, in this Samsara. He falls a prey to me (Yama or death). He comes under my clutch.

*Baalam*—(to) the child or who is like a child, ignorant and non-discriminating; *Vasam apadyate*—falls under my control or sway, he is born again and again to die, he becomes my victim, he is caught in the meshes of Death.

श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यं न विद्युः ।  
आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धाऽश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ॥७॥

7. He (the Self), of whom many are not even able to hear, whom many, even when they hear of him, do not comprehend; wonderful is a man, when found, who is able to teach the Self; wonderful is he who comprehends the Self, when taught by an able teacher.

### Notes and Commentary

Many are not even able to hear of this Atman. Many, even when they hear of the Atman, do not comprehend because their minds are not purified. Wonderful is the man who is able to comprehend the Self, when taught by the able Teacher. In the Gita, the Lord says, "One sees Him as a wonder, another speaks of Him as a wonder, another hears of Him as a wonder; yet having heard, none understands Him at all"—(II-29).

Brahma-Vidya is the most wonderful science. It is the Science of sciences. What is that supreme spiritual science, which being known, all other worldly sciences become known? It is Para-Vidya, by which the Immortal Brahman is known.

Wonderful is the science of the Self. Wonderful is the Brahma-Jnani who knows the Self. Wonderful also is the student, who is the proper recipient of the instructions about the Supreme Self, the Atman. Brahma-Jnanis and qualified aspirants are very, very rare in this world. He, who is equipped with Sadhana-Chatushtaya, or the four means, is fit to tread the path of Jnana-Yoga. Of thousands who have heard this Atman, who seek good, one alone becomes the knower of the Atman (Atma-Jnani). In the Gita, the Lord says: "Among thousands of men, one perchance, strives for perfection; even among those successful strivers, only one perchance, knows Me in essence."—(VII-3).

न नरेणावरेण प्रोक्तं एष सुविज्ञेयो बहुधा चिन्त्यमानः ।  
अनन्यप्रोक्ते गतिरत्र नास्त्यणीयान्हृतकर्यमणुप्रमाणात् ॥८॥

8. That Self, when taught by a man of inferior intellect, is not easy to be known, as it is to be thought of in various ways. But when it is taught by a preceptor who is one with Brahman (who beholds no difference), there is no doubt concerning it, the Self being subtler than the subtlest, and is not to be obtained by arguing.

### Notes and Commentary

*Avarena narena*—inferior man; one who has not attained Self-realisation, or who has no knowledge of the Self; a person of uncultured intellect, or worldly understanding.

*Bahudha chintyamanah*—This Atman cannot be easily known when taught by an inferior person, who is not a knower of the Self, because it is thought of variously, i.e., whether he exists or not, whether he is an agent or not, whether he is pure or not, etc.

*Ananya prokte*—Sri Sankara interprets this in four ways: (1) If the Atman is taught by a teacher who has identified with Brahman, there will be no uncertainty or doubts. (2) If it has been taught that the Atman is identical with ourselves, there is no perception of anything else, there is nothing else to be known, because there is no other knowable, and the knowledge of the oneness of the Atman is the highest knowledge. (3) There is no rebirth, when the Atman, which is identical with the Self, has been taught, because Moksha, or salvation, is the fruit of Brahma-Jnana and is conjoined with the knowledge of the Self. (4) If it has been taught by one who has become one with Brahman, there is no failure in understanding.

*Atarkyam*—beyond arguments. This Atman cannot be realised by arguing or reasoning, because it is transcendental, i.e., beyond the reach of reason or intellect. Intellect is a finite instrument that is conditioned by time, space and causation. We cannot come to definite, final conclusion by arguing. A man of inferior intellect will be defeated by a man of superior intellect or genius. One man will say, 'This Atman is subtle'. Another will say, 'This Atman is subtler than the subtlest'. One man will argue vehemently and say, 'There is Atman'. Another will argue still more vehemently and say, 'There is no Atman, this body only is the Atman'. There will be no end to the arguing.

Arguing is mere jugglery of words. It is intellectual gymnastics and lingual warfare. He who spends his life in just arguing, is caught in the thick jungle of darkness and ignorance. One should give up arguing and become silent and introspective. This Atman is realisable only through silent meditation.

नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया प्रोक्ताऽन्येनैव सुज्ञानाय प्रेष्ट ।  
यां त्वमापः सत्यधृतिर्बतासि त्वादृङ्ग्नो भूयान्नचिकेतः प्रष्टा ॥१॥

9. This knowledge is not to be obtained by argument, but it is easy to understand it, O dearest, when taught by a teacher who beholds no difference; thou hast obtained it now; thou art fixed in truth. May we have, O Nachiketas, an enquirer like thee!

### Notes and Commentary

Brahma-Jnana, Knowledge of the Self, cannot be attained by mere reasoning. One has to realise and feel the Brahmic consciousness through spiritual experience, direct intuitive perception (Aparokshanubhuti).

जानाम्यहं शेवधिरित्यनित्यं न ह्यध्रुवैः प्राप्यते हि ध्रुवं तत् ।

ततो मया नचिकेतश्चितोऽग्निरनित्यैद्रव्यैः प्राप्तवानस्मि नित्यम् ॥१०॥

10. I know that the treasure is transient, for that eternal is not obtained by things which are not eternal. Therefore, the Nachiketa fire has been propitiated by me with the perishable things, and I have obtained the eternal.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sevadhih*—treasure, i.e., the reward of Karma. Why is it called a treasure? Because, it is sought after like a treasure. This treasure is not eternal or permanent. The eternal, or the supreme, treasure of the Atman which is constant, cannot be attained by the non-eternal, i.e., by Karma which is impermanent, not constant.

*Tena nityam praptavan asmi*—I have attained the eternal by that. Yama said: "The Nachiketa fire has been performed by me with the transient objects and through that, I have attained the position of Yama". The 'eternal' does not here refer to Brahman or the Absolute, but means only office of Yama which is relatively eternal when compared with life in this world.

Yama praises Nachiketas in verses 10 and 11. He says: "O Nachiketas, you certainly excel me even. I had to perform the Nachiketa fire to obtain this position of Yama, though I know that Karmas and their fruits are impermanent; but you have rejected ruthlessly all earthly objects with a firm resolve and withstood all sorts of temptations. You wish to attain the eternal Atman only. This is indeed highly creditable and laudable".

Some commentators have taken this verse to be the words of Nachiketas. This is not correct. Nachiketas had not performed this sacrifice till then. He had just received instructions from Yama on this sacrifice. How could he say then, "Therefore the Nachiketa fire has been performed by me with the perishable things, and I have obtained the eternal?"

कामस्याप्तिं जगतः प्रतिष्ठां क्रतोरनन्त्यमभयस्य पारम् । स्तोम-  
महदुरुगायं प्रतिष्ठां दृष्ट्वा धृत्या धीरो नचिकेतोऽत्यस्ताक्षीः ॥११॥

11. The end of all desires, the foundation of the world, the endless rewards of sacrifice, the other shore where there is no fear, the praiseworthy, the great, the wide-extended sphere and the abode of the soul—all these thou hast seen, and being wise, O Nachiketas, thou hast with firm resolve rejected all.

### Notes and Commentary

The end of all desires, the stay of the universe, etc., refer to the state of Hiranyagarbha or Brahmaloka. In Hiranyagarbha, all desires are fulfilled. Hiranyagarbha is the support of all the worlds which comprise the Adhyatma (bodies), the Adhibhuta (elements) and Adhidaiva (gods).

*Mahat*—great, because the state of Hiranyagarbha is unsurpassable; he who attains this state possesses the eight Siddhis or powers, Anima, Laghima, Garima, Mahima, etc., and so it is adorable also.

O Nachiketas! you have abandoned all these. You wish to attain the eternal Atman only. O, what wonderful qualities you possess!

The state of Hiranyagarbha also is nothing when compared to the eternal life in Para Brahman. During Cosmic Pralaya, Hiranyagarbha, or Karya Brahman, also merges himself in the pure Para Brahman. That is the reason Nachiketas rejected this state of Hiranyagarbha also, and wished to attain the state of Brahman only. Nachiketas possessed Para Vairagya or the highest degree of dispassion and discrimination. That is the reason he withstood all sorts of temptations and rejected even the wealth of Brahmaloka, or the state of Hiranyagarbha.

तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गद्वरेष्टं पुराणम् ।

अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति ॥१२॥

12. The wise sage who, by means of meditation on his Self, recognises the Ancient, who is difficult to be seen, who is unfathomable and concealed, who is hidden in the cave of the heart, who dwells in the abyss, who is lodged in intelligence, indeed renounces joy and sorrow.

#### Notes and Commentary

This Atman is very subtle and immanent. It is lodged in the inmost recess. It is seated in the heart or intellect. It is hidden in the cavity of the heart. So it is very difficult to behold or know this Atman.

*Adhyatma yoga*—by withdrawing the mind from external objects and fixing it on the inner Self.

The wise man (Dhirah) withdraws the mind from external objects, realises this Atman by means of meditation on the inner Self, and renounces both joy and grief. This Atman is beyond pleasure and pain, joy and grief. It is an embodiment of Bliss. It is Sat-chit-ananda Svarupa. Pleasure and pain are modifications of the mind only.

*Durdarsam*—very difficult to be seen; *Gudham*—hidden; *Anupravishtam*—seated in the heart or intellect; *Gahva-reshtam*—residing within the body.

एतच्छ्रुत्वा संपरिगृह्य मर्त्यः प्रवृद्ध धर्म्यमणुमेतमाप्य । स मोदते  
मोदनीयं हि लब्ध्वा विवृतं सद्य नचिकेतसं मन्ये ॥१३॥

13. Having heard and well grasped this (the Self), the mortal, abstracting the virtuous Atman, attaining this subtle Self, rejoices, because he has obtained what is cause for rejoicing. I think that the abode of Brahman is wide open for Nachiketas.

#### Notes and Commentary

The aspirant hears all about this Atman from his able and competent preceptor and comprehends its true nature. He then separates the Atman from the body and mind through

discrimination between the Real and the unreal (Viveka), meditates on the Inner Self and realises the Self through direct intuitive perception. He now rejoices in the Self. The door of the abode of Brahman is wide open for you, O Nachiketas, as you are a worthy aspirant equipped with the four means of salvation.

*Modaniyam*—what causes joy, i.e., the Self, the Atman; *Sadma*—the door or house of Brahman, i.e., the state of absolute consciousness of Brahman.

*Dharmyam* or *Dharmam* being the upholder of the worlds; connected with Dharma. This world is upheld by Dharma or righteousness. Brahman is the very centre of all Dharma. Why does a man lead a life of righteousness? Because, he wants to attain Brahman, the Self, wherein only he can really rejoice.

*Modati*—rejoices. The Svarupa or essence of Brahman is embodiment of Bliss. Sensual pleasure is mere fleeting sensation caused by titillation or excitement of nerves. There is adverse reaction always. Brahmic state is all-full, homogeneous and everlasting. It is an absolute unchanging state.

अन्यत्र धर्मादन्यत्राधर्मादन्यत्रास्मात्कृताकृतात् ।  
अन्यत्र भूताच्च भव्याच्च यत्तपश्यसि तद्वद् ॥१४॥

14. (Nachiketas said): That which thou seest as other than virtue and vice, other than cause and effect, other than the past and future, tell me that.

### Notes and Commentary

If I am worthy, if you are pleased with me, O Lord Yama, tell me that which thou seest other than virtue (Dharma) and vice (Adharma), other than cause (what is not made) and effect (what is made), other than the past and the future.

In Brahman, the Atman, there is neither virtue nor vice, neither cause nor effect, neither past nor future. Virtue and vice, past and future are mental creations only. Time is a mode of the mind. Time is mental creation. Time is caused by succession of events. In Isvara, it is simultaneous perception.

Everything is 'present' only. Everything is 'now' only. Brahman is eternity. He is beyond time.

सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति तपांसि सर्वाणि च यद्गदन्ति ।  
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण ब्रवीम्योमित्येतत् ॥१५॥

15. (Yama said): The goal (word) which all the Vedas speak of (praise), which all penances proclaim and wishing for which they lead the life of a Brahmacharin, that goal (word), I will briefly tell thee—It is Om.

### Notes and Commentary

*Padam*—way, place, abode, state, word (There are 22 meanings for this word). The practice of penances and Brahmacharya leads to the realisation of Brahman.

Om is a Pratika or symbol or substitute for Brahman. It is called Sabda-Brahman. The goal which you wish to learn and attain is the goal which is indicated or denoted by the sacred monosyllable Om. Om is also known by the names Pranava, Ekakshara, Omkara. This is the basis or rudiment of all sounds. Om is the most appropriate sound-symbol of Brahman. It consists of 3 letters, A, U and M. Sound, word or name is inseparably connected with thought or idea. For further details on Om, study the Mandukya Upanishad.

The ideas and some of the language of this verse recur in the Bhagavad Gita VIII-11.

एतद्गद्येवाक्षरं ब्रह्म एतद्गद्येवाक्षरं परम् ।  
एतद्गद्येवाक्षरं ज्ञात्वा यो यदिच्छति तस्य तत् ॥१६॥

16. This word is verily Brahman; this word is verily the highest; he who knows this word, obtains, verily, whatever he desires.

### Notes and Commentary

*Akshara*—syllable, imperishable (There are 14 meanings for this word).

Om is Brahman itself. Om and Brahman are inseparably associated. Om should be meditated upon as Brahman itself.

*Brahma*—the manifested or the lower or Saguna Brahman; *Param*—the highest, it means the higher or Nirguna Brahman.

Om is a substitute for both Saguna and Nirguna Brahman.

If one meditates on Om with Saguna Bhava, he will attain the manifested or Saguna Brahman; if he meditates on Om with Nirguna Bhava, he will attain the Nirguna Brahman. The manifested Brahman should be reached; the unmanifested should be known.

एतदालम्बनं श्रेष्ठमेतदालम्बनं परम् ।  
एतदालम्बनं ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्मलोके महीयते ॥१७॥

17. This is the best support. This is the highest support. He who knows this support is worshipped in the world of Brahman.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Alambanam*—support, prop, refuge, means of realising Brahman.

Om is the best prop or support. It is the best means to attain the highest or Nirguna Brahman and the manifested or Saguna Brahman. He who meditates on Brahman becomes identical with Brahman and becomes fit to be worshipped like Brahman. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

*Etadalambanam jnatva*—knowing this prop or support, having realised Brahman, having known the significance of Om.

न जायते प्रियते वा विपश्चिन्नायं कुतश्चिन्न बभूव कश्चित् ।  
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥१८॥

18. The intelligent Atman is not born, nor does He die; He did not spring from anything, and nothing sprang from Him; unborn, eternal, everlasting, ancient, He is not slain although the body is slain.

#### Notes and Commentary

In the 14th Mantra, Nachiketas asked Yama to tell him about that Being which is beyond virtue and vice, cause and effect,

etc. In reply to that, Yama gave a description of Om, the prop or symbol or Pratika (substitute) of Brahman, and a means to the realisation of Brahman, in Mantras 15, 16 and 17. Now, Yama speaks of the true nature of Brahman in this and the following Mantras.

*Na jayate mriyate*—Brahman is not born nor does He die. He is not born (Aja), i.e., He is not produced like a pot out of clay or a cloth from cotton. He is causeless. In this Mantra, the first and the last modifications, viz., birth and death are denied of Brahman. From this we can conclude that Brahman is free from all modifications which are incidental to things which are born and so, not eternal.

This Atman did not come from anything or any cause, nor anything has come into being from It. Therefore He is unborn, eternal (Nitya), undecaying, unchanging, everlasting (Sasvata). All objects in this world which are not eternal decay, but Brahman never decays as He is everlasting. We call a thing new when certain changes or development of its parts take place in it, e.g., a new building. But such changes or development of parts do not take place in Brahman as He is unchanging and everlasting. Therefore, He is ancient (Purana). As He is eternal and everlasting, He is not slain or affected even though the body is slain by swords. Just as the ether in the pot is not affected even though the pot is broken, so also this Atman is not destroyed or affected though the body is slain by the sword. In this Mantra, the immortality of the Soul is described.

Substantially this verse is identical with Bhagavad Gita II-20.

हन्ता चेन्मन्यते हन्तुं हतश्चेन्मन्यते हतम् ।  
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥१९॥

19. If the slayer thinks 'I slay', if the slain thinks, 'I am slain', then both of them do not know well. This slays not, nor is slain.

#### Notes and Commentary

This Atman is extremely subtle. It cannot be slain by the sword. Ignorant people think that this body is the Atman and identify the Soul with the body. If the slayer thinks 'I slay',

mistaking the body for the Soul, if the slain thinks 'I am slain', then both of them do not know their Atman. Both of them are ignorant. It (the Soul) does not slay, nor is It slain.

Verses 18 and 19 occur in Bhagavad Gita II-19 & 20 with slight alteration. Gita contains the essence of the Upanishads.

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्माऽस्य जन्तोर्निर्हितो गुहायाम् ।  
तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको धातुप्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ॥२०॥

20. The Atman, subtler than the subtlest, greater than the great, is seated in the heart of each living being. He who is free from desire, with his mind and the senses composed, beholds the majesty of the Self and becomes free from sorrow.

### Notes and Commentary

The way to attain Self-realisation is described in this Mantra. The Atman is seated in the heart of every living creature, from Brahma down to a worm. The Soul of an ant is the same as the Soul of an elephant. There is a common Consciousness in all beings. The basis or support for all objects of this world is the Atman. The whole world is superimposed upon the Atman, just as a snake is superimposed on a rope. This world has no independent existence apart from the Atman.

He, who has renounced all desires for enjoyments of this world and the next world, and who has controlled the senses and the mind and rendered them calm, attains Self-realisation, and therefore, is freed from grief.

*Dhatus*—the mind and the senses are called Dhatus because they support the body. *Dhatu-Prasadat*—Sri Sankara interprets it as *Dhatu-Samprasadat*: through the calmness of senses and mind. Dvaita commentators interpret this as follows: "When through the grace (Prasada) of the Creator (Dhatr), he beholds the greatness of the Soul (Atman)". This is an important passage, as this is the first explicit statement about the doctrine of grace (Prasada). The same verse occurs with slight variation in Svetasvatara Upanishad III-20, and Mahanarayana Upanishad VIII-3.

आसीनो दूरं व्रजति शयानो याति सर्वतः ।  
कस्तं मदामदं देवं मदन्यो ज्ञातुमर्हति ॥२१॥

21. Sitting He goes far; lying He goes everywhere. Who else, therefore, save myself, is able to comprehend the God who rejoices and rejoices not?

### Notes and Commentary

*Asino duram vrajati*—sitting, He goes far. This Atman does not move and yet He goes a great distance. This seems to be apparently contradictory, but is really true. From the Absolute viewpoint, this Atman is motionless. Where will He move, when He is all-full (Paripurna)? He is, as it were, limited by the body. From the relative viewpoint, He is said to move when the body moves. He is conditioned by the motion of the body and mind.

*Sayano yati sarvatah*—lying He goes everywhere. He goes everywhere means 'He is all-pervading'.

He is joyful and joyless. He rejoices and does not rejoice. He enjoys the world in His relative aspect, but He is the silent witness in His absolute nature, and so He does not rejoice.

The Atman has attributes that are mutually contradictory. Therefore, it is difficult to know Him.

Capable persons like me who are endowed with subtle, sharp and pure intellect, learning, and the four means can know this Atman. This Atman appears to possess conflicting properties like Visvarupa or Chintamani gem, which appear in different ways according to the fancy of the man who perceives.

अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितम् ।

महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥२२॥

22. The wise man, who knows the Atman as bodiless, seated firmly in perishable bodies, great and all-pervading, does never grieve.

### Notes and Commentary

The sages who have attained Self-realisation, i.e., who have known the Atman through direct, intuitive perception (Aparokshanubhuti), do not grieve. How can the all-pervading Atman have a body? The Atman is like Akasa, the all-pervading ether.

*Asariram*—bodiless. *Sarireshu*—in bodies of the gods, manes, men and the rest; in physical, astral and causal bodies.

This Atman, which is bodiless, is seated firmly in perishable bodies. He is bodiless within the bodies. He is unchanging among changing things.

*Avasthitam*—seated firmly, i.e., eternal, not subject to modifications or changes, changeless; *Mahantam*—great; *Vibhu*—all-pervading.

A doubt whether the greatness is relative or not, may arise in the mind. To remove this doubt, we have the attribute *Vibhu*, i.e., all-pervading.

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।  
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूँ स्वाम् ॥२३॥

23. This Atman cannot be attained by study of the Vedas, nor by intelligence, nor by much hearing. He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained. To him this Atman reveals Its true nature.

### Notes and Commentary

This Atman cannot be attained by the study of the Vedas, or by intelligence, or retentive memory, or by much hearing of the Srutis; but the Atman can be attained only by him who is free from desire, and who seeks to know It. This Atman reveals Its real form or true nature to him. The Soul of him who is desirous of knowing his own Soul reveals its own truth.

According to Sankaracharya *Yam* means 'which', i.e., which Atman the aspirant seeks. *Yesha* means 'aspirant'. 'It is attainable by that aspirant alone who seeks this Atman'.

According to the Dvaitins, *Yam* means 'whom'; *Esha* means 'this' (God). 'It is attained by him alone whom God chooses, i.e., on whom God shows His grace, with whom He is pleased'.

The same idea is contained in verses 7-9 supra. It occurs also in Mundaka Upanishad III-ii-3.

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।  
नाशान्तमानंसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥२४॥

24. But he who has not turned away from bad conduct, whose senses are not subdued, whose mind is not concentrated, whose mind is not pacified, can never obtain this Atman by knowledge.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Asantah*—who has not subdued the senses; *Asamahitah*—one who is not concentrated; *Asanta manasah*—one who is not tranquil-minded.

He who has not refrained from doing sinful acts prohibited by the scriptures, who has not restrained his senses, who has no one-pointed mind, who has no tranquil mind, cannot have direct intuitive perception of the Atman.

यस्य ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं च उभे भवत ओदनः ।  
मृत्युर्यस्योपसेचनं क इत्था वेद यत्र सः ॥२५॥

॥ इति प्रथमेऽध्याये द्वितीया वल्ली ॥

25. Of whom, the Brahmana and the Kshatriya classes are (as it were) but food, and Death itself a condiment (or pickle), how can one thus know where that Atman is?

#### Notes and Commentary

How can one who is ignorant and worldly-minded, and who is not equipped with the above-mentioned qualifications, know the Atman, the Supreme Self, in whom all distinctions of caste and creed disappear, and in whom even Death is swallowed up?

He, who is equipped with the above-described qualifications, only can know this Atman.

Thus ends the Second Valli of the First Chapter.

## CHAPTER I

### VALLI iii

ऋतं पिबन्तौ सुकृतस्य लोके गुहां प्रविष्टौ परमे परार्थं ।  
छायातपौ ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति पश्चामयो ये च त्रिणाचिकेताः ॥१॥

1. The two who enjoy the fruits of their good works, being seated in the cavity of the seat of the Supreme, the knowers of Brahman call them shadow and light, as also the performers of the five-fold fire, and those who have propitiated three times the Nachiketa fire.

### Notes and Commentary

There are the two, i.e., the Paramatman (the Supreme Soul) and the Jivatman (the individual soul), the former being the light and the latter the shadow. The former is ever free and the latter is bound. Hence, the simile of light and shadow is used here. They are dissimilar like light and shadow.

*Ritam*—truth, the fruit of good work; *Loke*—in this body.

*Pibantau*—enjoying. Although only the individual soul enjoys the reward of his actions, and therefore the singular number should have been used, the dual number is here used on account of the connection of the individual with the Supreme Soul. It is used on the analogy of using the expression, 'the umbrella-carriers go', when all of them do not carry umbrellas. Paramatman has no concern with the works and their fruits. He is always the silent witness.

How can the Supreme Self be said to drink or enjoy the reward of former deeds, as He is above all works and their fruits? This should be taken only as a metaphorical expression, as we often speak of many when we mean one. (Cf. Mundaka Upanishad III-i-1.)

*Sukrita* literally means good deed; *Sukritasya* means deeds done by themselves, and is connected with the previous word

'fruits': *Guham pravishtau*—lodged in intelligence; *Parame*—in the Supreme, Akasa of the heart superior to the external Akasa (*Bhutakasa*), because Brahman becomes manifest in the heart; *Parardhe*—in the abode of Brahman, in the cavity of the heart.

They are lodged in the Akasa within the cavity of the heart. They have entered into the intelligence in the supreme cavity of the heart.

The knowers of Brahman tell this. The householders who maintain the five sacrificial fires, and others who perform the Nachiketa sacrifice three times, also say this.

यः सेतुरीजानानामक्षरं ब्रह्म यत्परम् ।  
अभ्यं तितीर्षतां पारं नाचिकेत् शकेमहि ॥२॥

2. We are able to understand both, the Nachiketa fire which is the bridge of all sacrifices (to cross misery), and also the highest, indestructible Brahman, fearless, and the refuge for those who wish to cross the ocean of Samsara.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sethu*—bridge, refuge. The Nachiketa fire is a bridge to take the performers of the sacrifice from this mortal world to the immortal abode of Brahman. It is, as it were, a bridge for sacrificers for the purpose of crossing grief. We can also know the highest, immortal and fearless Brahman which is the refuge, the other shore for those who want to cross this formidable ocean of Samsara. The opposite shore of Samsara is Moksha. Both the unmanifested Brahman, the goal of the Vedantins and the manifested Brahman, the goal of those who perform Karma, are worthy to be known.

*Param*—shore.

The first two Mantras may be later additions.

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।  
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥३॥

3. Know the Atman as the Lord of the chariot, the body as the chariot; know the intellect as the charioteer and the mind again as the reins.

### Notes and Commentary

The analogy of the chariot is given in this Mantra for the sake of easy understanding of the subject. This beautiful analogy is very often quoted by lecturers and writers. Know the Jivatman, the individual soul, who enjoys the fruits of his Karmas, and is bound in this Samsara through his Avidya, ignorance, to be the Lord of the chariot.

Just as the chariot is drawn by the horses, so also this body-chariot is drawn by the horses of senses. Therefore, this body is compared to the chariot. Just as the chariot is carefully moved by the driver, so also this body-chariot is moved or guided by the driver intellect, which is endowed with the power of discrimination. Body does everything under the directions of intellect. The horses move when the driver grasps the reins in his hands. So also the senses perform their function when grasped by the mind.

Vide Svetasvatara Upanishad 2-9 where a similar comparison is given: 'Keeping down the senses, subduing his desires, and gently breathing by the nostrils, let the wise diligently attend to mind, as the charioteer to a car, drawn by vicious horses'.

इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् ।  
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥४॥ .

4. They say, the senses are the horses and their objects are the roads; the Atman, the senses and the mind united, the wise call the enjoyer.

### Notes and Commentary

The senses such as the ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose are the horses, because they draw this body-chariot. The objects of sound, touch, form, taste and smell form the roads on which the horses of senses tread.

The pure Atman cannot be the enjoyer. It is ever the silent witness (Sakshi). He can never be the agent. He is actionless (Nishkriya, Akriya). He is non-doer (Akarta). He appears as the agent or enjoyer when He is united with the mind, senses and the body through Avidya, ignorance. The mind acts and enjoys through the senses and the body. The attributes of the mind, senses, Prana and body are transferred to the pure Atman and the attributes of Atman are transferred to the mind and the body. This is called mutual superimposition (Anyonya Adhyasa). Through this superimposition, the insentient mind seems to be intelligent, and the impure and insentient body is mistaken for the pure and sentient Atman. The pure Atman puts on the appearance of Jiva, on account of this superimposition created by Avidya, and undergoes apparently the pains of Samsara, birth and death. Jiva, in essence, is Satchidananda Svarupa. When Avidya is destroyed through knowledge of the Self, he becomes identical with Brahman, Paramatman (the Supreme Self).

यस्त्वविज्ञानवान्भवत्ययुक्तेन मनसा सदा ।

तस्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानि दुष्टाश्वा इव सारथे: ॥५॥

5. He who has no discrimination and whose mind is always uncontrolled, his senses are not controllable like vicious horses of a driver.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Avijnananavan*—who has no right understanding; who has not Buddhi, intellect, as a charioteer; who is devoid of discrimination.

If any one is not endowed with the power of discrimination between the real and the unreal, if he is not able to discriminate what is to be done or what is not to be done, and if his mind is not controlled properly, he becomes an incompetent driver of this body-chariot. His senses become unduly turbulent and uncontrollable like the wicked horses of a charioteer. Just as an incompetent driver of a chariot is not able to control the vicious horses, so also an incompetent driver of this body-chariot, i.e.,

intellect that is not capable of discriminating, is not able to control the senses.

यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवति युक्तेन मनसा सदा ।  
तस्येन्द्रियाणि वश्यानि सदश्वा इव सारथे: ॥६॥

6. But he who has understanding and whose mind is always controlled, his senses are under control like good horses of a driver.

### Notes and Commentary

*Vijnanavan*—who has right understanding, whose mind-rein is firmly held.

Just as a competent charioteer controls the horses of a chariot by skilful manipulation of the reins, so also a competent driver of this body-chariot keeps the senses under proper restraint, through right understanding, discrimination and will-power.

The last two verses show that the senses can be controlled through the control of the mind. Control of the senses is an indirect means of attaining the goal, or Moksha.

यस्त्वविज्ञानवान्भवत्यमनस्कः सदाऽशुचिः ।  
न स तत्पदमाप्नोति संसारं चाधिगच्छति ॥७॥

7. But he, who has no discrimination, and whose mind is not under control, and who is always impure, does not reach that goal, but enters into the round of births and deaths.

### Notes and Commentary

In this Mantra, the results produced by an incompetent driver (intellect), who has no right understanding, are mentioned. The Lord of the chariot, i.e., the Jiva or the individual soul who has neither right understanding nor discrimination, who is, therefore, impure and unclean, does not attain that immortal goal of infinite splendour and glory, on account of his having such an incompetent or incapable driver (intellect). Not only this, He enters the Samsara or gets into the round of births and deaths.

*Padam*—goal, state mentioned in I-ii-15; *Samsara*—world-process, round of births and deaths.

यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवति समनस्कः सदा शुचिः ।  
स तु तत्पदमाप्नोति यस्माद्द्यो न जायते ॥८॥

8. But he, who has understanding, who has his mind always under control, and who is pure, reaches that goal whence he is not born again.

#### Notes and Commentary

He who has right understanding and discrimination, who has his mind always under control and therefore, who is always clean, reaches that goal from which he is not born again in *Samsara*.

विज्ञानसारथिर्यस्तु मनःप्रग्रहवान्नः ।  
सोऽध्वनः पारमाप्नोति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥९॥

9. But he who has discerning intelligence as the driver and a well-controlled mind as the reins, reaches the end of his journey, that highest place of Vishnu.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Vijnana sarathi*—who has discerning intelligence as the charioteer; *Manah-pragrahavan*—who has a well-controlled mind as the reins.

Just as a man can reach his destination, the end of his journey, when the driver of the chariot is clever, and when he drives the chariot carefully by controlling the horses by means of the reins, so also the Jiva can reach the end of the road of *Samsara*, i.e., it can attain the highest place of Vishnu, or the nature of the all-pervading immortal Brahman, only when the discerning intelligence or discrimination controls and guides the mind and the senses.

*Vishnu*—the all-pervading Brahman (the line occurs in Rig-Veda 1.22.20); *Tad vishnoh paramam padam*—that supreme place of Vishnu, the immortal state of Vishnu, the

all-pervading Paramatman known as Vaasudeva (the self-luminous, Svayam Prakasa).

*Vyapansilasya brahmanah paramatmano vaasudevakhya*ya: Vishnu is identified with the son of Vasudeva—(Sri Sankara).

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्था अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः ।

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्बुद्धेरात्मा महान्परः ॥१०॥

10. Beyond the senses are the rudiments of objects, beyond these rudiments is the mind, beyond the mind is the intellect, beyond the intellect is the great Self.

### Notes and Commentary

The ascending degree of subtlety of things is described in the 10th and 11th Mantras. Superiority is graded in accordance with the subtle nature of things. A subtle thing is superior to a gross thing and a subtler thing is superior to a subtle thing. The Atman is the most subtle Vastu. It is superior to all. There is a gradation by which the knowledge of the Atman is attained. There are stages and degrees by which consciousness expands, and more and more of the knowledge flows in.

The cause is subtler and more pervasive than the effect. The Pancha Maha Bhutas, or the five rudiments of matter, are superior to the senses or organs, because the senses are formed out of them. Mind is superior to the objects, because it is more subtle than the gross matter (Sthula Maha Bhutas). Mind is formed out of the subtle matter, Tanmatras or Sukshma Bhutas. The Pancha Maha Bhutas also are the effects of the Tanmatras or Sukshma Bhutas. Further, mind is the perceiver (Drik), the objects are the perceived (Drisya). Mind is more internal than the senses. Therefore, mind is superior to the objects.

Intellect, or Mahat, is superior to mind, because intellect is subtler, greater and more internal than the mind. Mind passes on the concept to the intellect that determines, decides matters and comes to definite conclusions. Intellect is the Prime Minister to Atman. Intellect is the judge. It is very near to Atman. Mind is only the Head Clerk. Mind is an advocate.

*Mahan atma*—the great Atman, this is Hiranyagarbha, cosmic intelligence, universal life, the sum total of all individual souls. Why He is called Mahan or great? Because He is the greatest of all. Hiranyagarbha is the first born of Avyakta (the unmanifested or the primal matter). He is subtler than Buddhi or the individual intellect.

In the Gita III-42 the Lord says: "The senses are superior to the body, superior to senses is mind, superior to mind is intellect, one who is even superior to intellect is He (the Atman)". Vide also Brahma-Sutra III-iii-14.

महतः परमव्यक्तमव्यक्तात्पुरुषः परः ।

पुरुषात्र परं किंचित्सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥११॥

11. Beyond the great (Mahat) is the unmanifested (Avyakta). Beyond the Avyakta is the Purusha, beyond the Purusha there is nothing, that is the end, that is the highest goal.

#### Notes and Commentary

Beyond even Hiranyagarbha, or the macrocosmic soul, is Avyakta, the unmanifested. This Avyakta is more subtle than Hiranyagarbha. This is the seed of all worlds. Just as the tree exists in a potential state in the seed, so also the world exists in a seed state in Avyakta. The three Gunas are in a state of equilibrium in Avyakta. Matter, energy and sound are in an undifferentiated or potential state in Avyakta. In the state of Pralaya, the whole world gets itself involved in Avyakta. Avyakta exists in Para Brahman as warp and woof. It is the combined state of the potentialities of all causes and effects. Mula Prakriti, Pradhana, Avyakta, Avyakrita, Maya are synonymous terms. Beyond Avyakta is the Purusha or the internal Atman of all. Purusha is the greatest and subtlest Vastu. It is the Cause of all causes. He fills all. Hence, He is called Purusha, or the Atman. He is the end, or the supreme goal of life, or *summum bonum*. Here is the end of subtlety and greatness. He who attains this Purusha is not born again in this Samsara. He attains Moksha, or the final emancipation.

एष सर्वेषु भुतेषु गूढोऽत्मा न प्रकाशते ।

दृश्यते त्वग्रथया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ॥१२॥

12. This Atman is hidden in all beings and does not shine forth, but it is seen by subtle seers through their sharp and subtle intellect.

### Notes and Commentary

This Atman is hidden in all living creatures from Brahma down to the worm. On account of the influence of Avidya, man, though in essence he is Brahman, is not able to grasp the truth, 'I am Brahman', although he is instructed. But he thinks that he is the son of such and such a person, although he is not instructed. He mistakes the body for the pure Atman and walks deluded in this Samsara. How mysterious is Avidya! How deep and unfathomable is Maya! How marvellous and inscrutable is Moha!

*Esha atma na prakasate*—this Atman does not shine for those who have an impure, dense or gross intellect, but He is seen, i.e., felt or realised by those who have a pure, sharp and subtle intellect.

*Agraya*—sharp-pointed. This intellect is rendered pure and sharp by the constant hearing, reflection and meditation of Brahman. A sharp and subtle intellect alone is capable of perceiving subtle objects.

*Sukshma darsibhīḥ*—by the subtle seers or sages who are able to see the subtleties of objects, as mentioned in the previous two Mantras, through their sharp or one-pointed, subtle intellect. Such able seers can behold the most subtle Atman.

यच्छेदवाङ्मनसी प्राज्ञस्तद्यच्छेज्ञान आत्मनि ।

ज्ञानमात्मनि महति नियच्छेत्तद्यच्छेच्छान्त आत्मनि ॥१३॥

13. Let the wise sink his speech into the mind, the mind into the intellect, and the intellect into the Great Atman, and the Great Atman into the Peaceful Atman.

### Notes and Commentary

Withdraw the speech and other organs into the mind through the process of abstraction (Pratyahara) and self-restraint (Dama). Merge the mind into the intellect, the intellect into the Cosmic Intelligence, Hiranyagarbha, and Hiranyagarbha into the Peaceful Atman (Santa Atmani), i.e., the pure unconditional Para Brahman, the substratum and support for everything which is changeless, which is the Inner Self of all and which is the Witness of all modifications of the intellect. This is the process of involution. This is the method of Self-realisation through Laya-Chintana method (dissolution of effects into the Ultimate Cause).

Practise introspection and self-analysis. Control the lower mind by the higher. Stop all the activities of the senses and focus the consciousness in the mind. Afterwards, withdraw the consciousness from the mind and fix it in the intellect. Then, withdraw the consciousness from the intellect and fix it on the Cosmic Intelligence. Finally, withdraw the consciousness from the Cosmic Intelligence and fix it on the Absolute Consciousness, Brahman, the Absolute.

*Prajnah*—the wise; *Yacchet*—withdraw or draw into, should merge, cause the Laya; *Vak*—speech.

Through Upalakshana, speech is used to denote all the senses. Just as the limbs of the tortoise are withdrawn into its body, so also all the senses are withdrawn into the mind.

*Jnana atmani*—in intellect, in the knowledge-self. Intellect is called Atman here, because it pervades the mind and the senses. Therefore, it is their Pratyagatman, i.e., internal principle.

*Jnanam mahati niyacchet*—let him merge the intellect into the great Atman, i.e., Hiranyagarbha, i.e., let him make his intellect as clear in its nature as that of Hiranyagarbha.

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्गं पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति ॥१४॥

14. Arise, awake, having reached the great (teachers), learn (realise that Atman). Like the sharp edge of a razor is that path, difficult to cross and hard to tread, thus the wise say.

### Notes and Commentary

Having thus merged the senses, mind and intellect and the Great Atman, Hiranyagarbha, in the Supreme Self, Para Brahman, one enjoys the eternal bliss and everlasting peace, and attains Moksha, the final emancipation. He gets true knowledge of the Self. Just as the water in the mirage, the serpent in the rope, and the blue colour of the sky vanish by seeing the real nature of the mirage, rope and the sky, so also the illusory world, of names, forms and Karma, which is produced by false knowledge, and which is of the nature of action, agent and fruits, disappears when one attains knowledge of the Atman.

*Uttistatha*—Arise! O human beings in the quagmire of Samsara! Turn towards the acquisition of spiritual knowledge, knowledge of the Atman, the supreme Self; give up thinking of worldly objects. *Jagrata*—Awake from the slumber of ignorance, destroy the sleep of ignorance, the seed of all miseries. *Varan*—the excellent (teachers).

How to destroy this ignorance? Having approached the excellent teachers (Brahmanishta, Brahmasrotriya Gurus who have realised the Atman), realise this Atman taught by them. Feel 'I am He'. Do not neglect this. This is your foremost duty. This is your primary duty. The Sruti Bhagavati is very kind and loving. She says from compassion like a mother. As the Atman is very, very subtle, the path of Knowledge that leads to It is difficult to travel on. The aspirant who treads this razor-path must be very cautious, vigilant, diligent and intelligent.

From the study of Mantras I-ii-7 & 8 and this Mantra, it would be quite clear that Guru is absolutely necessary.

अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययं तथाऽरसं नित्यमगन्धवच्च यत् ।

अनाद्यनन्तं महतः परं ध्रुवं निचाय्य तन्मृत्युमुखात्प्रमुच्यते ॥१५॥

15. He, who has known that which is without sound, without touch, without form, without decay, without taste, eternal, without

smell, without beginning, without end, beyond the Mahat (great) and unchanging, is freed from the jaws of death.

### Notes and Commentary

This Atman is transcendental, i.e., beyond all sense-perceptions. It is Asabdam (without sound), Asparsam (without touch), Arupam (without form), Arasam (without taste) and Agandhavat (without smell). It is beyond matter. It is pure Spirit. It is absolute Consciousness. It is beyond the reach of mind and speech. It does not possess the properties of matter such as sound, touch, form, taste and smell. It is of the nature of pure Bliss and Knowledge. This earth is gross. This space is subtle. But the Atman is subtler than the subtlest.

The attributes of matter such as sound, etc., do not exist in the Atman, Brahman. Therefore, It does not decay. It can neither increase nor decrease. A thing that decays is ephemeral. That which has a beginning is an effect. It is absorbed into its cause. Therefore, it is not eternal. But, this Atman has no cause into which it could be absorbed. As It is the cause of all, it is not an effect. As it is not an effect, it is eternal.

*Anadi-anantam*—without beginning and an end. Decaying objects like trees, flowers, body, etc., have a beginning and an end, but this Atman is beginningless and endless, as it is eternal.

*Mahatah param*—beyond the Mahat; the Atman is distinct in nature from Mahat, because it is the silent Witness of all, Knowledge-Absolute, and the inner Soul of all objects. In Mantra I-iii-12, it is said that 'this Atman is hidden in all beings'. *Dhruvam*—immutable, changeless. That which is changeless only can be said to be eternal.

*Mrityumukhat pramuchyate*—Having realised the Atman described above, one is released from the jaws of death, i.e., liberated from the bondage of birth and death. He is freed from the bondage of ignorance (Avidya), desire (Kama) and action (Karma). The three knots (Granthis) viz., ignorance, desire and action are rent asunder. He attains Immortality.

नाचिकेतमुपाख्यानं मृत्युप्रोक्तं सनातनम् ।

उक्त्वा श्रुत्वा च मेधावी ब्रह्मलोके महीयते ॥१६॥

16. A wise man who hears and repeats the ancient story of Nachiketas told by Yama, attains glory in the world of Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

The knowledge of the Atman, Brahma-Vidya, is extolled in the sixteenth and seventeenth verses.

*Nachiketam*—obtained by Nachiketas or relating to Nachiketas; *Mrityuproktam*—told by Death (Yama); *Upakhyanam*—the story contained in the three Vallis; *Sanatanam*—ancient, old; *Uktva*—having repeated to the Brahmins, Brahman-enquirers, aspirants; *Srutva*—having heard from competent preceptors; *Brahmaloke*—world of Brahman, world which is Brahman; *Mahiyate*—is glorified, becomes worshipped, attains glory having become the Atman, Brahman, is fit to be worshipped.

य इमं परमं गुह्यं श्रावयेद्ब्रह्मसंसदि । प्रयतः श्राद्धकाले वा  
तदानन्त्याय कल्पते तदानन्त्याय कल्पत इति ॥१७॥

॥ इति प्रथमेऽध्याये तृतीया वल्ली ॥

17. Whoever with devotion, recites before an assembly of Brahmins or at the time of Sraaddha of forefathers, this highest secret, obtains thereby immortality, obtains immortality.

### Notes and Commentary

The last portion of this Mantra has been repeated twice. This repetition is for concluding the chapter.

*Brahmasamsadi*—assembly of persons who are enquirers of Brahman, who are able to comprehend the nature and mysteries of Brahman revealed in the story of Nachiketas.

*Sraaddhakale*—at the time of Sraaddha ceremony. Sraaddha is the anniversary, or annual ceremony, performed in honour of the departed souls (ancestors or forefathers), in order to bring peace to them.

*Anantyaya*—infinite rewards, endless fruits.

Whoever with devotion, cleanliness and purity relates the story verbatim and with meaning, or causes it to be recited at the time of Sraaddha to those who are fed, obtains, thereby, infinite rewards. That Sraaddha secures for him endless fruits.

*Tat*—thereby. Sankara explains *Tat* as Sraaddha; his Sraaddha secures infinite fruits. It refers to both, the assembly and the Sraaddha.

Thus ends the Third Valli of the First Chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### VALLI i

पराश्रि खानि व्यतृणत्स्वयम्भूस्तस्मात्पराङ्पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।

कश्चिद्दीरः प्रत्यगात्मानमैक्षदावृत्तचक्षुरमृतत्वमिच्छन् ॥१॥

1. (Yama said): The self-existent (Brahma) created the senses with outgoing tendencies; therefore man beholds the external universe and not the internal Self (Atman). But, some wise man with eyes averted from sensual objects (with his senses turned away), desirous of Immortality, sees the Atman within.

### Notes and Commentary

In Mantra I-iii-12, it is stated that this Atman is hidden in all beings and does not shine, but is seen by subtle seers through their sharp and subtle intellect. What is the obstacle that stands in the way of Self-realisation? The reason is given in this Mantra. When one knows what that obstacle is, he can strive to remove it, but not otherwise.

*Paranchi*—going outwards; *Khani*—the senses; *Svayambhu*—the self-existent (God), the supreme Ruler, the Lord of all, because He alone is always independent.

The self-existent Brahman created the senses with outgoing tendencies. Therefore, the organs run towards external objects such as sound, form, etc., and the perceiver beholds the external objects, but not the Atman within. But, some wise man withdraws the mind and the senses from external objects,

stops the outward flowing current of the senses, and makes it turn inward like turning back the current of a river, meditates on the inner Self and beholds the Pratyag-Atman. The Immortal Soul cannot be obtained through outward senses.

*Atman*—that which pervades and absorbs is the Atman; *Aikshat*—saw, here means 'sees', past used for present (the tense is not strictly observed in the Vedas); *Avritta-chakshu*—averted gaze, with his eyes turned inside. Here it means that not only eyes but also all the organs are withdrawn from their respective objects. It is not possible to have light and darkness at the same time. Even so, it is not possible to enjoy sensual pleasure and Bliss of the Soul at the same time, to revel in sensual objects and behold the inner Self at the same time, to worship God and mammon simultaneously.

Why does some wise man strive with great efforts to behold the inner Self? Why does he withdraw the senses from their objects through great exertion? Because he wishes to attain Immortality and enjoy the eternal Bliss of the Atman.

*Amritatvam*—Immortality, liberation; *Icchan*—desiring; *Pratyagatmanam*—the inner Self.

पराचः कामाननुयन्ति वालास्ते मृत्योर्यन्ति विततस्य पाशम् ।  
अथ धीरा अमृतत्वं विदित्वा ध्रुवमध्रुवेष्विह न प्रार्थयन्ते ॥२॥

2. The ignorant run after external objects of desire and fall into the snares of widespread death, but wise men, knowing the nature of immortality, do not covet the fleeting (unstable) things here.

### Notes and Commentary

*Baala*—children, i.e., child-like, indiscriminating, ignorant people.

The two obstacles that stand in the way of attaining Self-realisation are: (1) the natural tendency of the senses to run towards external objects, and (2) desire for enjoyment of this world and the next. The senses run towards the external objects on account of *Vikshepa Sakti* or *Rajas*. If the *Rajas* in the senses is squeezed out by increasing the *Sattva*, they will

be absorbed in the mind. They will not run outwards. The cause of desire is ignorance. Desire is born of Avidya.

*Mrityoh*—of death, of Yama; *Yanti*—go, fall into; *Vitatasya*—widespread, all-pervading; *Pasam*—snare, noose.

Man has forgotten his essential divine nature on account of ignorance, and so the mind runs after sensual pleasures. Ignorant men, who have no right understanding and discrimination, run after external objects of desire, and so they fall into the meshes of widespread or omnipresent death. They get into the wide-extended noose or snare (*Pasam*) of Yama. Ignorance (Avidya), desire (Kama) and actions (Karma) are the three knots (*Granthis*) of the noose of Yama. They suffer from the pangs of birth, death, old age, sickness, etc. The term 'death' includes other modifications of life also, viz., birth, disease, decay or old age. But the wise (the knowers of Brahman), having known what is immortal and eternal and unchanging, do not covet the ephemeral, unstable objects here. The *Pratyagatman*, Inner Self, neither increases nor decreases by Karma. Hence, It is constant and immutable. The wise who enjoy the eternal Bliss of the Atman, do not care for the little sensual pleasures. The sum total of the pleasures of this world is a mere drop when compared to the Bliss of the Atman. The Atman is ocean of Bliss. They know that the sensual objects are enemies of the Atman. They are fully aware that the sensual objects are opposed to Self-realisation. Hence, they ruthlessly abandon the desires for sons, wealth, heaven, etc. Will any man attempt to eat black-sugar and berries when he has sugar-candy and mangoes in abundance?

येन रूपं रसं गन्धं शब्दान्स्पर्शं श्च मैथुनान् ।

एतेनैव विजानाति किमत्र परिशिष्यते । एतद्वै तत् ॥३॥

3. To the Self, by which one knows form, taste, smell, sound, touch and the sexual pleasure, nothing remains unknown. This verily is That (Brahman which thou hast asked for).

### Notes and Commentary

The Atman, Brahman, is Knowledge-Absolute. It is absolute consciousness. What is there unknowable to the Atman in this world? Everything is certainly knowable by the Atman. The mind and intellect are insentient. They borrow their light or intelligence from the Atman only, just as the moon borrows its light from the sun. The mind, intellect and the senses perform their functions through the light of the Atman. The Atman is at the back of all sense-perceptions, mind and intellect. Just as iron pieces move in front of a magnet, so also the mind, intellect and senses move, or do their functions in the presence of the Atman.

This is verily that Atman thou hast wanted to know, about which even the gods from olden times had doubt, which is distinct from virtue and vice, cause and effect, which is the highest place of Vishnu (Vishnu Pada) and beyond which there is nothing.

स्वप्नान्तं जागरितान्तं चोभौ येनानुपश्यति ।  
महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥४॥

4. The wise, when he knows that, by which he perceives all objects in dream or in waking, is the great omnipresent Atman, grieves no more.

### Notes and Commentary

The wise man does not grieve, having realised that great and all-pervading Atman, through which he beholds all objects in the dreaming and the waking state.

*Svapnāntam*—objects of dream, literally dream-end, in the dream. In dream, the Sushupti or deep sleep is also to be included. *Antar* means place, the regions of dream and sleep. The state of *Turiya*, Super Consciousness, transcends the state of waking, dreaming and deep sleep states. The Atman is the silent witness of the three states. Hence, It is called *Turiya*. Through the intelligence of the Atman only, one is conscious of the dreaming and waking states.

*Matva*—knowing, having realised; having realised that great and all-pervading Atman as his own Self in the form, 'I am Brahman, the Immortal Self'.

य इमं मध्वदं वेद आत्मानं जीवमन्तिकात् ।  
ईशानं भूतभव्यस्य न ततो विजुगुप्सते । एतद्वै तत् ॥५॥

5. He who knows this Atman, honey-eater, Soul, always near, and the Lord of the past and the future, henceforward fears no more. This is verily That.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Madhu-adam*—literally honey-eater, the drinker or enjoyer of honey or pleasure, the enjoyer of the fruits of Karma, the Jiva or the individual soul, empirical self; honey is the fruit of Karma. *Jivam*—the supporter of Prana or life. *Antikat*—very near, i.e., within the body as the Inner Self, the Atman.

He who knows the eternal Atman becomes absolutely fearless. Fear manifests only when one is attached to his body, when one identifies himself with his physical body. He who identifies himself with his physical body, thinks himself to be non-eternal and therefore, attempts to protect his body. Wherever there is attachment (Raga), fear (Bhaya) and anger (Krodha) coexist. When one knows the Atman, which is one without a second and eternal, through Self-realisation, then who would wish to protect what, and from whom? He beholds the Self only everywhere. He is above body-consciousness. He becomes absolutely fearless. To know the Atman is to realise the Atman. To know the Atman is to become the Atman. 'This verily is That'—This verily is Brahman which thou hast asked for.

यः पूर्वं तपसो जातमद्द्वयः पूर्वमजायत ।  
गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तं यो भूतेभिर्व्यपश्यत । एतद्वै तत् ॥६॥

6. Who beholds him seated within the five elements, him who was born of Tapas (of Brahman), who was created before the waters, who entered the cave of the heart and dwells there (he verily sees Brahman). This is verily That (Brahman which thou hast asked for).

### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who, seeker after liberation, Mumukshu; *Purvam*—in the beginning, the first (Brahman or Hiranyagarbha); *Tapasah*—of knowledge (penance), from Brahman defined as knowledge, penance as characterised by knowledge; *Jatam*—born, created or produced, the first born of Brahman, i.e., Hiranyagarbha; *Adbhyah purvam*—prior to the waters; *Adbhyah*—to waters; *Purvam*—prior. By water all the five elements are meant here; before the five elements, including water and not before water alone. Hiranyagarbha was born before creation of five elements. *Ajayata*—was born.

Jiva (the individual soul) and Hiranyagarbha (cosmic soul) are the two aspects of Brahman. Brahman appears as Jiva through the Upadhi (limiting adjunct) Avidya, and Hiranyagarbha through the Upadhi Maya. The sum total or aggregate of Jivas (Samashti) is Hiranyagarbha. Macrocosmic aspect of Brahman is Hiranyagarbha. Microcosmic aspect of Brahman is Jiva. When the limiting adjuncts drop, Hiranyagarbha and Jiva become identical with the transcendental Brahman. Hiranyagarbha is the first manifestation of Brahman through His Tapas (penance) or knowledge. Brahman willed. Hiranyagarbha came into being.

*Bhutebhih*—with the elements; *Tishthantam*—abides therein.

Hiranyagarbha abides in the body which is made up of the five elements. Hiranyagarbha, the first-born, having created the bodies of the Devas and men, entered the Akasa of the heart of every living being. He is seated there and perceives sounds, etc. He who knows Brahman through His two aspects, viz., macrocosmic as Hiranyagarbha, and microcosmic as Jiva, verily knows Him.

या प्राणेन संभवत्यदितिर्देवतामयी ।

गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तीं या भूतेभिर्व्यजायत । एतद्वै तत् ॥७॥

7. Who is born along with Prana in the form of all Devatas, who, entering into the heart, abides therein, and who was born with the elements (he who knows Him, verily knows Brahman). This is indeed That.

### Notes and Commentary

*Devatamayi*—in the form of all the Devatas; *Pranena*—in the form of Prana, as Hiranyagarbha; *Aditih*—the eater, enjoyer.

Hiranyagarbha is called here Aditi, because He is the sole enjoyer of the whole universe. He is the macrocosmic life, or cosmic Prana, or cosmic intelligence. He eats, as it were, the sounds, etc. He entered the heart and abides therein. He was born along with Bhutas (elements) or living creatures. He, who knows Him verily, knows Brahman. This is verily that Brahman which thou hast asked for.

अरण्योर्निर्हितो जातवेदा गर्भ इव सुभृतो गर्भिणीभिः ।  
दिवे दिव ईङ्ग्यो जागृवद्दिर्हविष्मद्दिर्मनुष्येभिरग्निः । एतद्वै तत् ॥८॥

8. The fire that is lodged within two pieces of wood, as the foetus is well-preserved by the pregnant woman, is worshipped daily by men who are awake and those who offer oblations. This is indeed That.

### Notes and Commentary

In the Vedic sacrifices, the fire is ignited by rubbing two pieces of wood, the upper stick (Uttara-arani) and the lower stick (Adhara-arani). The sacrificial fire is well-preserved by the Rtviks, just as the foetus is well-preserved by the pregnant woman by means of nutritious food.

The same Brahman who is worshipped by sages, Jnanins, in the heart through meditation, is worshipped by householders as Agni (fire) through sacrifices.

*Jagrivadbhīh*—by the awakened men, i.e., sages, Jnanins, who are watchful; *Havishmadbhīh*—by performers of sacrifice who offer oblations of ghee, etc., the Karma Yogins or the householders who perform Agnihotra, etc.

यतश्चोदेति सूर्योऽस्तं यत्र च गच्छति ।  
तं देवाः सर्वे अर्पितास्तदु नात्येति कश्चन । एतद्वै तत् ॥९॥

9. And that whence the sun rises, and whither it sets, on that there all the Devatas depend and no one goes beyond. This is indeed That.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yatha udeti*—that Prana or Brahman from which the sun rises at the time of creation.

*Yatra astam gacchati*—in whom the sun is absorbed at the Pralaya; that Prana or Brahman from which the sun rises daily and in whom it sets daily; that Prana, i.e., the Adhidaiva and the Adhyatma aspect of the Atman as the gods and senses.

*Deva sarve arpitah*—all the Devas are fixed in Brahman, like the spokes of a wheel to its nave or axle. All the Devas depend upon Brahman.

That is this Brahman, the Atman or inner Self of all (Sarvatmakam Brahman). No one verily can go beyond Him. This is indeed That.

यदेवेह तदमुत्र यदमुत्र तदन्विह ।

मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति ॥१०॥

10. What is even here (visible in the world), the same is there (invisible in Brahman), and what is there, the same here. He proceeds from death to death, who beholds here the difference (between Brahman and the world).

### Notes and Commentary

*Iha*—here, in this world or in this body; *Amutra*—there, Brahman.

Just as the wave is not essentially different from the ocean, just as the golden ornament is not essentially different from gold, so also this manifested world is not essentially different from Brahman. The difference is in name only. Just as snake appears in the rope, so also this world of names, forms and action (Nama, Rupa, Kriya) appears in Brahman, through Avidya (ignorance), Maya (illusion).

*Mrityoh sa mrityum apnoti*—he who holds the slightest difference between these two, goes from death to death through ignorance, lack of knowledge of the Self. He who thinks 'I am different from Brahman', is again born and dies, but he who thinks and feels 'I am verily the all-pervading, immortal Satchidananda Brahman', attains immortality.

Brahman, in His nature, is an embodiment of dense eternal Knowledge (Nitya Vijnanaghana Svabhava). He is destitute of the attributes of all Samsara (Sarva Samsara-dharma Varjita). The Supreme Soul, or Brahman, is identical with the individual and with all creation. Failure to comprehend and realise the essential unity of Being is the cause of rebirth.

मनसैवेदमाप्तव्यं नेह नानाऽस्ति किंचन ।

मृत्योः स मृत्युं गच्छति य इह नानेव पश्यति ॥११॥

11. By mind alone could this (Brahman) be obtained; then there is no difference here at all. He goes from death to death, who sees any difference here.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Manasa eva idam aptavyam*—by the mind alone this (Para-Brahman) is to be obtained or realised; *Manas*—Suddha Manas or pure mind; *Idam*—This (Para-Brahman).

Manas, mind, is of two kinds, viz., Suddha Manas, the pure mind, and Asuddha Manas, the impure mind, which is filled with Vasanas, egoism, greed, etc.

Brahman can be obtained only by the mind purified by the Sastras, and by the preceptor by instruction and Yoga, by practice of fourfold means, and constant meditation on the inner Self.

When one attains Self-realisation, Avidya (ignorance) which is the cause of the perception of difference, is totally removed. The Knower or Sage realises that there is Brahman alone and nothing else exists, and this world is only the manifestation of the same Brahman, and therefore, is not substantially different from Him.

*Iha*—here; there is not even the slightest difference here, i.e., in Brahman.

But he who sees difference with the eyes dark due to ignorance, proceeds from death to death.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो मध्य आत्मनि तिष्ठति ।

ईशानं भूतभव्यस्य न ततो विजुगुप्सते । एतद्वै तत् ॥१२॥

12. The person (Purusha) of the size of a thumb resides in the middle of the body, as Lord of the past and the future, and henceforward (after knowing Him) fears no more. This is indeed That.

### Notes and Commentary

Purusha, the Atman, dwells in one's own heart. The Atman is called Purusha because He abides in the city (Puri) of the body, or because all is pervaded by Him, the whole world is filled by Him.

*Angushthamatrah*—of the size of a thumb; the cavity of heart, or lotus of heart, of every man is of the size of his own thumb. The Jiva in the causal body is also said to have this size. The Atman is limitless, but this size is given for the facility of meditation, only for the beginners. To begin with, aspirants meditate on the Atman as a Jyoti, or light, of the size of a thumb in the cavity of the heart.

*Madhye atmani*—within the body; the Atman here means body. *Na tato vijugupsate*—henceforward, after knowing the fearless, immortal Atman, one fears no more, does not wish to protect himself afterwards.

The Svetasvatara Upanishad III-13 says: 'He is the perfect Purusha, of the measure of a thumb, the inner Soul who always abides in the heart of every man, the ruler of knowledge, who is concealed by the heart and mind. Those who know Him, become immortal'.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो ज्योतिरिवाधूमकः ।

ईशानो भूतभव्यस्य स एवाद्य स उ श्वः । एतद्वै तत् ॥१३॥

13. That person, of the size of a thumb, is like a flame without smoke, Lord of the past and the future. He alone is even today, and will be verily tomorrow. This is verily That.

### Notes and Commentary

That Purusha, Atman, of the size of a thumb, who is perceived as light or Jyoti in the heart of Yogis, exists in the past, present and future. He is eternal, immutable (Kutastha)

and constant. He exists in all living beings now, and He will certainly exist tomorrow.

*Adhumakah*—smokeless, pure, luminous.

यथोदकं दुर्गे वृष्टं पर्वतेषु विधावति ।  
एवं धर्मान्पृथक्पश्यस्तानेवानुविधावति ॥१४॥

14. As water, when rained on a mountain-ridge, runs down the rocks scattered on all sides, so does he, who beholds the objects as different, run after them only on all sides.

### Notes and Commentary

The result of seeing multiplicity is described in this verse. Just as the rain water that falls on the top of a mountain, quickly runs down, becomes dispersed in the valleys and is lost, so also the ignorant man who beholds differences between life and life, who thinks that there are different selves in the different bodies, that the world is different from Brahman and that the individual is distinct from the Supreme Soul and other souls, who sees the things as different from the Soul, who has not realised the substratum of all, who has not cognised the non-dual Brahman, the one, real, eternal, immutable, underlying principle of unity, runs down quickly to darkness, i.e., is caught in the round of birth and death.

*Anu vidhavati*—runs downwards.

The perception of difference in Brahman is a grave mistake.

यथोदकं शुद्धे शुद्धमासित्कं तादृगेव भवति ।  
एवं मुनेर्विजानत आत्मा भवति गौतम ॥१५॥

॥ इति द्वितीयोऽध्याये प्रथमा वल्ली ॥

15. As pure water poured into pure water becomes the same only, so the Atman of the thinker who knows this, becomes, O Gautama.

### Notes and Commentary

Just as pure water poured into pure water becomes of the same quality, so also the individual soul who has been purged

of impurities, and who has cognised the Supreme Self through direct intuitive perception, who has destroyed the perception of difference by knowledge of the Atman, who beholds the unity of Self, oneness of the Atman, everywhere, becomes identical with the Supreme Soul.

Vedas, Sruti Bhagavati, is a better well-wisher than thousands of mothers and fathers. Therefore, Srutis, which bespeak of knowledge of the Self, or unity of individual soul with the Supreme Self, should be worshipped by the seekers of Truth. They should have perfect, unshakable faith in the teachings of the Srutis. If there is no faith, there is no prospect of attaining Self-realisation.

Thus ends the First Valli of the Second Chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### VALLI ii

पुरमेकादशद्वारमजस्यावक्रचेतसः ।

अनुष्ठाय न शोचति विमुक्तश्च विमुच्यते । एतद्वै तत् ॥१॥

1. The city of the unborn (Brahman) whose knowledge is permanent, has eleven gates. Adoring Him, one does not grieve, and liberated (from all bonds of ignorance), he becomes free. This verily is That.

### Notes and Commentary

*Puramekadasadvaram*—city with eleven gates, the body with eleven openings or gates. Two openings of the eyes, the two ears, two nostrils, and the mouth, make up the seven openings or gates. The navel and the two lower make up ten. The eleventh is Brahmarandhra at the crown of the head.

*Puram*—city. This body is like a city, because we find in it the appendages of a city, such as gate-keepers, their controllers, etc. The openings represent the gates. The presiding Devatas of the organs represent their controllers. Just as the city belongs to a king who is independent of the city and who is not mixed with it, so also this city of the body belongs to a king, the Atman, who is independent and not mixed with the body.

This city belongs to the unborn (*Ajasya*, of the unborn Brahman, the Atman), who is not subject to modifications such as birth, decay, death, etc., who occupies the place of a king, who is the owner of the city of this splendid body.

The Soul, Paramatman, the Supreme Ruler, is here represented as a king.

*Avakra chetasah*—whose knowledge is not crooked, i.e., straight, eternally existent.

He who meditates on Brahman and has attained Self-realisation, does not grieve. He is liberated from all bonds of ignorance and becomes free from the round of birth and death.

He is freed from all desires, and the ties of Karma, produced by ignorance. He becomes absolutely fearless. He does not take a body again. He merges himself in Brahman. Svetasvatara Upanishad III-18 says: 'Embodied in the town of nine gates, the soul (Hamsa) moves to things without, subduing the whole world, all that is immovable and movable'. Compare also with Bhagavad Gita V-13, which states: 'Mentally renouncing attractions and being self-controlled, the embodied one rests happily in the nine-gated city, neither acting nor causing others (body and the senses) to act'.

Omitting the last two openings, viz., navel and Brahma-randhra, the body is conceived as a nine-gated city in the Svetasvatara Upanishad and the Gita.

हौसः शुचिषद्वसुरन्तरिक्षसद्वोता वेदिषदतिथिर्दुरोणसत् ।

नृषद्वरसदृतसद्व्योमसदब्जा गोजा क्रतजा अद्रिजा क्रतं बृहत् ॥१२॥

2. As Hamsa (sun) he dwells in heaven, as Vasu (air) he dwells in the sky, as fire he dwells on the earth, as guest he dwells in a house, he dwells in men, in gods, in truth, in ether. He is born in the waters, he is born in the earth, he is born in the sacrifice, he is born on the mountains, he is true and great.

#### Notes and Commentary

This Atman does not live in the city of one body alone. He lives in all cities, in all bodies.

*Hamsah*—the sun, literally one who moves or proceeds. *Hamsa* is derived from *Hansati* (he proceeds or moves).

*Suchishat*—dwelling in the heaven as the sun; *Vasu*—one who animates all, dwells in the inter-space, as wind; *Hota*—fire, literally the sacrificer, the Hotri priest; *Vedishah*—dwelling in *Vedi* or earth; *Atithih*—guest (the god *Soma*); *Duronasat*—dwelling in the jar (of *Soma*). *Durona* means vessel, or a Brahmin dwelling in the house (*Durona*) as a guest.

*Nrisat*—dwelling in men; *Varasat*—dwelling in the superior ones (gods, Devas); *Ritasat*—dwelling in *Rita*, i.e., truth (of *Veda*) or sacrifice; *Vyomasat*—dwelling in *Akasa*, sky or space; *Abjah*—those born in water in the form of conch, mother-of-pearl, shell, fish, insects, etc.; *Gojah*—those born of the earth in the form of corn, grain, plants, herbs, etc., *Ritajah*—those born in the sacrifice; *Adrijah*—those born of mountains in the form of rivers; *Ritam*—truth; *Brihat*—the great being, the cause of all.

The Atman is only one and all-pervading. There is no difference in the Atman. This Mantra reveals the omnipresent nature of the Atman. (Cf. Rig-Veda IV-40-5.)

ऊर्ध्वं प्राणमुन्नयत्यपानं प्रत्यगस्यति ।  
मध्ये वामनमासीनं विश्वे देवा उपासते ॥३॥

3. He (Brahman) sends up the Prana and throws the Apana downwards, that adorable one seated in the centre, all Devas worship.

### Notes and Commentary

There are five principal kinds of vital energy, known as *Prana*, *Apana*, *Samana*, *Udana* and *Vyana*. There are five minor or sub-*Pranas* (*Upa-pranas*). The one *Mukhya Prana*, chief *Prana* or vital energy, assumes the ten forms according to the function done by each *Prana* (*Vritti-bheda*).

*Prana* does the work of respiration, *Apana*, the function of excretion, *Samana*, the work of digestion, *Udana*, the function of voice and *Vyana*, the function of circulation of blood. *Prana* is not breath. *Prana* is vital energy. Breath is only one of the

various manifestations of Prana. The function of Prana is connected with the breath.

*Unnayati*—leads upwards; sends upwards; *Urdhvam*—upward; *Pratyag*—downward; *Asyate*—throws; *Asinam*—sitting, is seated; *Madhye*—in the middle, in the heart, seated in the Akasa of the lotus of the heart, with the light of knowledge shining in the intellect and fit to be adored (*Hridaya Pundarikaksha asinam buddhavabhivyakta vijnanaprakasanam*).

*Vamanam*—the adorable, the dwarf, the person of the size of the thumb mentioned above; *Vama*—beauty, *Na*—leader, *Vamana*—the lord of beauty; *Visve*—all; *Devah*—gods (senses, the eyes and the rest); *Upasate*—worshipping, serve.

All the senses and the mind (mind is the eleventh sense) adore their Lord, the Atman, by discharging their allotted duties properly. They propitiate their Lord, the Atman, by bringing in the different sensations of form, colour, sound, smell, taste, touch, just as the subjects please and serve the king by offerings. The senses, mind and the Pranas are ever-active for the Atman. The Atman only directs the mind, the senses and the Pranas to do their respective duties. The five Jnana-Indriyas, the organs of knowledge, gather the experiences from the external world and present them to Him. This is their true worship.

अस्य विस्त्रिंसमानस्य शरीरस्थस्य देहिनः ।

देहाद्विमुच्यमानस्य किमत्र परिशिष्यते । एतद्वै तत् ॥४॥

4. When this Atman, who dwells in the body, departs from the body, what remains then? This verily is That.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Visram samanya*—leaving the dense body, escaping, of him who is separated; *Dehinah*—embodied, of the owner of the body (Jiva dwelling in the body). The meaning of the word *Visram samana* is explained by the expression *Dehat vimuchyamanasya*—being free from the body.

*Kim-atra-parishyate*—what remains behind? What remains here (after death)? *Atra*—here, in this body.

Nothing remains of that Atman in the body, when He leaves this body. Nothing of the whole lot of Prana, etc., remains. The whole body disintegrates. As soon as the Atman leaves the body, the whole body decays and disintegrates, as in the case of the inhabitants of a city when the king of the city is driven out of it.

न प्राणेन नाऽपानेन मत्यो जीवति कश्चन ।  
इतरेण तु जीवन्ति यस्मिन्नेतावुपाश्रितौ ॥५॥

5. Not by Prana, not by Apana does any mortal live, but it is by some other, on which these two depend, that men live.

#### Notes and Commentary

The real source of life is the Atman. The Prana, Apana, etc., cannot be the source of life. They work conjointly for the benefit of the Atman only, which is distinct from them. The body is destroyed not only by the exit of Prana and Apana. It is destroyed by the exit of the Atman.

A house exists for the benefit of the owner, who is distinct from the house and who is the director. Even so the Prana, Apana, etc., the senses and the mind exist for the benefit of the Atman, who is distinct from them and who directs them. They maintain their life through the Atman. They depend upon the Atman for their life. They perform their allotted duties in harmony and combination for the benefit of the Atman, their director. The cause of life does not depend upon the Prana, Apana, senses and the mind, as they refer to other things on account of their composition. Without something else which arranges them, it is impossible that things, of themselves, should form a compound, as the materials of a house do not form a house, without somebody who brings them together. Therefore, it is quite clear that the Atman is distinct from the Prana, the senses and the mind.

*Itarena*—by something other than these, different from the compound of senses, etc.

By Prana and Apana all the other Pranas and the senses are implied. This is Upalakshana. The highest and principal

support of all beings, of Prana, the senses, and the mind, is the Atman. He is absolutely independent (Svatantra).

हन्त त इदं प्रवक्ष्यामि गुह्यं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।

यथा च मरणं प्राप्य आत्मा भवति गौतम ॥६॥

6. Well then, O Gautama, I will explain the mysterious, ancient Brahman and also what happens to the Self after death.

#### Notes and Commentary

I will now explain to thee again, O Gautama, the secret, mysterious, ancient, eternal Brahman, by whose knowledge one is freed from the trammels of birth and death, and not knowing which, how after death the Jiva travels in Samsara. Listen, with rapt attention, O Gautama.

योनिमन्ये प्रपद्यन्ते शरीरत्वाय देहिनः ।

स्थाणुमन्येऽनुसंयन्ति यथाकर्म यथाश्रुतम् ॥७॥

7. Some Jivas enter the womb in order to have a body, others go into the inorganic matter according to their Karma and knowledge.

#### Notes and Commentary

In Mantra I-i-6, there is a clear reference to the law of Karma and the doctrine of reincarnation. It says: 'Like corn, the mortals decay, and like corn, they are born again'. In this Mantra also, the Sruti speaks definitely of the law of Karma and the doctrine of reincarnation.

The Jiva takes a body according to his Karma performed in this birth, and the nature of knowledge acquired by him. He may become Indra or Hiranyagarbha even. He may hold any office in the cosmic hierarchy or internal Divine Government. He may take the final birth as a man, and may become a Jivanmukta, a liberated sage. He may become a Muni, Tapasvin or a Yogi, if he has very good spiritual Samskaras. He may also become a tree or some inorganic matter, if his actions are of a very inferior nature.

*Yatha karma*—according to work, Karma, done in the physical plane; *Yatha Srutam*—according to the knowledge.

य एष सुप्तेषु जागर्ति कामं कामं पुरुषो निर्मिमाणः । तदेव शुक्रं तद्ब्रह्म तदेवामृतमुच्यते । तस्मिल्लोकाः श्रिताः सर्वे तदु नात्येति कश्चन । एतद्वै तत् ॥८॥

8. This Purusha who, building desire after desire, is awake when all sleep, is called certainly 'the pure', is called Brahman, is called even immortal. Upon Him all the worlds are found: no one goes beyond that. This verily is That.

### Notes and Commentary

Brahman is the silent witness of the three states, viz., waking state (Jagrat Avastha), dreaming state (Svapna Avastha) and deep sleep (Sushupti Avastha). The Purusha, Brahman, remains awake, i.e., does not sleep when all, i.e., Prana, senses and the mind, are asleep, as He is the witness (Sakshi). He is ever pure, immortal. He is the cause of all worlds. All the worlds depend on Him alone. He is the prop or support for all worlds. In Him all worlds are contained.

In deep sleep you rest in Brahman, you actually come in contact with Brahman, but there is then the veil of ignorance. Therefore you are not able to be actually conscious of Brahman. In Samadhi, this veil is rent asunder, there is perfect awareness and you are one with the Absolute consciousness. When the mind and all senses are at rest during deep sleep, you do experience the true bliss of Brahman. That is the reason you say when you come back to waking consciousness: 'I slept happily, I did not know anything'. This memory of Bliss goes to prove that Brahman exists, that He is non-dual and that He is of the nature of Bliss. (Compare Mantras II-i-9 and II-iii-1.) *Kamaan kamam*—different desirable objects; *Nirmimanah*—shaping, creating, building, i.e., creating various objects of desire in dream.

अग्निर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव ।  
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च ॥९॥

9. As the one fire, after it has entered the world, though one, takes different forms according to whatever it burns, so does the internal Atman of all living beings, though one, takes a form according to whatever He enters, and is outside all forms.

### Notes and Commentary

Many argue in order to exhibit their vast learning or erudition, and to get victory over others. They do not argue in order to arrive at the Truth. Honest and sincere discussion with great souls, in order to remove doubts and get light and clarity, is highly desirable. Sincere aspirants may discuss amongst themselves on knotty and abstruse problems. This is very helpful for their growth and right understanding.

The mind of many persons is shaken by the argument of many Pandits and logicians who possess perverted intellects. So they are not able to grasp the true nature of Brahman, the Supreme Self. The knowledge of the oneness of the Atman, though supported by authority and often reiterated, is not firmly grasped by these persons. Therefore, the Srutis explain the Truth, the Atman, in a variety of ways, with diverse illustrations, similes and analogies. Sruti Bhagavati is very anxious to inculcate the truths of Vedanta in her children, however perverted and indifferent they may be. She has a strong desire that her children should come out of this quagmire of Samsara and become Jivanmuktas, liberated sages.

*Bhuvanam*—the world, because all are born here; derived from the root *Bhu*—to be.

As the same fire takes forms according to the shapes of the different objects it burns, so also the one Atman appears in different forms according to the different objects it enters, yet is transcendental, i.e., beyond them or without them, like Akasa. The Atman is ever pure and separate from the forms. It is not in the least affected by the forms, as It is without attributes and subtle, as It is pure Consciousness, the Soul or Spirit. How can there be connection or association between matter and spirit? The Atman puts on diverse forms through the Upadhis, vehicles or limiting adjuncts, viz., the mind, the senses, the Pranas and the body, and is at the same time beyond all names

and forms. This Atman is a mysterious Vastu or Tattva, entity or principle. (Cf. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad II-v-19.)

वायुर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव ।

एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च ॥१०॥

10. As the one air, after it has entered the world, though one, takes different forms according to whatever it enters, so the internal Atman of all living beings, though one, assumes forms, according to whatever He enters and is outside all forms.

#### Notes and Commentary

In this verse, there is another beautiful illustration to indicate the oneness of the Atman. The Atman enters all bodies as Prana, and assumes forms corresponding to every form, and yet He is transcendental and beyond all names and forms.

सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुर्न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैर्बाह्यदोषैः ।

एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्यः ॥११॥

11. As the sun, the eye of the whole world, is not contaminated by the defects of the eye or of external things, so the one internal Atman of all living beings, is not contaminated by the misery of the world, being external to it.

#### Notes and Commentary

Just as the sun which illumines the objects of this world, is not affected by the defects of the eye or by the defects of the unclean objects, so also the Atman is not tainted by the miseries of the world, arising from desire and Karma (*Kama karmodbhavam duhkham*), being outside that.

Just as the snake is superimposed on the rope when seen in the dark or dim light, just as silver is superimposed on the mother-of-pearl, so also this world and body, subject and object are superimposed upon the Atman, Brahman, on account of Avidya, ignorance. Just as the rope is not affected by the snake seen in its place, so also this pure, transcendental Atman is not in the least affected by the superimposition. The snake, silver, water, blue colour, superimposed on the rope, mother-of-pearl,

barren place and the sky respectively, do not really exist as defects in the rope, etc. They are seen as defects in the true objects on account of the false notion created by superimposition. The true objects are not really affected by such defects, as they are external to the false notion so superimposed. So also, the Atman is not affected by the misery of the world, arising from the superimposition of a false notion, because He is external to the false notion superimposed on Him.

Action, agency and fruits (Kriya, Karaka and Phala) are falsely attributed, or superimposed, upon the Atman on account of ignorance. These are all false notions only, like the erroneous notion of snake in the rope. The Atman is non-doer (Akarta), non-enjoyer (Abhokta). He is unattached (Asanga).

This is Vivarta Vada, the doctrine of superimposition, propounded by Sri Sankaracharya.

एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति ।  
तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषाम् ॥१२॥

12. He is One, the ruler, the internal Atman of all living beings, who makes manifold His one form—those wise men who realise Him in their hearts, to them belongs eternal happiness and not for others.

#### Notes and Commentary

He is the Lord of all (Paramesvara), all-pervading (Sarvagata), independent (Svatantra). There is none other equal to Him or greater than Him.

*Vasi*—the controller, the ruler; the whole universe is under the control of the Lord. *Sarva-bhutantarata*—the inner Self, the Atman of all creatures. He makes Himself manifold, though one, by the differences of impure conditions of name, form, etc. *Atmasthanam*—seated in the Self, placed in one's own Akasa of heart, in the intellect.

The wise (Dhirah) who behold Him within their Self, enjoy eternal bliss (Sukham Sasvatam). The worldly-minded persons who are engrossed in external objects, who are not endowed with discrimination and dispassion, cannot enjoy this eternal

bliss of the Atman. This Atman is concealed by ignorance for them.

नित्योऽनित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानामेको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान् ।  
तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वती नेतरेषाम् ॥१३॥

13. The wise, who behold the Self as the eternal among the transient, as conscious among the conscious, who, though one, grants the desires of many, as dwelling in their own selves, to them belongs eternal peace, not to others.

### Notes and Commentary

The Atman, Brahman, is eternal, permanent and unchanging. This world of names and forms is non-eternal, impermanent and changing. Body, mind, senses and Prana are included in the term world. This world is like a fleeting shadow. The very idea of change implies that there is a basic substance which is ever unchanging and permanent. Changes or phenomena can take place only in an unchanging thing or noumenon. The screen in the cinema show never changes, but the pictures come and go on the screen. Brahman represents the screen and this universe of fleeting forms, the pictures.

Just as hot water borrows its heat from the fire, so also the intellect borrows its intelligence from the Atman, the source for everything.

*Bahunam yo vidadhasti kaman*—who fulfils the desires of many, i.e., who dispenses to the Jivas, the fruits of their Karmas according to law and justice.

Those who behold the Atman seated in their selves, enjoy eternal peace. Others, who are ignorant, are subject to the miseries of Samsara.

Svetasvatara Upanishad VI-12 says: "The only self-dependent among the many (souls) which are not active, who makes manifold the one seed—the wise who perceive Him as placed within their own selves, obtain eternal bliss, not others."

तदेतदिति मन्यन्तेऽनिर्देश्यं परमं सुखम् ।  
कथं नु तद्विजानीयां किमु भाति विभाति वा ॥१४॥

14. They (the sages) perceive that indescribable highest bliss as 'This is That'. How shall I know that? Does it shine (by itself) or does it shine by another light?

### Notes and Commentary

The sages, who are freed from all desires, perceive or realise the indescribable, highest bliss of the Atman which is beyond the range of speech and mind, and describe as 'This is That', i.e., as something directly cognised or intuitively realised. How, by what method, shall I know that Bliss, realise that Bliss as my own Self, as the Sannyasins or sages, freed from desire, do?

Does it shine in its own self-effulgence? Can it be clearly perceived or realised as my own Self shining in my intellect or not?

'As This is That': as something directly or intuitively perceived or realised.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।  
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥१५॥

॥ इति द्वितीयेऽध्याये द्वितीया वल्ली ॥

15. The sun does not shine there, nor do the moon and the stars, nor do lightnings shine and much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light, all these shine.

### Notes and Commentary

In the previous Mantra it is said: 'Does the Atman shine by itself or does it shine by another light?' The answer is given in this Mantra. The Atman is self-luminous. It shines by itself. A self-luminous thing is that which is not in need of any extraneous light for its own shining or effulgence. The sun, moon, stars, lightning and fire borrow their light from the Atman. The sun cannot illumine the Atman, but it gets its light

from the Atman, just as the water borrows its heat from its contact with the fire. Water does not possess heat as its inherent attribute. From the various kinds of light which shine after Him, the self-effulgent nature of Brahman is inferred.

If you say that the Atman also receives its light from some other light, then that light should have another light for its illumination. This will land in 'Anavastha Dosha', regresses *ad infinitum*. So the Atman must be self-luminous.

Only a thing that is effulgent can impart its light to another. A pot cannot illumine other objects, but the sun can illumine other objects as it is luminous in nature.

(Cf. Mundaka Upanishad II-ii-10, Svetasvatara Upanishad VI-14. There is exact repetition. The same Mantra is repeated with some variation in Bhagavad Gita XV-6.)

Thus ends the Second Valli of the Second Chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### VALLI iii

ऊर्ध्वमूलोऽवाक्षाख एषोऽश्वत्थः सनातनः । तदेव शुक्रं तद्ब्रह्म  
तदेवामृतमुच्यते । तस्मिंल्लोकाः श्रिताः सर्वे तदु नात्येति कश्चन । एतद्वै  
तत् ॥१॥

1. (Yama said): There is that ancient Asvattha tree whose root is upwards and branches are down. That indeed is pure. That is Brahman and that alone is called Immortal. Upon that, all the worlds depend and no one goes beyond that. This is verily That.

### Notes and Commentary

If you know the nature of a flower, you can know the nature of the root of a tree. Even so, you can know the nature of Brahman, the source of the tree of Samsara (Maya Vriksha), by finding out the nature of the effect, the tree of Samsara. This last Section is begun with a view to ascertain the nature of Brahman.

Asvattha—Asvattha tree, the fig tree, the world, the tree of Samsara, which extends from the Avyakta down to the

immovable. This has its root in Brahman. From Brahman only, the whole universe proceeds.

Just as the tree is cut down by the axe, so also, the tree of Samsara can be cut down by the axe of non-attachment, or sword of Atma-Jnana, knowledge of the Self.

This tree receives its sap from its source, Para-Brahman, the Supreme Self, and grows from the seed of ignorance. Hiranyagarbha, the Karya Brahman, is its sprout. The subtle bodies of all living beings represent its trunk.

Just as pot, a thing made of mud, does not pass beyond the mud, so also any modification does not pass beyond Brahman. This verily is That. (Cf. Bhagavad Gita XV, 1-3.)

यदिदं किञ्च जगत्सर्वं प्राण एजति निःसृतम् ।  
महद्भयं वज्रमुद्यतं य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥२॥

2. This whole universe evolved from Brahman, moves in the Prana (in the highest Brahman). That Brahman is a great terror, like an uplifted thunderbolt. Those who know this, become immortal.

#### Notes and Commentary

Prana means here Brahman. Brahman is the source of this world. He is the Lord of creation. Man becomes immortal by attaining knowledge of Brahman. Some ignorant people say that Brahman does not exist, and the world has come out of nothing. This is quite absurd. This universe has come out of Brahman. It moves or vibrates in Brahman. It rests in Brahman. It dissolves in Brahman. Brahman is the bedrock or substratum for this changing world. He is ever changeless and motionless. Motion or vibration can only take place in something that is motionless. That immovable something is Brahman.

*Mahat Bhayam*—a great terror, great and terrible; *Vajramudyatam*—raised thunderbolt.

Just as the servants obey the commands of their master, at the sight of the thunderbolt raised in his hand, so also this world with its lords, sun, moon, planets, constellation and stars, obeys the universal law. Nothing can escape the law which is unrelenting and inexorable. No one can transgress it.

Everything is under His strict control. Creation, preservation and dissolution are governed by an unalterable divine law, which no one can violate or break. Therefore, He is called a great terror like the uplifted thunderbolt.

*Ye etad viduh*—who knows this Brahman; *Amritaste bhavanti*—they become immortal.

Those who know thus, this highest Brahman, the witness of all our mental activities or modifications (Vrittis), who know that Brahman is the cause of the origin, etc., of the universe, and that He guides the world from within, through definite laws, attain immortality.

भयादस्यामिस्तपति भयात्तपति सूर्यः ।

भयादिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चमः ॥३॥

3. From fear of Brahman fire burns, from fear the sun shines, from fear Indra and Vayu and Death, the fifth, run.

#### Notes and Commentary

If Brahman does not exist as Controller or Governor of the protectors of the world, like one with the thunderbolt raised in his hand, this world will not run smoothly and harmoniously, in a perfect orderly manner, and a well-regulated activity of the celestials (Devas) and the guardians of the world (Lokapalas), will not be possible.

Cf. Taittiriya Upanishad II-viii-1. There is an alteration in only a few words. It says: 'Through fear of Him blows the wind, through fear rises the sun, through fear of Him, speech, Agni and Indra, and death as the fifth'.

इह चेदशकद्बोद्धुं प्राक्षरीरस्य विस्सः ।

ततः सर्गेषु लोकेषु शरीरत्वाय कल्पते ॥४॥

4. If here (in this life), one is able to comprehend Him (Brahman) before the death of the body, he will be liberated from the bondage of the world; if one is not able to comprehend Him, then he has to take a body again in the worlds of creation.

### Notes and Commentary

If one attains Self-realisation before he throws off this physical sheath or mortal coil, then he certainly becomes freed from the bondage of Samsara. He is freed from the trammels of birth and death, through the knowledge of Brahman. If he is not able to do it, then, he has to take body again in the worlds of creation, from lack of knowledge of the Self. Therefore, sincere attempt should be made to realise this immortal, eternal, self-luminous Brahman before the falling of the body.

यथाऽदर्शे तथात्मनि यथा स्वप्ने तथा पितृलोके ।

यथाऽप्सु परीव ददृशे तथा गन्धर्वलोके छायातपयोरिव ब्रह्मलोके ॥५॥

5. As in a mirror, so (Brahman can be clearly seen) here within one's self, as in dreams, so in the world of the forefathers; as in water, so in the world of Gandharvas; as in light and shade, so in the world of Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

Just as one perceives his own image in a mirror very distinctly, so also Brahman can be seen very distinctly in one's own Buddhi (intellect). The perception becomes indistinct in the world of the manes or forefathers, being engrossed in the enjoyment of the fruits of Karma, just as the perception is indistinct in dreams. Just as the image of one's self reflected in water is indistinct, so also the realisation of the Atman, in the world of the Gandharvas, is indistinct. There are degrees of perception of the Soul (Atman). The distinctness becomes less and less in the worlds of the manes, Gandharvas, etc. But in the Brahmaloka, the Brahman is realised very distinctly as that of light and shadow, i.e., as clearly as light is seen as separate from darkness. But, it is hard to reach that Brahmaloka. Special Karma or worship is needed to attain it. Therefore, one should attempt to realise the Atman in the Self (Buddhi) itself, while here (in this world).

इन्द्रियाणां पृथग्भावमुदयास्तमयौ च यत् ।

पृथगुत्पद्यमानानां मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥६॥

6. A wise man, having understood that the senses, separately produced, are distinct from the Atman, and also their rising and setting, grieves no more.

### Notes and Commentary

*Prithak-utpadyamananam*—produced in different origins, born in different ways.

The senses such as the ears, eyes, etc., originate separately from their causes, like Akasa, etc., for perceiving their respective objects.

*Prithak-bhavam*—distinct nature, the absolute distinctness of the senses from the Atman, dissimilarity of their nature to the nature of the Atman, which is pure, stainless, self-luminous and independent.

*Udayasthamayau*—rising and setting (of the senses). The senses function during the waking state. This is rising of the senses. They are absorbed during the state of sleep. This is setting of the senses. The creation and absorption of the senses depend upon the waking and sleeping states. There is neither rising nor setting for the Atman. The Atman has neither beginning nor end. The senses and the mind, which are changing, can be clearly distinguished and separated from the Atman which is pure, changeless, eternal, all-pervading and indivisible, beginningless and endless. Having understood that the senses are distinct from the Atman, and that their rising and setting (their waking and sleeping) belong to them and not to the Atman, a wise man does not grieve. Another Sruti also says: "The knower of the Atman crosses grief (*Tarati sokam atmavit*)".

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनो मनसः सत्त्वमुत्तमम् ।

सत्त्वादधि महानात्मा महतोऽव्यक्तमुत्तमम् ॥७॥

7. Beyond the senses is the mind, higher than the mind is the intellect, higher than the intellect is the great Atman, higher than the Mahat is Avyaktam (the unmanifested).

### Notes and Commentary

As the senses are distinct from the Atman, the latter cannot be perceived externally by the senses, because He is the internal Self of all. (Vide verses I-iii-10 & 11). Rudiments are of the same class with the senses or organs, they are included in the word Indriya.

Sattva here means Buddhi (intellect). There is gradation upto the supersensible Purusha, the Atman. This gradation was shown in Mantras 10 and 11 of the Third Valli of the First Chapter also. There it was stated merely as a fact of nature. It is repeated or reiterated in the Mantras 7 and 8 of this Section, in order to show that the knowledge of the Atman is necessary for attaining Immortality, or the final emancipation.

अव्यक्तात् परः पुरुषो व्यापकोऽलिङ्गः एव च ।

यं ज्ञात्वा मुच्यते जन्तुरमृतत्वं च गच्छति ॥८॥

8. Beyond the Avyakta is Purusha, all-pervading and devoid of Linga (indicative sign). He who knows Him is liberated and obtains Immortality.

### Notes and Commentary

Avyakta—the unmanifested, the Mula-Prakriti or Maya. During Pralaya, the whole world is withdrawn into the Avyakta. Beyond Avyakta is the all-pervading Purusha, the cause of all objects like Akasa, etc.

Alingah—without distinctive marks. That by which a thing is reached, known or understood is called Linga, such as Buddhi (intellect), Manas (mind), etc. He who has not these is Alinga. He is devoid of all the attributes of Samsara (*Sarva samsara dharma varjitaḥ*).

He, who knows Him from the preceptor, and the Sastras, and through direct intuitive perception in his own intellect, attains Immortality or the final emancipation. He is freed from the knots of the heart, such as ignorance (Avidya), desire (Kama) and action (Karma). He is the Purusha beyond the Avyakta.

न संदृशे तिष्ठति रूपमस्य न चक्षुषा पश्यति कश्चनैनम् ।

हृदा मनीषा मनसाऽभिक्लृप्तो य एतद्विद्विरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥१९॥

9. His form is not to be seen. No one beholds Him with the eye. By controlling the mind by the intellect and by incessant meditation He is revealed. Those who know this (Brahman) become immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

In this Mantra, the method of obtaining Self-realisation is described. This Atman cannot be seen by the physical eyes, because He is transcendental, beyond the reach of senses and mind.

*Na chakshusha pasyati*—none can see Him with the eyes, i.e., with all the senses (Upalakshana). The eye is here illustratively used. *Hrida*—residing in the heart, by the intellect within the heart. *Manisha*—by intuition. *Abhikriptah*—is revealed or realised.

He who knows this Brahman or Atman attains Immortality.

Cf. Svetasvatara Upanishad IV-20. It says: "Not in the sight abides His form, none beholds Him by the eye. Those who know Him dwelling in the heart (in the ether of the heart) by the heart (pure intellect) and mind, become immortal".

यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह ।

बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टति तामाहुः परमां गतिम् ॥१०॥

10. When the five organs of knowledge are at rest together with the mind, and when the intellect ceases functioning (becomes calm), that they call the highest state.

### Notes and Commentary

Yoga is now explained in the 10th and 11th Mantras.

*Pancha jnanani*—the five organs of knowledge such as ear, skin, eyes, tongue and nose. These senses gather the experiences of this world and present them to the Atman through the mind and intellect. Man acquires the knowledge of this world through the five senses of perception.

When the five organs are withdrawn from the external objects and merged in the mind, when the mind is centred or fixed in the Atman, when the intellect characterised by determination is not active or does not exert itself, that state they call the highest.

When the senses are quietened, when the emotions are controlled, when the intellect ceases to exert, that is the supreme state, the sages say. This is called Yoga. Yoga is the highest path, because it leads to Moksha, the final emancipation.

तां योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम् ।  
अप्रमत्तस्तदा भवति योगो हि प्रभवाप्ययौ ॥११॥

11. The firm control of the senses, they regard as Yoga. At that time one gets careful, for Yoga is acquired and lost.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sthiram indriya dharanam*—firm control of the senses or restraint of the senses, firm control of the internal and external organs of sense.

The senses are restrained and the mind is fixed in the Atman through steady concentration and meditation. At this time, the Yogi becomes careful or watchful. He becomes quite vigilant, for Yoga is acquired and lost, Yoga comes and goes, if the mind is not rendered quite steady, if the mind is not properly controlled, if dispassion (Vairagya) wanes, if there is any slackness or irregularity in meditation.

*Apramattah*—free from carelessness, not heedless or negligent, free from excitement or hasty action, i.e., ever striving towards concentration, free from the vagaries of the mind, undistracted.

Perfect vigilance is necessary when one has started Yogic practice, before the cessation of the activity of intellect, senses and mind.

This state they consider as Yoga (connection) but this is really Viyoga (disconnection), because the Yogi has disconnected himself entirely from everything and is resting in

his own Atman, which is free from all superimposition of ignorance and all dualities.

Yoga literally means yoking, i.e., subduing of the senses, and also joining or union with the Supreme Soul.

नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न चक्षुषा ।  
अस्तीति ब्रुवतोऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥१२॥

12. The Self cannot be reached by speech, by mind or by the eye. How can it be realised otherwise than from those who say, 'He is'?

#### Notes and Commentary

Any amount of argument or metaphysical ratiocination will not help the aspirant to attain Brahman. He has to place implicit faith in the words of the Srutis, or the Seers, who have actually realised the Atman through direct intuitive perception, and who positively assert that Atman exists. Sabda Pramana (Srutis) and Apta Vakya (words of Seers), are of utmost importance. Sri Sankara and Vyasa dispensed with argument and ratiocination, and established their doctrine on Sabda Pramana only, which is quite infallible.

If you wish to attain the Atman, have faith in the words of the Guru, who has actually realised the Self, and follow his instructions. The Atman has to be obtained from the Guru who knows that the Atman exists.

If the Atman cannot be known by speech, mind, or the eye, how is He to be known? He is known only through the instruction imparted by a Satguru, who knows that the Atman exists, through Self-realisation.

अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धव्यस्तत्त्वभावेन चोभयोः ।  
अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धस्य तत्त्वभावः प्रसीदति ॥१३॥

13. He should be known to exist and also as He really is. Of these two, to him who knows Him to exist, His true nature becomes manifest.

### Notes and Commentary

'Of the two': of the conditioned (Saupadhika or Saguna Brahman with attributes), and the unconditioned (Nirupadhika or the Nirguna Brahman without attributes), which is different from both the known and the unknown, i.e., the manifested universe and the Mula-Prakriti, one without a second and which is indicated by the Srutis 'not this, not this—(neti, neti)', not gross, not subtle, not short, bodiless (Atanu), supportless (Niralambam), etc. This is the view of Sri Sankaracharya.

But in the context, there is no question about the conditioned and the unconditioned, or the Saguna Brahman or the Nirguna Brahman. According to the context, it is Asti—'is' and Nasti—'is not', of the Atman.

To him who meditates on the pure Brahman after equipping himself with the four means, the real nature of Brahman becomes revealed.

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः ।  
अथ मत्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥१४॥

14. When all desires, that dwell in the heart of one, cease, then the mortal becomes immortal and here attains Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

The condition for immortality is the renunciation of all desires and attachments. The worldly desires are renounced only when the fetters of false knowledge are cut asunder.

Intellect is the seat of desire. There is no desire in the Atman. The Atman is ever pure and taintless. Desire is the cause of pain and bondage. When all desires are destroyed by the attainment of knowledge of Self, one who was mortal before he attained the knowledge, becomes immortal subsequent to the attainment of knowledge. He becomes Brahman even here, while living in the body. He is freed from the bondage of Karma.

यदा सर्वे प्रभिद्यन्ते हृदयस्येह ग्रन्थयः ।  
अथ मत्योऽमृतो भवत्येतावद्व्यनुशासनम् ॥१५॥

15. When all the knots of the heart are severed here on earth, then the mortal becomes immortal, so far is the instruction (of all Vedanta).

### Notes and Commentary

*Hridayasya granthayah*—knots of the heart, knots of ignorance. Ignorance (Avidya), desire (Kama), action (Karma) are the three important knots. Egoism, hatred, lust, jealousy and pride, born of ignorance, are small knots.

The beliefs 'I am this body', 'This is my property', 'He is my son', 'I am a Raja', 'I am Kshatriya', 'I am happy', 'I am miserable', are also knots. These are destroyed by the rise of contrary belief in the identity of the Atman, Brahman, in the form, 'I am certainly Brahman'.

When all the knots of the heart are destroyed, then the mortal attains immortality.

This much or thus far is the instruction of all Vedanta. 'Of all Vedanta' should be added to complete the sentence. This is the consummation of all Vedanta teachings.

शतं चैका च हृदयस्य नाड्यस्तासां मूर्धनमभिनिःसृतैका ।  
तयोर्धर्वमायन्नमृतत्वमेति विष्वद्वद्वन्या उत्क्रमणे भवन्ति ॥१६॥

16. There are hundred and one nerves of the heart. One of them (Sushumna) penetrates the crown of the head, moving upwards by it, one (at the time of death) attaining immortality, the other nerves are of various course.

### Notes and Commentary

The Jivanmukta, who has attained Self-realisation, goes nowhere. His Pranas do not go out (*Na tasya prana utkramanti*). Being Brahman, he attains Brahman. He attains Kaivalya Mukti.

Those who have not attained Kaivalya Mukti, who have not realised the Absolute Brahman, but who have realised the lower Brahman, the Saguna Brahman with attributes, go by the Sushumna path or the Sushumna Nadi, to the solar plane, and thence through several other planes, to Brahmaloka, where

they dwell till the end of the cycle of creation. In Brahma-loka they enjoy incomparable pleasures. When the cycle terminates, they merge in Brahman along with Brahma. This is known as Krama Mukti, progressive emancipation.

The other nerves, or Nadis, serve for departing in different directions. If the soul passes through other nerves, it is born again in Samsara. It assumes various bodies according to its Karma and desire.

Sushumna Nadi is also known by the name Brahmanadi.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषोऽन्तरात्मा सदा जनानां हृदये संनिविष्टः । तं स्वाच्छरीरात्प्रवृहेन्मुञ्जादिवेषीकां धैर्येण । तं विद्याच्छुक्रममृतं तं विद्याच्छुक्रममृतमिति ॥१७॥

17. The Purusha of the size of a thumb, the inner Self, is always seated in the heart of all living beings; one should draw him out from one's own body with steadiness, as one draws the pith (stalk) from a reed; one should know him as pure and immortal.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Munjat*—from the reed; *Ishikam*—inner pith or stalk. This is the concluding Mantra of all the Vallis. Just as you draw the pith or stalk from a reed, so also you will have to draw or take out the essence, the Atman, from the five Kosas (sheaths), patiently and boldly through Vichara, discrimination and meditation. You will have to separate the Atman from the body.

One should know Him, who is thus drawn out from the body as Brahman, pure, immortal. The repetition of *Tam vidyat-sukramamritam* and the use of the particle *iti* indicate that the Upanishad ends here.

मृत्युग्रोक्तां नचिकेतोऽथ लब्ध्वा विद्यामेतां योगविधिं च कृत्स्नम् ।  
ब्रह्मप्राप्तो विरजोऽभूद्विमृत्युरन्योऽप्येवं यो विदध्यात्ममेव ॥१८॥

॥ इति कठोपनिषत्समाप्ता ॥

18. Nachiketas, then having acquired this knowledge imparted by Yama, and also the whole teaching about Yoga, attained Brahman, having become free from all impurities and death. Thus it will be with another also, who thus knows the nature of the Atman.

### Notes and Commentary

*Virajah*—free from Rajas or sin, free from impurities, free from vice and virtue. Nachiketas got clear instructions on Brahma-Vidya from Lord Yama through the third boon. He also received instructions on Yoga. He practised meditation and eventually attained Brahman, became immortal through knowledge of the Self. He was a qualified aspirant. He was already free from vice, passion and all sorts of impurities. So it was easy for him to attain Brahma-Jnana. Any qualified student, like Nachiketas, who knows the Atman, can surely attain Immortality.

Here ends the Kathopanishad.

ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै । तेजस्वि  
नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

This Santi Mantra is an expiatory prayer. It is intended to remove all faults incurred by the disciple and preceptor in the course of receiving and imparting knowledge respectively, and caused by abandoning of rules due to oversight or excitement. In order to ward off all evils, the word Santih, Peace, is repeated three times.

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

# **PRASNOUPANISHAD**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Prasna Upanishad is in prose and belongs to the Atharva Veda, Pippalada Sakha. Pippalada is the principal teacher in the Upanishad. It is one of the three classical Atharvopanishads. This is a later Upanishad. This contains six questions and their answers and hence its name.

The Prasna, Mundaka and Mandukya Upanishads belong to the Atharva Veda. All of them lay great stress on the sacred syllable Om, the Pranava. This Upanishad goes by the name Shat-Prasna Upanishad also, because it contains six questions.

Sri Sankara, in the beginning of his commentary, says: "This Brahmana is commenced to explain more fully repeating what has been declared in the Mantra portion". This refers to the Mundaka Upanishad, which is spoken of as a Mantra or Mantropanishad. Sankara calls this a Brahmana complimentary to the Mantra Upanishad of the Mundaka. One uniform idea runs through the Prasna, Mundaka and Mandukya Upanishads. They have a family resemblance. Some of the points that are dealt with in the Mundaka are explained at full length in this Upanishad.

Six seekers of Brahman go to a sage called Pippalada, and put to him six questions. These questions and answers form the substance of this Upanishad. The first question is the most general and the sixth is the most specific and particular. The first question deals with the creation or the cosmogony.

Prana (life-principle) and Rayi (matter) were first created by the Lord. Prana acts on Rayi. Various forms manifest. It is the intermingling of these two that gives rise to the world of diverse forms. The one is active, positive and the male principle; the other is the passive, negative and the female principle. Prana belongs to the conscious-side of creation, while Rayi belongs to the form-side of creation.

The first question shows the relation between Prajapati (the creator) and the creatures, the period of creation, and the way in which Prajapati is to be adored. The whole description is mythological and symbolical. Prajapati was desirous of offspring. From this desire, a pair sprung forth, viz., matter or the universal food, and Prana (life or consumer). As life and matter, Prajapati is gradually the sun, the moon, the year in its two halves, day and night, etc.

Prana, Aditya (sun), day, Amurta (formless), life, spirit, Northern path, invisible, belong to the life-side. Rayi, the moon, the night, Murta (with form), matter, Southern path, visible, belong to the matter-side. The body is composed of five elements. The ten senses discharge their functions through the body. The body is upheld by the Prana, the life-principle.

The second question refers to the Devas, who support man and enlighten the senses and the constituents of this body, the third to the nature and origin of Prana, the fourth to sleep and dreams, the fifth to Pranava or Om, and the sixth to the Purusha of sixteen Kalas or parts.

## PRATHAMA PRASNA (QUESTION I)

### KABANDHI AND PIPPALADA

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः । भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।  
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुषुवां सस्तनूभिर्वर्शेम देवहितं यदायुः । स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो  
वृद्धश्रवाः । स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्ताक्ष्योऽ  
रिष्टेमिः । स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om. O gods, may we, with our ears, hear what is auspicious, O Ye fit to be worshipped, may we, with our eyes, see what is auspicious. May we enjoy the life allotted to us by the gods, offering our praise with our bodies strong of limb. May Indra, the powerful, the ancient of fame, vouchsafe us prosperity. May He, the nourisher and the possessor of all wealth, give us what is well for us. May the Lord of swift motion be propitious to us and may the protector of the great ones protect us too.

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

ॐ सुकेशा च भारद्वाजः शैव्यश्च सत्यकामः सौर्यायणी च गार्यः  
 कौसल्यश्चाश्वलायनो भार्गवो वैदर्भिः कबन्धी कात्यायनस्ते हैते  
 ब्रह्मपरा ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः परं ब्रह्मान्वेषमाणा एष ह वै तत्सर्वं वक्ष्यतीति ते ह  
 समित्पाणयो भगवन्तं पिप्पलादमुपसन्नाः ॥१॥

Adorations to the Supreme Atman! Harih Om.

1. Sukesa, the son of Bharadvaja, Satyakama, son of Sibi, Gargya, the grandson of Surya, Kausalya, son of Asvala, Bharadvaja, the son of Vidarbhi, and Kabandhi, son of Katya—all these devoted to Brahman and centred in Brahman, seeking the Highest Brahman, approached the revered Pippalada with fuel (Samit) in their hands, thinking that he would explain all to them.

#### Notes and Commentary

This Brahmana is for the purpose of explaining in detail, that which has been expressed by the Mantras.

Knowledge of Brahman can be acquired by men who have observed celibacy, performed Tapas and lived with the preceptor for a year. This knowledge should be imparted by sages like Pippalada, who have attained Atma-sakshatkara, direct Self-realisation, and not by anybody else.

*Gargya*—a descendent from the Garga family. *Bhargava*—descendent from the Bhrigu family. *Vaidarbhi*—born in Vidarbha.

Bharadvaja, Saibya, Garga, Asvalayana, Bhargava and Katyayana are names of Gotras, families.

*Brahma-parah*—devoted to Brahman, by Brahman here the Saguna Brahman or Apara Brahman (lower Brahman) is meant; proficient in the study of the Vedas.

*Brahma-nishthah*—centred in Brahman; intent on Brahman; well established in the practices of devotion to the Saguna Brahman or Hiranyagarbha.

*Param Brahmanveshamana*—seeking after the Highest Brahman; wishing to attain the transcendental, Trigunatita, pure, Para Brahman.

They approached the worshipful preceptor Pippalada, with loads of Samit or sacrificial fuel in their hands, for the purpose of knowing the supreme Brahman. They thought that he would explain all to them. In ancient times, it was customary for pupils to carry sacrificial fuel in their hands when they approached the teacher for initiation. The sacrificial fuel is the ancient token, with which a religious student or an aspirant presented himself as a pupil, unto a teacher whose instruction he desired. The teacher also knew when he saw a student with sacrificial fuel in his hands, that he had come to him for initiation.

तान्ह स क्रषिरुवाच भूय एव तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया संवत्सरं  
संवत्स्यथ यथाकामं प्रश्नान्पृच्छत यदि विज्ञास्यामः सर्वं ह वो वक्ष्याम  
इति ॥२॥

2. That Rishi said to them: Stay here another year with austerity, celibacy and faith; then you may ask questions as you please and if I know them, I will surely explain all to you.

#### Notes and Commentary

Pippalada said to the aspirants: Though you have already practised Tapas and controlled the senses, still live here with me for one year, and practise again Tapas (subjugation of senses), and be particularly careful about Brahmacharya; develop more faith and serve your preceptor whole-heartedly. Then every one of you can ask me questions as you please.

The subtle truths of Vedanta cannot be grasped by a gross and impure mind. The mind should be rendered pure, subtle and sharp-pointed. Only then will it be fit to practise concentration and meditation, and comprehend the subtle truths of the Upanishads. Tapas and celibacy contribute to the purification of the mind. He who practises the vow of celibacy, should avoid these following eight breaks in Brahmacharya: (1) thinking about women with evil thoughts, (2) talking about them, (3) playing with them, (4) looking at them with lustful eyes, (5) talking with them in a solitary place, (6) desiring them, (7) trying to obtain them, and (8) enjoying them.

Service of the Guru, the preceptor, with faith and devotion purifies the mind quickly. This is the most powerful purifying agent.

The spiritual teacher knows through his inner vision, the mental state of the aspirants, the degree of their evolution, their defects, etc. He actually sees their astral and causal bodies through his inner eyes of wisdom. The seer Pippalada found out through his inner vision that there were still impurities in their minds, and so he asked them to stay with him for one year and practise Tapas, celibacy and faith.

'If I know',—the word 'if' is intended to show that the teacher was not proud and not that he did not know the subject. There was no doubt as to his knowledge. He was an omniscient Seer. He himself says: 'I shall explain all to you'. This indicates that he had perfect knowledge of Brahman and that he could answer any question. He was very modest and humble and so he said 'If I know'.

अथ कबन्धी कात्यायन उपेत्य पप्रच्छ भगवन्कृतो ह वा इमाः प्रजाः  
प्रजायन्त इति ॥३॥

3. Then Katyayana Kabandhi approached Pippalada and asked: Venerable Master, whence are these creatures born?

#### Notes and Commentary

Kabandhi, of the clan Katyayana, having approached Pippalada, asked him: O venerable Master, whence are these creatures, Brahmins and the rest, born?

*Atha*—then, after a year, having performed Tapas, celibacy and faith as told; *Katyayana*—of the clan of Katyayana.

The drift of the question is, according to Sankara, what is the fruit of Apara Vidya (inferior knowledge), and of works in their conjunction? The question is for the purpose of finding out what results are obtained and what path is gone through by combining Apara-vidya and Karma.

Life has no beginning (Anadi). There is no beginning for the creatures. This world is not created. It is simply projected by Hiranyagarbha.

तस्मै स होवाच प्रजाकामो वै प्रजापतिः स तपोऽतप्यत स तपस्तप्त्वा स मिथुनमुत्पादयते । रयिं च प्राणं चेत्येतौ मे बहुधा प्रजाः करिष्यत इति ॥४॥

4. He replied: Prajapati (the Lord of creatures) was desirous of offspring. He performed penance (thought), and having performed penance, he created a pair, Rayi and Prana (matter and life or food and eater), thinking that they together would produce creatures for him in many ways.

### Notes and Commentary

*Praja kamah*—desiring to create beings (out of himself), being desirous of creatures; *Prajapati*—Creator, Hiranyagarbha; *Tapah*—penance, here means reflection or meditation on what is to be done, the reflection as to how and what are to be created; *Mithunam*—couple: energy and matter, Prana and Rayi, male and female.

The Lord of creatures desired to have creatures in the beginning of the Kalpa. He reflected over the plan. He recollected the things of the past Kalpas and made a plan on the model of the past. He reflected, at the commencement of this Kalpa, on the knowledge remaining from his former birth. Having fixed the plane, he produced a couple, Prana (energy) and the Rayi (matter), and said, 'These two will produce manifold creatures for me'.

He thought over the knowledge imparted by the Srutis and produced a pair, a couple necessary for creation, the moon, i.e., food, and Prana (fire, sun) i.e., the eater. He thought that Agni (sun) and the moon, the eater and the food, would create various creatures and so he created the sun and the moon.

According to Sri Sankaracharya, Rayi means food, moon, and Prana means fire, the eater, sun. Through the influence of the moon only, the delicious Soma, the Rasa of the earth which nourishes plants and herbs, is produced. Sun is the fire that consumes the Rasa. This is the Vedic notion. This life is sustained by food (Annam) and air (Prana).

आदित्यो ह वै प्राणो रथिरेव चन्द्रमा रथिर्वा एतत्सर्वं यन्मूर्तं चामूर्तं  
च तस्मान्मूर्तिरेव रथिः ॥५॥

5. The sun is verily life (Prana), and the moon, the food (matter), all this having form and formless, is food, and therefore form is indeed food.

### Notes and Commentary

*Murtam*—with form, gross (solid, liquid and fiery objects); *Amurtam*—without form, subtle (air and ether).

The sun is energy and matter is the moon. All this, what has body (form), and what has no body (formless, subtle), is matter, and therefore, body (form) indeed is matter. The view of Sage Pippalada tallies with the view of modern science.

The sun is Prana, the eater, the fire. The moon is the food. The eater and the food are really one. They are aspects of the Lord of creatures.

The sun is the centre of energy. It is, therefore, identified with the Prana.

अथादित्य उदयन्यत्प्राचीं दिशं प्रविशति तेन प्राच्यान्प्राणानश्मिषु  
संनिधत्ते । यद्विक्षिणां यत्प्रतीचीं यदुदीचीं यदधो यदूर्ध्वं यदन्तरा दिशो  
यत्सर्वं प्रकाशयति तेन सर्वान्प्राणानश्मिषु संनिधत्ते ॥६॥

6. Now the sun, rising, pervades the East. By that he bathes in his rays, all Pranas in the East. When he lights up the Southern, the Western, the Northern quarters, the Nadir, the zenith, the intermediate quarters and all, by that he takes up into his rays all creatures.

### Notes and Commentary

Now the sun, when he rises, enters the Eastern quarter. Thereby he collects (holds or bathes) the living beings (Prana) of the East in his rays. When he illuminates the Southern, the Western, the Northern, the lower, the upper, the intervening quarters, when he illuminates everything—thereby he collects (bathes or holds) all living beings in his rays.

*Prachim*—east; *Rasmishu*—in the rays; *Sannidhatte*—holds, upholds; *Pratichim*—west; *Udichim*—north.

All living beings are pervaded by the sun's all-pervading rays of light. The sun bathes all living beings in all quarters or directions, in his all-pervading light. The sun, by pervading all beings with his light, makes them one with his own self. Wherever there is life, wherever there is energy, it is due to the influence of the sun. The sun is the greatest inexhaustible power-house on this earth. He supports, by his rays, all life in all directions.

स एष वैश्वानरो विश्वरूपः प्राणोऽग्निरुदयते । तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम् ॥७॥

7. This is he (Vaisvanara), the sum total of all living beings, assuming all forms, life and fire, who rises every day. This has been said in the following Mantra of the Rig-Veda.

#### Notes and Commentary

The sun illumines the whole world. He is the centre of force and energy. He is the source of life and activity. Therefore he is, in a way, the Lord of creatures. He is connected with the activities of all men. He is indeed the life of the world.

This life, the soul of all creatures (Vaisvanara), the nature of all, the life, rises as fire every day, making the quarters like himself. This has been declared in the following verse.

The sun and the fire are both manifestations of the same Prana which is all-pervading. The sun is a mass of energy. Fire also is energy. The view of modern science also is that energy or electrons is everything. The Sruti also expresses the view of modern science. The ancient Rishis found out through meditation that Brahman is the innermost Self of all beings and is also the Soul and support of this universe. They also made analysis of this world and found out the various principles (Tattvas) which go to constitute it.

This is he, the eater, the totality of all beings, life, the Atman of all, who assumes all forms, being the Soul or the Atman of the world, Prana and fire. This is the consumer or eater who rises every day, illuminating all directions and making them his own. This, which is now explained, had also been declared by the following Rig-Veda Mantra.

विश्वरूपं हरिणं जातवेदसं परायणं ज्योतिरेकं तपन्तम् । सहस्ररश्मिः  
शतधा वर्तमानः प्राणः प्रजानामुदयत्येष सूर्यः ॥८॥

8. Assuming all forms, resplendent, omniscient, the highest goal, the one light, the heat-giver, the thousand-rayed, existing in hundred forms, life of all creatures, this sun rises.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Visvarupam*—having all forms, of universal form. *Harinam*—full of rays, resplendent, yellow or golden; *Jatavedasam*—omniscient; *Parayanam*—the final goal or end, the highest refuge of all beings, the highest stay; *Jyotirekam*—the one light, the eye, as it were, of all living beings, having no second; *Tapantam*—giving heat, the heat-giver; *Sahasra-rasmih*—of thousand rays.

The seers, or knowers of Brahman, have known the sun, their own Atman, the innermost Self. This sun, the life of all creatures, having thousand rays, i.e., having many rays, existing in hundred forms, i.e., existing in many forms, in different living beings, rises.

संवत्सरो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्यायने दक्षिणं चोत्तरं च । तद्ये ह वै  
तदिष्टापूर्ते कृतमित्युपासते ते चान्द्रमसमेव लोकमभिजयन्ते । त एव  
पुनरावर्तन्ते तस्मादेत ऋषयः प्रजाकामा दक्षिणं प्रतिपद्यन्ते । एष ह वै  
रयिर्यः पितृयाणः ॥९॥

9. The year is indeed Prajapati (the Lord of the creation), and there are two paths thereof, the Southern and the Northern. Those who follow the path of Karma alone, by the performance of sacrificial and pious acts, obtain only the world of the moon and certainly return. Therefore, those sages who desire offspring, take the Southern route. This food is verily the path of the forefathers.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Samvatsarah*—a year, the supreme Self in the form of continuous time, time.

How the pair, the moon, having form, the food, and the Prana the formless, the eater, the sun, could create all creatures is explained. This pair alone is time.

The year, which is formed by days and nights on account of the moon and the sun, is said to be of the nature of pair, the food and the eater.

There are two paths, viz., Dakshinayana, the Southern route and the Uttarayana, the Northern route.

Those who perform *Ishtapurta* (*Ishta*—sacrifice and *Purta*—pious acts) attain the world of moon (Chandraloka), by the path of the manes (Pitriyana), and return to this world. This is the Southern route which leads to the world of moon.

*Ishta*—daily performance of Agnihotra, penance, truthfulness, maintenance of animals, feeding the guests, the birds and the animals, are called *Ishta*. *Purta*—digging of wells, tanks, etc., for the public, building temples, hospitals and choultries, giving food to the poor and the hungry, laying out public gardens, etc., are called *Purta*.

अथोत्तरेण तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया विद्ययात्मान-  
मन्विष्यादित्यमभिजयन्ते । एतद्वै प्राणानामायतनमेतदमृतमभय-  
मेतत्परायणमेतस्मान्न पुनरावर्तन्त इत्येष निरोधस्तदेष श्लोकः ॥१०॥

10. But those, who have sought the Atman by penance, celibacy, faith and knowledge, gain the Northern route, the sun. This is the home of all lives, the immortal, fearless, the highest goal. Thence they do not return, for this is the end. This is unattainable (to the ignorant). About that, there is this verse.

### Notes and Commentary

Those, who search for the Self along the Northern path by Tapas, control of the senses, celibacy, faith and knowledge, attain the sun, i.e., Brahmaloka, through the Northern path. They attain the state of Prajapati, the life, the consumer, Aditya. They go along the Devayana, or the path of the gods, to the world of sun and from there go to Brahmaloka. They merge in Brahman at the end of the cycle. This is Krama Mukti or gradual liberation.

*Etat-amritam*—this is immortal and therefore fearless. Those who have attained Brahmaloka do not return to this world. They do not take rebirths, as followers of mere Karma do.

*Nirodha*—obstacle. The ignorant, obstructed by the sun, do not attain the year, the sun, the Prana. The Northern path is blocked for the ignorant, as they do not possess the necessary qualifications.

पञ्चपादं पितरं द्वादशाकृतिं दिव आहुः परे अर्थे पुरीषिणम् । अथेमे अन्य उ परे विचक्षणं सप्तचक्रे षडर आहुर्पितमिति ॥११॥

11. Having five feet (the five seasons), the father, having twelve forms (twelve months), the giver of rain, they (sages) say, he is seated in a place higher than heaven. Others call him all-wise, upon whom, like a chariot (drawn by seven horses) with seven wheels and six spokes, the whole world is founded.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Pancha padam*—five feet; five seasons (Ritus) are five feet. Hemanta and Sisira are considered as one. *Vichakshanam*—the seer (the sun).

The five seasons are the feet of the sun. The sun is nothing but the year or time. The sun is the maker or measurer of time. He marks it out into the year, with its sub-divisions of seasons, months, and so he is the father of all. The year moves with seasons as feet.

The sun is called father because he is the creator of all, he sustains all life, and all life proceeds from him only.

*Dvadasakritam*—with twelve forms. The twelve months are the twelve forms, i.e., limbs or component parts of the year. He is seated in a place higher than Dyuloka sky, i.e., in the third heaven. Heaven here means the atmosphere.

*Purishinam*—having water, full of water, excreting, giving rains. The sun has abundance of rain as it produces it from the waters of oceans.

*Ahuh*—they say, i.e., sages say; the knowers of time say that the world is fixed to the wheel of time, ever moving in the form of seven horses, and having six seasons. The world is fixed

there as spokes in a wheel. The year, which is of the nature of Time, the Lord of creation, in the form of the sun and the moon, is the cause of this world.

*Saptachakra*—of the seven wheels, the seven rays or colours of the sun, are known as the seven horses of the sun. Or they may be the sub-divisions of the year—half-years, seasons, months, half-months, days, nights and Muhurtas. Or they are the seven Chakras through which the Prana passes.

*Shadare*—on six-spoked (chariot), the six spokes are the six seasons. The seer, or the sun, is placed on a chariot of seven wheels and six spokes. The six spokes may also be Rik, Yajus, Saman, Yajna, Kshatra and Brahmana. The twelve faces are the twelve aspects of Prana.

The five-footed father may mean also the chief Prana, having five feet or modes of motion, viz., Prana, Apana, Vyana, Samana, Udana (having respiratory, excretory, digestive, circulatory functions, also the function of sleep).

मासो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्य कृष्णपक्ष एव रथिः शुक्लः प्राणस्तस्मादेत्  
ऋषयः शुक्ल इष्टं कुर्वन्तीतर इतरस्मिन् ॥१२॥

12. The month is Prajapati (the Lord of creation), its dark half is indeed the food, its bright half, the Prana. Therefore, these Rishis perform sacrifices in the bright half, the others in the dark half.

#### Notes and Commentary

The month is verily Prajapati, the Lord of creation. Prajapati, in the form of the year, gets his completion by his parts, the months. The month also is in the nature of a pair; one portion, the dark half, is food, matter or moon. The other portion, the bright fortnight, is the sun, the eater, the fire or Prana.

Some seers, or Rishis, behold everything as Prana, marked by the bright half. They behold in life the nature of all. Therefore, though they perform sacrifices in the dark half, perform them only in the bright half, as they do not see the dark half as distinct from Prana, the bright half. This is a sublime vision. But others do not see the Prana, but only the dark half. Therefore, though they perform sacrifices in the bright half,

they do in the dark half only, as they do not see the Prana or life, and behold only nature in its darkness.

There is rhythm or harmony in the world. During Pralaya or involution, there is rest. This is followed by motion, when the world is projected. In a year there are two solstices, viz., the sun's Northward and Southward courses. In a month, there is the bright half and the dark half. In a day, there is day and night. Night is daily Pralaya.

अहोरात्रो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्याहरेव प्राणो रात्रिरेव रथिः प्राणं वा एते प्रस्कन्दन्ति ये दिवा रत्या संयुज्यन्ते ब्रह्मचर्यमेव तद्यद्रात्रौ रत्या संयुज्यन्ते ॥१३॥

13. Day and night are Prajapati; the day is the Prana and the night indeed is food. Those who unite in love by day waste their Prana, those who unite in love by night are considered verily as Brahmacharis.

#### Notes and Commentary

Days and nights are the parts of the month. The day is verily Prana, the eater, the fire, and the night is food.

Those who unite in love by day waste their energy. The rule that one should not unite in love by day is enjoined by the way. But if they unite in love by night, in season (during Ritu), that is Brahmacharya indeed, or that is right indeed, that is self-control indeed. The rule that one should approach his wife in season is enjoined here by the way.

अन्नं वै प्रजापतिस्ततो ह वै तद्रेतस्तस्मादिमाः प्रजाः

प्रजायन्त इति ॥१४॥

14. Food indeed is Prajapati, from that indeed proceeds semen, from that all these creatures are born.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Retah*—seed or semen.

Annam or food is the Lord of creation. How? From food, semen, which is the cause of creation, is produced. These creatures such as men, etc., are produced from semen.

This verse directly gives the answer to the first question, 'O venerable Master! whence are these creatures born?' These creatures are produced by couples, beginning with the sun and the moon and ending with the day and the night, through food, blood, and semen or seed.

It was said before that the year is Prajapati, the month is Prajapati, day and night are Prajapati. Now in this verse, it is said that food and semen are also Prajapati. Primarily, the word Prajapati means Brahma or Hiranyagarbha. As these are all manifestations of Prajapati or matter and energy, so they are also called as Prajapati. This physical body has come out of semen. Semen is the source for this physical body. So semen also is regarded as Prajapati.

Time also is an expression or manifestation of Prajapati, or Lord Brahma. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna says: "Kalah kalayatamaham—of calculators Time am I; Aham eva akshayah kala—I am everlasting Time" (XI-30 & 33).

If Time is Prajapati, the divisions of time such as years, seasons, months, days and nights are also Prajapati. There is nothing but the Lord in this universe. These divisions are also the functioning of the same matter and energy, which are the fundamental principles of creation.

Time is caused by the movement of the sun. If there is no sun, there will be no time, no year, no month, no season, no day, no night, no food, no life, no creation also. Sun, time, food, life and Prajapati are one. Sun and time control life. Food nourishes life also. All the different principles are interlinked. Behind matter, energy, food, etc., there is one common thread, the pure consciousness, which is the source or womb for everything, which is self-luminous, eternal, changeless and all-pervading.

तद्ये ह वै तत्प्रजापतिव्रतं चरन्ति ते मिथुनमुत्पादयन्ते । तेषामेवैष  
ब्रह्मलोको येषां तपो ब्रह्मचर्यं येषु सत्यं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥१५॥

15. Thus, therefore, those who observe this rule of Prajapati (as laid down in verse 13), produce a pair. To them alone is this Brahmaloka, in whom penance, celibacy and truth abide.

### Notes and Commentary

*Prajapati vratam*—the vow of Prajapati or rule of Prajapati, approaching the wife in due season (Ritukalagamanam); *Mithunam*—a pair, a couple, i.e., son and daughter.

Those who observe the vow or rule of Prajapati, i.e., who approach their wives in due season, produce a pair, son and daughter.

*Brahmaloka*—Here only the Chandraloka, or the world of the moon is meant, and not the world of Brahma. This is called the world of Brahma, because it is a part of Prajapati, Brahma.

Those ignorant householders who simply observe the rule of Prajapati, attain the fruit in the world in the shape of sons and daughters. But those who have practised austerity, celibacy and truthfulness, and have performed sacrifices, pious acts and gifts, go to the Chandraloka hereafter, to which Pitriyana, the route of the manes, leads.

तेषामसौ विरजो ब्रह्मलोको न येषु जिह्ममनृतं न माया चेति ॥१६॥  
॥ इति प्रथमः प्रश्नः ॥

16. That pure Brahmaloka belongs to them only in whom there is no deceit, falsehood or dissimulation.

### Notes and Commentary

*Virajah*—pure, stainless; *Jihmam*—crookedness, deceit; *Anritam*—falsehood; *Maya*—hypocrisy, dissimulation, guile.

*Brahmaloka*—the world of Brahma or Satyaloka. This world is pure, not tainted like the world of moon or Chandraloka, not subject to increase and diminution. Brahmaloka, mentioned in this verse, is the goal of those who combine Karma with worship. The Brahmaloka, that is mentioned in the previous verse, is for those who perform Karma (sacrifices and gifts) only.

Fraud leads to many conflicting modes of conduct. Play, joking and amusement lead to utterance of falsehood. So they should be avoided. Dissimulation is double-dealing or duplicity in behaviour. It is pretending to be what one is really not. The man of dissimulation speaks of himself in one manner, and acts in a different manner. Fraud, crookedness, falsehood and dissimulation taint the heart. They are great obstacles or obstructions in the spiritual path. They should be eradicated by cultivating the opposite positive virtues such as honesty, straightforwardness and truth.

Here ends the First Prasna.

OM

### DVITIYA PRASNA (QUESTION II)

#### BHARGAVA AND PIPPALADA

अथ हैनं भार्गवो वैदर्भिः पप्रच्छ । भगवन्कत्येव देवाः प्रजाः  
विधारयन्ते कतर एतत्प्रकाशयन्ते कः पुनरेषां वरिष्ठ इति ॥१॥

1. Then Bhargava, son of Vidarbhi, questioned him: O Bhagavan! How many Devas support the creature? Which of them enlighten that? Who again is, among them, the greatest?

#### Notes and Commentary

*Devah*—gods, powers, organs or the senses; *Prakasayante*—manifest, illumine; *Varishtha*—the greatest or the Lord.

Bhargava of Vidarbha asked Pippalada: O Bhagavan, venerable Master! How many Devas (senses) mainly support this creature, i.e., the body? Which among the senses manifest their glory or power outside? Through the instrumentality of what Deva does the Lord preserve these creatures, and make them know the external universe? What energies, or Devas, illumine it, or are involved in the acts of sensation and cognition? And again, who amongst them is the best or the greatest?

In the first question and answer, it was taught that the Lord created all including Prana and Rayi. After the creation comes

preservation. The second question and answer deal with this. The Prana has been declared to be the greatest. In the first question, life has been set forth as the consumer, as Prajapati. In the second question, how his nature as Prajapati, universal life or consumer, is to be understood in this body, is dealt with. The second question deals with the powers, glory and splendour of Prana. It is the Prana that supports the microcosm and the macrocosm. He also illuminates them and is, thus, the best of all.

तस्मै स होवाच । आकाशो ह वा एष देवो वायुरन्निरापः पृथिवी वाङ्मनश्कृः श्रोत्रं च । ते प्रकाश्याभिवदन्ति वयमेतद्बाणमवष्टभ्य विधारयामः ॥२॥

2. He replied: Those Devas verily are the ether, wind, fire, water, earth, speech, mind, eye and ear. They, manifesting their glory (disputed among each other), say, 'We hold together and support this body'.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Abhivadanti*—dispute among themselves. *Banam*—according to Sri Sankara, body; generally means arrow.

These Devas, senses, manifesting their glory and competing with each other for pre-eminence, say: "We alone uphold this body by supporting it". Each sense thinks that this body is supported by it alone. The senses disputed among themselves. The five gross elements constitute the foundation of this body.

Besides speech, mind, eye and ear, the other seven senses also should be included. There are five organs of knowledge (Jnana-Indriyas), and five organs of action (Karma-Indriyas). The five Jnana-Indriyas are ear, skin, eye, tongue, nose. The five Karma-Indriyas are speech, hands, feet, organ of generation and anus.

तान्वरिष्टः प्राण उवाच मा मोहमापद्यथाहमेवैतत्पञ्चात्मानं प्रविभज्यैतद्बाणमवष्टभ्य विधारयामीति तेऽश्रद्धाना बभूवः ॥३॥

3. Prana, the greatest, said to them: 'Be not lost in delusion (do not entertain this foolish pride); I alone, dividing myself fivefold, support this body and keep it'.

### Notes and Commentary

*Varishthah Prana*—Prana the greatest, the chief Prana.

*Panchadha*—in five parts; in five ways, by dividing myself into Prana, Apana, Vyana, Samana and Udana.

The chief Prana spoke to the Devas, who were thus contending: "Why have you fallen into this error or delusion? Why have you been conceited? Why do you each think, 'I support or illumine this body'. Do not entertain this false notion. It is I, who dividing myself fivefold in this body, support it and illumine it". The other Devas did not believe him. They thought how could it be thus.

Heart, lungs, brain and all the abdominal organs, viz., liver, spleen, kidneys, pancreas, the small and large intestines, bladder, etc., all carry out their allotted functions through Prana or energy. The sympathetic nervous system, the motor and sensory nerves also function through Prana. Mind, intellect and the ten organs work through Prana only. Breathing and thought are expressions of Prana only. Prana is the most important, or fundamental principle, or Tattva, in the body or nature. Therefore, Prana is called Brahman. Individual Prana also is a part of the universal Prana or Cosmic energy.

सोऽभिमानादूर्ध्वमुत्क्रामत इव तस्मिन्नुत्क्रामत्यथेतरे सर्व  
एवोत्क्रामन्ते तस्मिंश्च प्रतिष्ठमाने सर्व एव प्रातिष्ठन्ते । तद्यथा मक्षिका  
मधुकरराजानमुत्क्रामन्तं सर्वा एवोत्क्रामन्ते तस्मिंश्च प्रतिष्ठमाने सर्वा  
एव प्रातिष्ठन्त एवं वाङ्मनश्शक्षुः श्रोत्रं च ते प्रीताः प्राणं  
स्तुन्वन्ति ॥४॥

4. They did not believe. It (the principal Prana), in indignation, seemed to go out of the body (as it were), from above. When the Prana ascended, all the others immediately ascended too, and when it remained, all the others remained, just as the bees go out when their queen goes out, and return

when she returns. So mind, speech, eye, ear, and the rest being pleased, praised Prana.

### Notes and Commentary

*Utkramanti*—having gone out; *Makshikah*—bees; *Madhukara-rajanam*—the king of the bees, the queen bee; *Pratishthante*—remain.

When the Devas were incredulous, at the truthful statement of the chief Prana, the latter, in order to convince them, began as if, to go out of the body. Prana was hurt when the Devas disbelieved him. He began to go out of the body due to wounded pride and indignation.

When the Prana went out, all the senses went out, and when it remained all the senses remained. Just as the bees go out when their queen bee goes out, and settle down when she settles down, so did mind, speech, eye, ear and the rest. The mind and the organs left their disbelief, recognised the glory and greatness of Prana, became delighted and praised Prana. (On this dispute of the organs and the Prana see Bri. Up. VI-I, Chh. Up. V-I.)

एषोऽग्निस्तपत्येष सूर्य एष पर्जन्यो मघवानेष वायुरेष पृथिवी  
रयिदेवः सदसच्चामृतं च यत् ॥५॥

5. This (life), as fire (it burns), as the sun (it shines), as Parjanya (it rains), as Maghavan (Indra) (it reigns), it is the wind, it is the earth, moon, Deva, what has form, what is formless, and what is immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sat*—what is Being, form, gross, visible objects; *Asat*—what is not, non-being, formless, subtle, imperceptible, causal matter which cannot be cognised or perceived by the senses.

This Prana is all energy wherever it is found, whether in the fire, or the sun, or the rain, or the wind. All the forces of nature are Prana only. This is earth (supporter of all) and moon (nourisher of all). This is also Amrita, which is the basis or stay of all Devas.

अरा इव रथनाभौ प्राणे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।  
ऋचो यजूँषि सामानि यज्ञः क्षत्रं ब्रह्म च ॥६ ॥

6. As spokes in the nave of a wheel, so all is centred in Prana, the verses of the Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sama-Veda, sacrifices, the Kshatriyas and the Brahmanas.

### Notes and Commentary

*Kshatram*—Kshatriyas, power; *Brahma*—Brahmanas, wisdom.

Just as spokes are fixed in the nave of a wheel, so also all from 'Asa' (aspiration) down to 'name' are fixed in Prana (see Chh. Up. VII-1 to 15). The Vedas also are fixed in Prana, i.e., they came out from Hiranyagarbha, the Universal Prana. They can be recited or chanted with the help of Prana only. The three kinds of Mantras and what is accomplished by them, i.e., the sacrifices, the Kshatriyas who are the protectors of all, and the Brahmanas who are competent to perform sacrifices and other Karmas, also are established or fixed in the Prana. Prana is all this. Prana is the universal life-force.

प्रजापतिश्वरसि गर्भे त्वमेव प्रतिजायसे ।

तुभ्यं प्राण प्रजास्त्विमा बलिं हरन्ति यः प्राणैः प्रतितिष्ठसि ॥७ ॥

7. As Prajapati (Lord of creatures) thou movest about in the womb, thou indeed art born afterwards. To thee, O Prana, who dwelleth together with the other Pranas (senses), these creatures offer oblations.

### Notes and Commentary

Prana is the Lord of creatures, Prajapati. He moves in the womb. In the womb he causes the growth of the foetus. He expels the child from the womb when grown. He is born as a child, as another embodiment of the father and the mother. Prana is both father and mother, as he is the Lord of creatures. He is Prajapati, the universal life. Men bring offerings to the Prana through the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, etc. The senses carry the perceptions of their respective objects for nourishing and sustaining the life in the body. These are the offerings to

Prana, the Lord of the senses. Prana is the eater. All is food for Prana.

In the previous two verses 5 and 6, the Prana has been praised in the third person. In verses 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, he is directly addressed, 'Thou, O Prana, are the Prajapati', etc.

देवानामसि वह्नितमः पितणां प्रथमा स्वधा ।  
ऋषीणां चरितं सत्यमथर्वाङ्गिरसामसि ॥८॥

8. Thou art the best carrier to the gods, the first oblation to the forefathers. Thou art the true active principles of the senses (Pranas), which are the essence of the body.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Vanhitamah*—the best carrier of offerings. *Pitrinam prathama svadha*—Thou art the principal carrier of Svadha offering to the manes. *Atharvangerasam*—of the Atharva Angiras Rishis. Sri Sankaracharya takes it as the senses; the senses are called Atharva. The second line can be translated as: 'the true doings of the sages, the descendants of Atharvan and Angiras, thou art'. Rishi—from the root 'Risha', going, obtaining, because the senses are the producers of knowledge.

Prana is the best of the carriers of oblation to the Devas, such as Indra. Agni, the god of fire, carries to the gods the oblations offered unto the fire. Therefore, he is called by the name Vanhi (carrier). Agni is only a manifestation or expression of Prana. 'This life as fire burns, Prana burns as fire.' (Vide verse II-5)

The food given to the manes (forefathers) in the Nandi Sraaddha, is prior even to that offered to Indra, or the chief of the gods. Prana alone is the carrier of the first oblation to the ancestors. Prana is the active principle that supports the senses and the body. The limbs and organs will be emaciated and dried up if there is no Prana. So Prana is the essence or sap of all senses and body.

इन्द्रस्त्वं प्राण तेजसा रुद्रोऽसि परिरक्षिता ।  
त्वमन्तरिक्षे चरसि सूर्यस्त्वं ज्योतिषां पतिः ॥९॥

9. O Prana! thou art Indra, thou art Rudra by prowess, thou art the protector, thou movest in the sky, thou art the sun, the Lord of all lights.

### Notes and Commentary

*Indra*—Indra, i.e., Paramesvara (the supreme) Lord, Lord of all; *Tejasa*—by splendour, by prowess, by valour; *Rudra*—the destroyer; *Parirakshita*—the protector, i.e., Vishnu; *Jyotisham Pati*—the Lord of all lights, all lights shine on account of thee.

Agni, O Prana! thou art Indra, i.e., Paramesvara, the supreme Lord. By prowess thou art Rudra, the destroyer of the world. Thou art Vishnu, the protector of the world, by your mild aspect. Thou movest always in the interspace. Thou art the sun, the Lord of all lights.

यदा त्वमभिवर्षस्यथेमाः प्राण ते प्रजाः ।  
आनन्दरूपास्तिष्ठन्ति कामायान्नं भविष्यतीति ॥१०॥

10. When thou showerest down rain, then, O Prana, these creatures of thine sit delighted, hoping that there will be food as they desire.

### Notes and Commentary

When as cloud you rain on all sides, then these creatures become alive and are delighted hoping there will be abundant food. These creatures, having obtained food, work vigorously.

O Prana, these, your creatures, being yourself and nourished by your food, rejoice at the mere sight of the rain you pour, thinking there will be plenty of food according to their desire.

According to the reading, *Pranate*, the meaning would be, 'Then these creatures live'.

व्रात्यस्त्वं प्राणैकर्षिरत्ता विश्वस्य सत्पतिः ।  
वयमाद्यस्य दातारः पिता त्वं मातरिश्च नः ॥११॥

11. O Prana! thou art a Vratya (unpurified one), thou art the fire Ekarshi, the consumer of everything, the good Lord of the

world. We are the givers of oblations, O Matarisvan! thou art our father.

### Notes and Commentary

*Vratyah*—unpurified one, a person for whom the Samskaras, the sacramental and initiatory rites have not been performed. Thou being the first, there was no one to initiate thee. Prana being the first-born, there was none to perform the Samskaras or the purificatory rites for him. As he is endowed with inherent pure nature, there is no necessity for the performance of purificatory rites.

As you are Ekarshi, i.e., the famous fire of the followers of the Atharva Veda, you are the eater of all oblations. You alone are the Lord of all existence, or you are the good Lord.

*Sat-patiḥ*—the Lord of all existence, Lord of Truth, good Lord.

We are offerers of oblation to thee as thy worshippers. O Matarisvan! Thou art our father. (Or, you are the father of Matarisvan, the wind.) Therefore, it is established that thou art the father of all the universe.

या ते तनूर्वाचि प्रतिष्ठिता या श्रोत्रे या च चक्षुषि ।  
या च मनसि संतता शिवां तां कुरु मोत्क्रमीः ॥१२॥

12. Make propitious that body of thine which abides in speech, in the ear, in the eye, and also which pervades the mind, do not go out.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tanuh*—body or portion, expression of Prana.

What form of thine exists, in speech, in the ear, in the eye, and in the mind, is fully spread out; make them auspicious. O Prana, do not go out of this body.

O Prana, your body or form is in the speech. You move the mouth of the speaker. Your form is in the ear and you make the ear to hear. Your form is in the eye and you make the eye to see. Your form is in the mind and you make the mind to think.

Make these forms quiet and calm. Do not render them unquiet by going out of the body or ascending from the body.

प्राणस्येदं वशे सर्वं त्रिदिवे यत्प्रतिष्ठितम् ।  
मातेव पुत्रानक्षस्व श्रीश्च प्रज्ञां च विधेहि न इति ॥१३॥

॥ इति द्वितीयः प्रश्नः ॥

13. All this is within the control of Prana, as also all that is in the third heaven. Protect us like a mother. Give us prosperity and wisdom.

### Notes and Commentary

All objects of enjoyment in this world are under the control of Prana. All objects that exist in the heaven for the enjoyment of the Devas, are also under the control of Prana. Tridivi may mean the three worlds. Whatever exists in the three worlds, is all under the control of Prana. The splendour of Brahmanas and the valour of Kshatriyas are due to you. Prana alone is the Lord or protector. Therefore, O Prana, protect us just as a mother protects her sons. Bestow on us prosperity and knowledge that are in you.

Prana is the Lord of creation. He is the eater. He is the Lord of speech, eye, ear, mind, etc. His glory, greatness and superiority is thus a well-established fact.

Thus ends the Second Prasna.

OM

### TRITIYA PRASNA (QUESTION III)

#### KAUSALYA AND PIPPALADA

अथ हैनं कौसल्यश्वलायनः पप्रच्छ । भगवन्कुत एष प्राणो  
जायते कथमायात्यस्मिन्नारीर आत्मानं वा प्रविभज्य कथं प्रातिष्ठते  
केनोत्क्रमते कथं बाह्यमभिधत्ते कथमध्यात्ममिति ॥१॥

1. Then Kausalya, son of Asvala, questioned him: O Bhagavan! whence is this Prana born? How does it come into

this body? How does it abide, after it has divided itself? How does it go out? How does it support what is without, and how all within the body?

### Notes and Commentary

This question shows that the supreme Lord is not only the creator of the whole universe, but also rules the microcosm as five-fold Prana. After it has been determined that the nature of Prajapati, the consumer, belongs to life, another question is asked in order to ascertain the manner in which it should be worshipped.

*Atha*—next, then; *Enam*—him; *Kutah*—whence; *Katham*—how; *Kena*—by what means; *Utkramate*—goes out (of this body); *Iti*—thus.

Then Kausalya, son of Asvala, questioned Pippalada. Though the glory of Prana has been thus realised by the senses, yet it may be an effect, or a combination (Samhata), or modification. Therefore, I ask, O venerable Master! whence, from what cause, Prana is produced and when produced, how does he enter this body? What is the cause of his taking a body? How does he, dividing himself, stay, when he has entered the body? How does he go out of the body, how does he ascend?

How does he support what is without and what is external to the body (Adhibhuta and Adhidaiva), the totality of elements and powers, all creatures and presiding deities? How does he support what is within the body, the senses and the mind?

तस्मै स होवाचातिप्रश्नान्पृच्छसि ब्रह्मिष्ठोऽसीति तस्मात्तेऽहं  
ब्रवीमि ॥२॥

2. He replied: You ask questions about transcendental matters. I will explain to thee, because you are a great enquirer of Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

*Atiprasnan*—great questions, deep and difficult questions, questions which are above ordinary understanding, about the

mysteries that should not be probed into, questions on transcendental matters.

Pippalada said: O Kausalya! you question even about the origin of Prana. These are all questions about transcendental things. You are a great enquirer of Brahman. You are a knower of Brahman, i.e., you are centred in lower Brahman. You are a worshipper of lower Brahman. You are a deserving aspirant. So, I shall tell you what you ask about. Listen with rapt attention.

आत्मन एष प्राणो जायते । यथैषा पुरुषे छायैतस्मिन्नेतदाततं  
मनोकृतेनायात्यस्मिञ्चरीरे ॥३॥

3. This Prana is born of the Atman. As this shadow in man, so is this (Prana) in the Atman. By the action of the mind, this enters into this body.

### Notes and Commentary

*Manokritena*—by the act of the mind, by thought-power, by willing and wishing, by the good or evil deeds, which are the work of the mind.

From the Atman, the higher Purusha, the Self undecaying and true, is born this Prana. Just as the shadow inheres in man, so in this Atman, Brahman, is this Prana spread out. Prana has no independent existence. It is not apart from the Atman. The form of the man is the cause for his shadow which is the effect. Even so, the Atman is the cause and Prana is the effect. By a mere mental act, it enters this body, i.e., through the Karma (virtue and vice) produced by volition (Sankalpa), wish (Iccha), etc., of the mind. Another Sruti says, 'Intent on the fruit he obtains the body with his Karma'. A person's life in this body is the sure and appropriate result of his thoughts in a previous existence, just as a shadow is the resemblance inevitably cast from a person's body.

यथा सप्राडेवाधिकृतान्विनियुड्कत एतान्ग्रामानेतान्ग्रामानधितिष्ठ-  
स्वेत्येवमेवैष प्राण इतरान्प्राणान्पृथक्पृथगेव संनिधत्ते ॥४॥

4. As a king commands his officers, saying to them, 'Reside in and govern these or those villages', so does this Prana dispose the other Pranas, each for their separate work.

### Notes and Commentary

*Samrat*—a king, an emperor, a sovereign.

Just as in the world, the sovereign alone posts officers under him to different villages and orders, 'Govern these villages and those', so also the chief Prana appoints the lower Pranas, Prana, Apana, Vyana, Samana and Udana, each to his respective (post) organ and function, and appoints other Pranas such as the eye, etc., to their respective posts to carry out their different functions or duties.

पायूपस्थेऽपानं चक्षुःश्रोत्रे मुखनासिकाभ्यां प्राणः स्वयं प्रातिष्ठते  
मध्ये तु समानः । एष ह्येतद्बृतमन्नं समं नयति तस्मादेताः सप्तार्चिषो  
भवन्ति ॥५॥

5. The Apana dwells in the organs of excretion and generation, the Prana itself abides in the eye, ear, mouth and nose. In the middle is Samana; it distributes the food supplied equally and the seven flames proceed from it.

### Notes and Commentary

This verse shows the various localities where these Pranas dwell. The spheres of actions of these are also defined. Apana dwells in the Anus and the generative organ. It performs excretion. Prana does the sensory life function. It dwells in the eye, the ears, etc. Samana dwells in the navel. It does the digestive function. Vyana does the function of circulation of blood. It is all-pervading. Udana helps swallowing of food and drink. It takes the Jiva to Brahman during deep sleep. It takes the Jiva out of the body during death, and conducts him to the other worlds. It dwells in the throat.

*Payupaste*—in the anus and the generative organ, presiding over the function of defecation and urination.

*Sapta-archisha*—seven lights or flames. From the gastric fire arise the seven flames called Kaali, Karali, Manojava,

Sulohita, Sudhumravarna, Sphulingini and Visvaruchi. The seven organs of knowledge, viz., the two ears, the two eyes, the two nostrils and the mouth are also called seven flames. These organs depend upon the food digested by the gastric fire.

*Hutam*—offered (eaten and drunk).

*Samana* is compared to the fire which consumes the sacrificial food and equally distributes it among the gods.

The seven flames go out from the fire in the stomach, fed by food and drink, and reach the region of the heart and then the openings in the head, i.e., the objects of seeing, hearing, etc., are enlightened through the *Prana*. Man experiences hearing, seeing, smelling, etc.

हृदि हृषे आत्मा । अत्रैतदेकशं नाडीनां तासां शतं शतमेकैकस्यां  
द्वासप्ततिर्द्वासप्ततिः प्रतिशाखानाडीसहस्राणि भवन्त्यासु  
व्यानश्चरति ॥६॥

6. This *Atman* is in the heart. Here, there are a hundred and one nerves. Each of them has a hundred branches; again, every one of these has seventy-two thousand sub-branches, in these the *Vyana* moves.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Naadi*—the astral tube or nerve that carries the currents of energy. It cannot be seen by the physical eyes. Generally, it is translated as the artery that carries blood.

In the heart, in the *Akasa* of the heart, is this *Atman*, i.e., the subtle body connected with the *Atman*. The *Vyana* moves in these nerves. *Vyana* pervades the whole body. Just as rays proceed from the sun, so also these nerves proceed from the heart to all parts of the body. Man performs deeds that need great strength with the help of *Vyana*.

*Vyana* is the energy that works through the nervous system and the arteries and veins. It does the function of circulating the blood throughout the body.

The principal nerves are 101, a hundred times 101 would give us 10,100, and each multiplied by 72,000 would give us a

total of 727,200,000 nerves and if we add the principal nerves, we have the total number 727,210,101.

अथैकयोर्ध्वं उदानः पुण्येन पुण्यं लोकं नयति पापेन  
पापमुभाभ्यामेव मनुष्यलोकम् ॥७॥

7. Again, through one nerve, the Udana, ascending, leads us upwards to the virtuous worlds by good work, to sinful worlds by sin, and to the world of men by virtue and sin combined.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Urdhva*—upwards; *Nayati*—leads, conducts; *Ubhayam*—by both (good and bad deeds); *Manushyalokam*—human world.

By one of these hundred and one nerves, called Sushumna, which goes up, Udana, which pervades the whole body from the foot to the head, conducts one to virtuous worlds such as the heavens, by virtuous actions enjoined by the scriptures; by sinful actions to sinful worlds, such as the nether worlds in low births, as that of animals, insects, etc.; by both equally combined, i.e., virtue and sin, to the world of men. Udana controls the subtle body (Linga Sarira of 19 Tattvas), and carries the soul after death to the different worlds. It is Udana that takes man to the region of deep sleep, and also performs the function of swallowing food and drink (the act of deglutition).

आदित्यो ह वै बाह्यः प्राण उदयत्येष ह्येनं चाक्षुषं प्राणमनुगृह्णानः ।  
पृथिव्यां या देवता सैषा पुरुषस्यापानमवष्टभ्यान्तरा यदाकाशः स  
समानो वायुव्यानः ॥८॥

8. The sun verily is the external Prana. He rises favouring the Prana in the eye. The goddess of the earth attracts (controls) the Apana downwards. The Akasa (ether) between (the sun and the earth) is Samana. The wind is Vyana.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Avashtabhyā*—drawing up, controlling; having controlled Apana, directs it downwards.

The sun rises, and by his light favours the Prana in the eye, i.e., helps the eyes with its light to see the forms and colours. Without the sun, the eye cannot see.

The goddess of earth attracts or controls the activity of Apana in man, and helps its action by pulling downwards. Otherwise this body may fall down owing to its weight, or may fly up by the opposite power. The goddess of the earth refers obviously to the force of gravity.

The space or ether between the earth and the sun is the cosmic Samana. It helps the Samana inside the man. Sri Sankara takes the air in the Akasa, in the middle, i.e., between the earth and the heaven as Samana. He says, 'By the word Akasa, the wind in it is denoted, as those in a cot are indicated by the word cot. The cosmic Samana resembles the Samana in man, in the fact of being enclosed within the Akasa in the middle, and also favours the Samana in man. The wind (Vayu) resembles Vyana in pervading and so favours Vyana.

तेजो ह वाव उदानस्तस्मादुपशान्ततेजाः ।  
पुनर्भवमिन्द्रियैर्मनसि संपद्यमानैः ॥९॥

9. The external fire indeed is Udana. Therefore, he whose fire has gone out, enters another body with his senses absorbed in the mind.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Tejah*—fire.

The external fire is the Udana in the body. It favours by its heat and light the Udana in the body. The Udana in man, assisted or favoured by the external fire, ascends from the body and takes the Jiva, the individual soul, to the different worlds.

*Upasantatejah*—those whose fire has extinguished.

*Punarbhavam*—rebirth, go for rebirth, i.e., die taking another body.

When a man's natural fire is extinguished, when the animal heat is gone, then one should know that his life is spent, i.e.,

that he is dying. He enters another body along with his senses absorbed or clinging to the mind.

In the Bhagavad Gita you will find: 'When man acquires a body and when he abandons it, he seizes the organs and goes with them, just as the wind takes fragrances from the flowers'. (XV-8)

यच्चित्तस्तेनैष प्राणमायाति प्राणस्तेजसा युक्तः ।  
सहात्मना यथासंकल्पितं लोकं नयति ॥१०॥

10. Whatever his thought (at the time of death), with that he attains Prana; and the Prana united with Udana together with the Jivatma leads on to the world thought of.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Yatha sankalpitam*—as desired, as thought; *Atman*—the Jivatman; *Lokam*—world, body; *Pranam ayati*—comes to Prana, approaches Prana, attains Prana.

At the time of death, the activity of the senses decline. All functions such as thinking, remembering, etc., cease. Only respiration goes on, for the Jiva is merged in Prana. He comes to the presence of the chief Prana. The Jiva, surrounded by the subtle body, appears in the presence of chief Prana at the time of death. He lives by the activity of the chief Prana alone. Then, his relatives and other people around say, 'he breathes and lives.' The Jiva separates himself, at the time of death, from the physical body and comes to the Pranamaya Kosa of the subtle body (Linga Sarira), with the thought he had at the dying moment.

The Udana, in conjunction with the Prana, ejects the tenant soul (Jiva) from its house, the body, and leads him (the enjoyer or owner) to worlds, i.e., bodies thought of according to the influence of good and evil actions. The Bhagavad Gita says: 'whosoever at the end abandons the body, thinking upon any being, to that being only he goes, O Kaunteya, ever to that confirmed in nature'. (VIII-6)

य एवं विद्वान्प्राणं वेद न हास्य प्रजा हीयतेऽमृतो भवति तदेष  
श्लोकः ॥११॥

11. The learned man who knows Prana thus, his offspring does not perish and he becomes immortal; there is the following verse.

### Notes and Commentary

*Evam*—thus, as such, as described above; with those attributes already described about his birth, glory, etc. The fruits of this knowledge, both here and hereafter are pointed out. His line never comes to an end or becomes extinct. The offspring, i.e., the son, the grandson, etc., of this knower, do not suffer break in continuity. He himself, after death, attains immortality (in a relative sense). The following verse briefly explains this purport.

उत्पत्तिमायतिं स्थानं विभुत्वं चैव पश्चाद् । अध्यात्मं चैव प्राणस्य  
विज्ञायामृतमश्नुते विज्ञायामृतमश्नुत इति ॥१२॥

॥ इति तृतीय प्रश्नः ॥

12. He who knows the origin, the entry, the seat, the fivefold distribution of Prana and its internal state in the body, obtains immortality, yea, attains immortality.

### Notes and Commentary

Knowing the birth of Prana from the Paramatman, the Supreme Self, its coming into the body by the activity of the mind (thoughts and desires), and its staying in the lower apertures, senses, navel, throat and other places, its fivefold sovereignty, the positing, as by a king, of the Pranas to their respective posts, its external manifestation as the sun, ether, wind, fire, etc., its internal manifestation as eye, etc., one attains relative immortality, the state of Hiranyagarbha or Brahma.

Thus ends the third Prasna

OM

## CHATURTHA PRASNA (QUESTION IV)

SAURYAYANI AND PIPPALADA

अथ हैनं सौर्यायणी गार्यः पप्रच्छ । भगवन्नेतस्मिन्पुरुषे कानि  
स्वपन्ति कान्यस्मिन्जाग्रति कतर एष देवः स्वप्नान्पश्यति  
कस्यैतत्सुखं भवति कस्मिन्नु सर्वे संप्रतिष्ठिता भवन्तीति ॥१॥

1. Then Gargya, the grandson of Surya questioned him: O Bhagavan, what are they that sleep in man? What again are awake in him? Which is the Deva who sees dreams? Whose is this happiness? On what do all these depend?

## Notes and Commentary

Saurayani Gargya asked Pippalada: "O venerable Master! Which organs sleep in the body, or cease functioning when man is sleeping? Which are awake therein, i.e., perform their functions? What god is it that sees dreams? By what organ the Jiva dreams? Whose is this happiness? In whom all these organs are founded, established or centred? Where do these blend indistinguishably in sleep, like juice in honey, or like rivers in the ocean? In whom all these organs are absorbed in sleep or Pralaya?

*Atha*—next; *Ha*—verily; *Enam*—him (Pippalada); *Etasmin*—in this; *Kani*—what (organs or senses); *Asmin*—in this (body); *Katarah*—who out of these; *Kasya*—whose; *Etat*—this; *Kasmin*—in whom; *Iti*—thus.

The first three questions deal with Samsara or the phenomenal existence, the subject of Apara Vidya, lower Vidya. The next three questions are asked in order that Brahman, the subject of Para Vidya, who is unborn, undecaying, self-luminous, all-pervading, imperishable and beyond the reach of mind, may be known.

तस्मै स होवाच यथा गार्य मरीचयोऽक्स्यास्तं गच्छतः सर्वा  
एतस्मिंस्तेजोमण्डल एकीभवन्ति ताः पुनः पुनरुदयतः प्रचरन्त्येवं ह वै  
तत्सर्वं परे देवे मनस्येकीभवति । तेन तर्हेष पुरुषो न शृणोति न पश्यति

न जिघ्रति न रसयते न स्पृशते नाभिवदते नादते नानन्दयते न विसृजते  
नेयायते स्वपितीत्याचक्षते ॥२॥

2. He replied: O Gargya, just as the rays of the sun, when setting, become one in that disc of light and come forth again when the sun rises again, so also all these become one in the highest Deva, the mind. Therefore, at that time, that man does not hear, see, smell, taste, feel, does not speak, nor take, nor enjoy, nor evacuate, nor move; they say, 'he sleeps'.

### Notes and Commentary

All the organs or senses are dormant in the mind during deep sleep. They become one in the mind. Mind is the highest deity or sense, because the eye and other senses are under the control of the mind.

In deep sleep, the activities of the senses cease. So, the man hears not, sees not, smells not, evacuates not, moves not. Men of worldly understanding say, 'he sleeps'.

प्राणाग्रय एवैतस्मिन्पुरे जाग्रति । गार्हपत्यो ह वा एषोऽपानो  
व्यानोऽन्वाहार्यपचनो यद्गार्हपत्यात्प्रणीयते प्रणयनादाहवनीयः  
प्राणः ॥३॥

3. The fires of Prana alone are awake in the city (body). The Apana is the Garhapatya fire. Vyana is the Anvaharyapachana fire. The Prana is the Ahavaniya fire, because it is taken out of the Garhapatya fire.

### Notes and Commentary

*Pranagnayah*—the Prana fires, the fires which consist of Prana, Apana, etc., the physiological energies; *Etasmin pure*—in this city (of nine gates), in this body; *Jagrati*—keep awake or keep watch, go on performing their functions of maintaining the organism.

When the senses, the ear and the rest are gone to sleep in this body of nine openings, the five Pranas called fires, being like fire, keep watch. They remain ever active.

Garhapatya is the fire of the household, the kitchen fire. Garhapatya, placed in the west, is always kept burning. From Garhapatya, fire is taken to the other altars. The Apana is the Garhapatya fire. Just as, at the time of performing the Agnihotra, another fire named Ahavaniya is obtained from the Garhapatya, so from the Apana, during sleep, Prana is obtained. This is the similarity between the Apana and the Garhapatya fire. Further, both are situated in the west. As the Garhapatya fire is lighted in the western hearth of the house, so the Apana is the western or downward going function, the excretory function. All the oblations to gods are offered in the Ahavaniya fire.

Vyana goes out of the southern cavity of the heart. Therefore, it is called the Anvaharyapachana or Dakshinagni (the southern fire) from its connection with the south. Further, both burn up oblations. The Anvaharyapachana is used for offering oblations to the manes or ancestors.

यदुच्छ्वासनिःश्वासावेतावाहृती समं नयतीति स समानः । मनो ह  
वाव यजमान इष्टफलमेवोदानः स एनं यजमानमहरहर्व्रह्म  
गमयति ॥४॥

4. Because the Samana distributes equally the oblations, the expiration and inspiration, he is the priest (Hotri). The mind is the sacrificer, the Udana is the reward of the sacrifices; he leads the sacrificer every day (in deep sleep to Brahman).

#### Notes and Commentary

*Ucchvasanisvasa*—expiration and inspiration; *Yajamanah*—the sacrificer.

Samana is the Adhvaryu or the officiating priest. Samana is connected with the respiratory function also. It establishes the equipoise between exhalation and inhalation.

Just as the sacrificer proceeds to heaven, so also the mind marches to Brahman, to enjoy the bliss of Brahman, having thrown the external senses and objects as oblations into the wakeful Prana-fires.

The Udana conducts the mind, the sacrificer, every day during deep sleep to the Immortal, all-blissful Brahman. Therefore, Udana is the fruit of the sacrifice.

अत्रैष देवः स्वप्ने महिमानमनुभवति । यददृष्टं दृष्टमनुपश्यति श्रुतं श्रुतमेवार्थमनुशृणोति देशदिग्न्तरैश्च प्रत्यनुभूतं पुनःपुनः प्रत्यनुभवति दृष्टं चादृष्टं च श्रुतं चाश्रुतं चानुभूतं चानुभूतं च सच्चासच्च सर्वं पश्यति सर्वः पश्यति ॥५॥

5. In this state, this Deva (mind) enjoys, in dream, his greatness. What has been seen, he sees again, what has been heard, he hears again, what has been enjoyed in different countries and quarters, he enjoys again. What has been seen and not seen, heard and not heard, experienced, and not experienced, real and unreal, he sees all; he being all, sees.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Atra*—here in this state; in dream when the Prana is withdrawn from sense-organs, ear, etc., but only the vital functions such as respiration, circulation of blood and digestion are carried on; *Devaḥ*—god, mind; *Anubhutam*—experienced in this life, perceived; *Ananubhutam*—not experienced in this life (but experienced in some past life), unperceived.

In dream, the mind creates a world of its own out of the impressions received in the waking state, and enjoys the visions. The mind itself is the perceiver (subject) and the perceived (object). The mind itself assumes the forms of mountains, rivers, trees, flowers, etc. Whatever was seen in the waking state, the mind perceives it again in dream as a picture. Whatever seen or not seen, heard or not heard, experienced or not experienced, true or false, he sees all. In dream, the mental impressions are revived and vivified. The mind creates a new and fantastic mixture of its own and experiences things in dream that you have never seen or heard in the waking state. You fly in the air in dream. You dream that you are dead. In dream, the subtle body operates. In dream, the mind dives deep sometimes into the impressions of past lives also and revives them. There is no coherence of time and space in some dreams.

In this verse, there is the answer for the question: Which is the Deva who sees dreams? When the ear, etc., stop functioning and Prana and other airs keep watch for the support of the body, before reaching the state of deep sleep, this Deva (mind) during the interval, with the senses absorbed in it, just as the rays of the sun are absorbed in the orb or disc of the sun, sees in dreams his own greatness or grandeur. He assumes various forms.

He sees in dreams what was seen in this birth and what was not seen, i.e., what was seen in previous births, what is real such as water, and what is unreal such as waters of the mirage.

In dream, the mind dwells in Hita Nadi, and in deep sleep the Jiva rests in Puritati Nadi. The Atman is self-luminous in dreams.

स यदा तेजसाऽभिभूतो भवत्यत्रैष देवः स्वप्नान्न पश्यत्यथ  
तदैतस्मिञ्चरीर एतत्सुखं भवति ॥६॥

6. When he is overpowered by light, then that god (mind) sees no dreams and that time the bliss arises in this body.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tejasa*—by the light; *Sarire*—in this body, the Jiva.

In deep sleep, the mind also ceases to function. The soul, the Jiva, enjoys happiness, and not the non-intelligent body. The causal body is active in deep sleep. The causal body is the organ through which the happiness of deep sleep (Sushupti) is enjoyed.

When the Deva, the mind, is overpowered, i.e., when all the outlets of these impressions are closed by the light of the sun lodged in the nerve called 'Hita', then the mind is absorbed into the heart along with its tendencies and the senses. Then he sleeps. During deep sleep (Sushupti), the Deva (mind) does not see dreams, as the door of vision is closed by light; then the bliss arises.

When the Jiva, or the mind, is overpowered by profound Tamas, he gets deep sleep. The Jiva rests in Brahman. There is only the thin layer of Avidya between him and the supreme Self. In Samadhi, or superconscious state, this veil of

ignorance is rent asunder, and the Jiva merges himself in Brahman and attains highest knowledge. This is the difference between sleep and Samadhi.

स यथा सोम्य वर्यांसि वासोवृक्षं संप्रतिष्ठन्ते ।  
एवं ह वै तत्सर्वं परं आत्मनि संप्रतिष्ठते ॥७॥

7. Just as, O beloved one, birds repair to a tree to roost (dwell), so indeed all this rests in the Supreme Atman.

### Notes and Commentary

*Hey Saumya*—O beloved one, my young friend, good youth; *Vayamsi*—birds; *Vasovriksham*—the tree where they dwell or roost; *Sarvam*—all, what are enumerated in the next verse.

During deep sleep, all organs and the mind become quiet. The Jivatma also is free from trouble, pain and sorrow. He enjoys the bliss of Brahman. Just as birds go to a tree to roost, so also all these (mentioned in the next verse), rest in the Supreme Atman.

पृथिवी च पृथिवीमात्रा चापश्चापोमात्रा च तेजश्च तेजोमात्रा च  
वायुश्च वायुमात्रा चाकाशश्चाकाशमात्रा च चक्षुश्च द्रष्टव्यं च श्रोत्रं च  
श्रोतव्यं च घ्राणं च घ्रातव्यं च रसश्च रसयितव्यं च त्वक्च स्पर्शयितव्यं च  
चाकच वक्तव्यं च हस्तौ चादातव्यं चोपस्थश्चाऽनन्दयितव्यं च  
पायुश्च विसर्जयितव्यं च पादौ च गन्तव्यं च मनश्च मन्तव्यं च बुद्धिश्च  
बोद्धव्यं चाहंकारश्चाहंकर्तव्यं च चित्तं च चेतयितव्यं च तेजश्च  
विद्योतयितव्यं च प्राणश्च विधारयितव्यं च ॥८॥

8. The earth and the subtle elements, the water and its subtle elements, the fire and its subtle elements, the air and its subtle elements, Akasa and its subtle elements, the eye and what can be seen, the ear and what can be heard, the nose and what can be smelt, taste and its object, the organ of touch and its object, the speech and its object, the hands and what can be grasped, the feet and what can be walked, the organ of generation and what is to be enjoyed, the organ of excretion and what must be excreted, the mind and what must be thought of, the intellect

and what must be determined, egoism and its object, Chitta and its object, light and its object, the Prana and what is to be supported by it—(all these rest in the Supreme Atman in deep sleep.)

### Notes and Commentary

Sankhya categories or Tattvas are enumerated here.

*Prithivimatra*—the subtle earth-element, the subtle Tanmatra, the root element of earth from which the gross earth is produced.

The five elements, the five Tanmatras, all the ten organs and their objects, the ten Vishayas, the fourfold mind and its functions—all these rest in the Supreme Atman in deep sleep. Manas or mind is that which cogitates, 'Should I do this or should I not do this?' The Buddhi or intellect determines, 'I must do this'. Egoism or Ahamkara is the self-arrogating principle. It says, 'I did this', 'I enjoyed this'. Chitta is the faculty of memory.

*Tejas*—Sri Sankara explains this term, as the skin apart from the sense of touch, having light, according to which the subtle cuticle which, besides the special organ, is the cause of perception.

एष हि द्रष्टा स्प्रष्टा श्रोता ग्राता रसयिता मन्ता बोद्धा कर्ता  
विज्ञानात्मा पुरुषः । स परेऽक्षर आत्मनि संप्रतिष्ठते ॥१॥

9. It is he who sees, feels, hears, smells, tastes, thinks, knows; he is the doer, the intelligent soul, the Purusha. He dwells in the highest, indestructible Self.

### Notes and Commentary

*Drashta*—seer; *Sprashta*—he who feels; *Srota*—he who hears; *Ghrata*—he who smells; *Rasayitha*—he who tastes; *Manta*—he who thinks; *Bodha*—the determiner; *Karta*—the doer.

*Vijnanatma*—intelligent self; *Vijnana* means the intellect, the instrument by which things are known; and therefore the word means he who knows, or the knower—he is a knower by his nature.

The Jivatma with the attributes of doer and enjoyer, is the seer, hearer, etc. Just as the image of the sun is reflected in water, so the image of Brahman is reflected in the mind. This reflected image is Jiva. This is only apparent but not real.

*Purusha*—He is called Purusha, because he is filled with limiting adjuncts; he fills out all the said spheres which are combinations of cause and effect. The Jivatma enters into the Supreme, the immortal, undecaying Atman, just as the reflected image of the sun in water enters into the sun.

परमेवाक्षरं प्रतिपद्यते स यो ह वै तदच्छायमशरीरमलोहितं शुभ्रमक्षरं  
वेदयते यस्तु सोम्य स सर्वज्ञः सर्वो भवति । तदेष श्लोकः ॥१०॥

10. Supreme, indestructible Being, he surely attains. Whoever, O beloved one, knows his Being, which is without shadow, without body, without colour, which is pure and indestructible, becomes omniscient and becomes all. There is this verse.

#### Notes and Commentary

The fruits of Self-realisation, or attaining the oneness of the Atman, are stated in this verse. He who knows the Self surely attains the supreme, indestructible, pure Atman. He becomes all and omniscient.

*Achhayam*—the shadowless, free from Tamas and ignorance, unshrouded by ignorance (Avidya); *Asariram*—bodiless, devoid of body subject to conditions of name and form, etc.; *Alohitam*—the colourless, devoid of all attributes, Gunas such as Rajas, etc.; *Subhram*—white, pure, shining.

Brahman is free from Gunas and so He is ever pure. He is bodiless and so He is undecaying. The Jiva was enveloped by ignorance and so he was not omniscient before. He becomes all by the destruction of ignorance, by attaining knowledge.

Brahman is eternal, incomprehensible, unborn. He is all bliss in His nature, free from all misery and troubles. He exists without and within all.

विज्ञानात्मा सहदेवैश्च सर्वैः प्राणा भूतानि संप्रतिष्ठन्ति यत्र । तदक्षरं वेदयते यस्तु सोम्य स सर्वज्ञः सर्वमेवाविवेशेति ॥११॥

॥ इति चतुर्थः प्रश्नः ॥

11. O beloved one, he who knows the imperishable Atman in whom rests the knowing Self with all the Devas, the Pranas and five elements, becomes omniscient, and indeed enters into all.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Vijnanatma*—the knowing Self, the being whose nature is knowledge; *Devaih*—the Devas such as Agni, Indra and the rest who preside over the functions of the senses; *Pranah*—Pranas, the senses, the eye and the rest; *Bhutas*—such as earth, water, etc.; *Avivesa*—enters; *Sarvamevavivesa*—enters into all, realises that he is the Self, the Atman in all beings, and feels that he himself exists in all.

Here ends the Fourth Prasna.

OM

#### PANCHAMA PRASNA (QUESTION V)

##### SATYAKAMA AND PIPPALADA

अथ हैनं शैव्यः सत्यकामः पप्रच्छ । स यो ह वै तद्वगवन्मनुष्येषु प्रायणान्तमोकारमभिध्यायीत । कतमं वाव स तेन लोकं जयतीति ॥१॥

1. Then Satyakama, son of Sibi, questioned him: O Bhagavan! What world does he who, among men, meditates on 'Om' until death, attain by that?

#### Notes and Commentary

This chapter deals with the sacred monosyllable Om, the great ineffable Name by which the Supreme Brahman is to be meditated upon. It also explains the fruit obtained by such meditation.

Now, the Prasna is begun for the purpose of enjoining the worship of the syllable Om (Pranava), as a means to the attainment of the Para (higher) and Apara (lower) Brahman.

Om is the Pratika, substitute for Brahman. It is the symbol of Brahman. Meditation on Om, with Bhava (feeling) and knowledge of its meaning, is real meditation on Brahman. Meditation on Om is the keeping up of the continuous flow of one idea of the Supreme Self, like the flow of oil from one vessel to another (*Tailadharavat*). The mind should be steady like the flame of a lamp in a windless place. Meditation can be practised only by that aspirant whose senses are turned away from external objects, who has a calm mind, who has practised Ahimsa (non-injury), Satya (Truth), Brahmacharya (celibacy), who is endowed with discrimination, dispassion, self-restraint, renunciation, purity, faith, endurance and strong yearning for the final emancipation.

तस्मै स होवाच । एतद्वै सत्यकाम परं चापरं च ब्रह्म यदोकारः ।  
तस्माद्विद्वानेतेनैवायतनेनैकतरमन्वेति ॥२॥

2. He replied: O Satyakama! Om is indeed the higher and the lower Brahman. Therefore, he who knows it by this means, surely attains either of them.

#### Notes and Commentary

This Brahman, unmanifested, the highest, transcendental, undecaying, Trigunatita, absolute, known as Purusha, and the lower Brahman known as Prana, the first born (Hiranyagarbha) is verily Om. Om is also its Pratika or substitute.

Om primarily signifies Para Brahman, or the Supreme Self, and secondarily, it denotes Hiranyagarbha (Virinchi) also, because the latter is only a manifestation or expression of the former. Om represents the manifested Saguna Brahman by its audible sound, and the unmanifested Para Brahman or Nirguna Brahman by its inaudible or unexpressed form, known as Ardhamatra.

*Vidvan*—the knower; *Ayatana*—refuge, means, support (*Alambana*), vehicle; *Anveti*—attains.

The pure Para Brahman is destitute of all distinguishing attributes. He is beyond the reach of the lower, impure mind. He is incapable of being indicated by words. He is beyond the reach of speech and intellect, as He is extremely subtle and incomprehensible. He cannot be grasped by the senses. But those qualified aspirants, who meditate on Om with a pure and one-pointed mind, understanding its right significance, attain Brahman, either the higher or the lower.

स यद्येकमात्रमभिध्यायीत स तेनैव संवेदितस्तूर्णमेव  
जगत्यामभिसंपद्यते । तमृचो मनुष्यलोकमुपनयन्ते स तत्र तपसा  
ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया संपन्नो महिमानमनुभवति ॥३॥

3. If he meditates on one Matra (measure) of it (A), then he being enlightened by that, comes quickly to earth. The Rik-verses lead him to the world of men, and being endowed there with austerity, celibacy and faith, attains greatness.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Ekamatram*—one measure, the letter 'A' alone, that aspect of Brahman which is denoted by the letter 'A' only; *Anubhavati*—experiences, reaches, attains.

Though he may not know the division of all the Matras (measures) of the syllable Om, still he surely attains an excellent goal by meditating on the one Matra alone, of the syllable Om. He cannot attain evil on account of the defect of a partial knowledge of Om. He gets enlightenment by meditation of Om with only one Matra. The Riks take him to the world of man, where he attains greatness in life. He becomes one pre-eminent among men, being endowed with austerity, celibacy and faith. He surely attains all prosperity on this earth. The Rik-verses lead him to human birth and give him all happiness. He does not become an unbeliever. He has intense faith in the Vedas, in the existence of Brahman, in the words of his preceptor, and in his own Self. He does not act according to his own sweet will and pleasure. He treads the path of righteousness. He follows the injunctions of the scriptures and so he experiences greatness and he is adored by the people.

By meditation of 'Om' as one Matra, some take it to mean the meditation on the letter 'A' alone of the syllable. Others mean the meditation on the whole 'Om'. The former only is correct, because, verse four deals with meditation on 'U', and the verse five deals with meditation on the syllable Om.

अथ यदि द्विमात्रेण मनसि संपद्यते सोऽन्तरिक्षं यजुर्भिरुन्नीयते  
सोमलोकम् । स सोमलोके विभूतिमनुभूय पुनरावर्तते ॥४॥

4. But if he meditates on its second Matra only, he becomes one with the mind. He is led up by the Yajus-verses to the sky, the world of the moon. Having enjoyed greatness there, he returns again.

### Notes and Commentary

*Dvimatrena*—by two syllables A and U.

If one meditates on the second Matra U of the monosyllable Om, or if he meditates on the two Matras A and U, the Yajus-verses take him to the world of forefathers (Chandraloka) in the Antariksha, intermediate space. Having enjoyed there its greatness and grandeur, he comes back again to the world of men.

*Manasi sampadyate*—becomes united with the mind, i.e., remains in his mental body (Linga-Sarira or subtle body, Sukshma Sarira).

यः पुनरेतं त्रिमात्रेणोमित्येतेनैवाक्षरेण परं पुरुषमभिध्यायीत स तेजसि सूर्ये संपन्नः । यथा पादोदरस्त्वचा विनिर्मुच्यत एवं ह वै स पाप्मना विनिर्मुक्तः स सामभिरुन्नीयते ब्रह्मलोकं स एतस्माज्जीव-घनात्परात्परं पुरिशयं पुरुषमीक्षते । तदेतौ श्लोकौ भवतः ॥५॥

5. But if again he meditates on the Highest Purusha with this syllable Om of three Matras, he becomes united with the bright sun. As snake is freed from its slough, so is he freed from sin. He is led up by the Sama-hymns to the world of Brahma (Hiranyagarbha), and from him, full of life, he beholds the Supreme Purusha residing in the heart. There are the two following verses about it.

### Notes and Commentary

*Trimatrena*—with the three Matras A, U, and M; *Jivaghanah*—Hiranyagarbha, life-mass, Jiva-mass, dense with lives. In Hiranyagarbha, all the Jivas are strung together like pearls in a thread. Hiranyagarbha is thread-soul or Sutratman.

*Tejasि surye sampannah*—he becomes united with the sun, he attains the Devayana or the path of gods, the path of Krama-Mukti.

He who meditates on this Supreme Self itself with the Om of three Matras, becomes one with the sun. Just as a snake is freed from its slough, so also he is freed from sins and led upward by the Sama-hymns to the world of Brahma, Satyaloka. He sees the Person living in the heart and superior to the higher life-mass, Hiranyagarbha.

Om is identical with Brahman. It is also a means to attain Brahman. The knower of the syllable Om of the three Matras, beholds the Supreme Purusha, the Paramatman who is beyond Hiranyagarbha, living in the hearts of all.

तिस्रो मात्रा मृत्युमत्यः प्रयुक्ता अन्योन्यसक्ता अनविप्रयुक्ताः ।  
क्रियासु बाह्याभ्यन्तरमध्यमासु सम्यक्प्रयुक्तासु न कम्पते ज्ञः ॥६॥

6. The three Matras when employed separately are mortal; but (when they are) connected with one another, they are not wrongly employed. (When they are) properly employed, in all the internal, external and middle functions, the knower trembles not.

### Notes and Commentary

When each of the three Matras A, U, M is taken separately and meditated upon, the meditator has to be born again and again in this world (vide verses 3 and 4).

If one meditates on the three Matras in combination, in respect of every one of the three aspects of Brahman, viz., Vaisvanara or Visva, representing the waking condition (represented by A), Hiranyagarbha or Taijasa, representing the dreaming condition (represented by U), and Isvara or Prajna, representing the sleeping condition (represented by M), he obtains the fruit as described in the previous verse. He cannot

be shaken. He trembles not, because he has attained the Supreme Brahman, he has become the Atman, the inner Self of all, and one with Om. How could he tremble? The Purushas, representing the waking, dreaming and sleeping states with their respective places, are seen by him as one with Om of the three Matras. He is the knower of Brahman in his three aspects in the macrocosm and microcosm. He is not shaken from his Brahmic consciousness or superconscious state. He is ever fixed in the consciousness, 'I am Brahman'.

*Bahyabhyantaramadhyamasu kriyasu*—external, internal and middle functions, i.e., waking state, dream state and deep sleep state. This may refer also to the three kinds of pronunciation, viz., Tara (loud), Mandra (mental) and Madhyama (that which is muttered).

ऋग्भिरेतं यजुर्भिरन्तरिक्षं सामभिर्यत्तकवयो वेदयन्ते ।  
तमोंकारेणैवायतनेनान्वेति विद्वान्यत्तच्छान्तमजरममृतमभयं परं  
चेति ॥७॥

॥ इति पश्चमः प्रश्नः ॥

7. Through the Rik-verses he arrives at this world, through the Yajus-verses at the sky, through the Saman-verses at that which the seers know (the Brahmaloka); by means of the letter Om, the wise one reaches these, and also that which is quiet, undecaying, deathless, fearless and supreme.

### Notes and Commentary

A brief summary of the Fifth Prasna is given in this last verse.

*Antariksha*—the sky, the world presided by the moon, *Chandraloka*, the world of forefathers.

The knower reaches the threefold world and also the Supreme Brahman who is tranquil, undecaying, immortal, fearless and supreme, with the aid of the sacred Om.

Brahman is devoid of all the characteristics of the world (Nishprapancha), such as names, forms, activities, waking, dreaming and deep sleep states. Therefore, He is undecaying, i.e., free from old age and decay. He is deathless, because He

is devoid of decay and modification. He is Supreme, unsurpassable, because He is fearless, decayless and deathless.

Here ends the Fifth Prasna.

OM

## SHASHTHA PRASNA (QUESTION VI)

### SUKESA AND PIPPALADA

अथ हैनं सुकेशा भारद्वाजः पप्रच्छ । भगवन्हिरण्यनाभः कौसल्यो  
राजपुत्रो मामुपेत्यैतं प्रश्नमपृच्छत षोडशकलं भारद्वाज पुरुषं वेत्थ ।  
तमहं कुमारमब्रुवं नाहमिमं वेदयद्यहमिममवेदिषं कथं ते नावक्ष्यमिति  
समूलो वा एष परिशुष्यति योऽनृतमभिवदति तस्मान्नार्हाम्यनृतं  
वक्तुम् । स तूष्णीं रथमारुह्य प्रवद्राज । तं त्वा पृच्छामि क्वासौ पुरुष  
इति ॥१॥

1. Then Sukesa, son of Bharadvaja, questioned him: O Bhagavan! Hiranyanabha, a prince of Kosala, came once to me and asked this question, 'O Bharadvaja, knowest thou the Purusha of sixteen Kalas (parts)?' I said to the youth, 'I do not know him. If I knew him why should I not tell thee? He who tells that which is not true, is dried up verily root and all. Therefore I dare not utter untruth.' Having ascended his chariot, he went away in silence. That I ask you. What is that Purusha?

### Notes and Commentary

*Shodasakala-Purusha*—Purusha of sixteen parts, the Purusha in whom the sixteen parts are superimposed by ignorance; *Samula*—with the whole root; *Anritam*—falsehood (he who tells lies is destroyed both in this world and in the next, and all the merits acquired by his good deeds perish); *Tushnim*—silently.

It has been stated in the previous chapter that all Jivas with their minds and senses enter Brahman during sleep. The whole universe also enters into that Supreme, undecaying, immortal, self-luminous Brahman during Pralaya. The world has come out of Brahman, its cause, and it, the effect, is

absorbed naturally in Brahman during dissolution. The absorption of an effect into that which is not its cause, is certainly not appropriate. It has also been stated that this Prana is born of the Atman.

One gets the highest consummation from the knowledge of that which is the cause of this universe. This is the emphatic declaration of all the Upanishads. It has also been said that 'he, all-knowing, becomes all'. Where then is that undecaying, immortal, all-blissful Atman known as Purusha? This question is asked for this purpose.

From the conversation between Sukesha and the prince of Kosala, it is quite clear that the attainment of Brahman is difficult. This anecdote is said here in order to simulate the aspirants to do vigorous Sadhana and rigorous Tapas, meditation.

Sukesha was a sincere and true disciple. He was humble and true. He admitted his ignorance. He was not conceited. He did not try to give some kind of vague answer to the prince to make him understand that he was also very learned, as many people do in this world. Sukesha possessed the qualities of a true disciple. As the prince did not believe that Sukesha was ignorant, Sukesha said the following to make the prince believe his words: 'If I knew him, why should I not tell thee? Whoever tells what is not true, is certainly dried, root and all'. The prince, being now convinced that Sukesha was speaking truth only, and did not merely throw him off, silently went away. Therefore, it is established that one should not tell a lie under any circumstance, and the knowledge of Brahman should be imparted by a Sage only to a worthy aspirant who has approached him duly.

तस्मै स होवाच । इहैवान्तःशरीरे सोम्य स पुरुषो यस्मिन्नेता:  
षोडशकला: प्रभवन्तीति ॥२॥

2. He replied: O gentle youth! that Purusha in whom these sixteen Kalas are born is even here within the body.

### Notes and Commentary

*Antahsarire*—in the interior of the body, in the Akasa of the lotus of the heart. One need not go far to seek Him. He is in the lotus of the heart. He is quite close to you, closer than your breath and nearer to you than your hands. It is said that the Atman dwells in the heart in order to make the aspirant realise that the Atman is his very own Self. This will help him to practise concentration, and the Purusha is realised as if within the body, by the process of thinking, reflection and meditation. Therefore it is said that the Purusha dwells within this body. Even a fool will not say that the Purusha, who is the cause of the Akasa, is really within this body only, just as a mango is in a pit. Much less would the authoritative Upanishads say so. The Atman is really all-pervading and infinite.

The Purusha has really no parts. He is indivisible, homogeneous and partless. On account of ignorance, He is seen as one having parts.

The Kalas are conditions which are superimposed on Purusha on account of ignorance. When one attains knowledge, all the conditions drop away. He beholds the one homogeneous, unconditioned Supreme Purusha alone. That is the reason why it is said 'that Purusha in whom these sixteen Kalas are born'.

You will have to eliminate the sixteen Kalas by the practice of Neti-neti (not this, not that) doctrine.

Intelligence is not an attribute of the Atman. The Atman is an embodiment of intelligence (Prajnanaghana), dense mass of intelligence (Vijnanaghana). The Atman is unchanging.

स ईक्षांचक्रे कस्मिन्नहमुत्क्रान्ते उत्क्रान्तो भविष्यामि कस्मिन्वा  
प्रतिष्ठिते प्रतिष्ठास्यामीति ॥३॥

3. He (the Purusha) reflected: What is it by whose departure I shall depart, and by whose staying I shall stay?

### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He (the Purusha). The Purusha reflected in the beginning of the Kalpa, 'Let me create Kalas'. *Ikshamchakre*—reflected, thought, meditated.

According to Sankhyas, Prakriti or Pradhana is the creator and Purusha is really the enjoyer. Prakriti transforms itself into Mahat, mind, egoism, Tanmatras, Bhutas, etc., for the benefit of the Purusha.

According to Vedanta, Brahman has two aspects: one unconditioned, and the other conditioned, wherein the names and forms are superimposed on account of ignorance (Avidya). The pure, unconditioned Brahman appears as the conditioned Brahman. The Atman, which is subject to the conditions of name and form, is dealt with in the scriptures which speak of the so-called bondage and emancipation of the Atman. The Infinite, the Absolute, ever remains pure and unchanging.

स प्राणमसृजत प्राणाच्छ्रद्धां खं वायुज्योतिरापः पृथिवीन्द्रियं  
मनोऽन्नमन्नाद्वीर्यं तपो मन्त्राः कर्म लोकां लोकेषु च नाम च ॥४॥

4. He created Prana; from Prana faith, Akasa, air, fire, water, earth, senses, mind and food; and from food, strength, penance, Mantras, Karma and worlds, and in the worlds, name also.

### Notes and Commentary

The sixteen Kalas or parts of the Purusha are enumerated in this verse.

*Viryam*—seed, vigour; *Mantras*—the Vedas Rik, Yajus, Sama, etc.; *Nama*—names, individuals.

By the Purusha, i.e., Isvara alone, is Prana created. Prana is Hiranyagarbha, who is the support of the active instruments of all living beings, and the internal Atman of all. From Prana He created faith, which goads people to do virtuous actions or act rightly. Then He created the great Bhutas (the five elements), which help man to enjoy the fruits of Karma.

Akasa (ether) has the attribute of sound. Air is born of Akasa. It has two attributes: its own, the touch, and that of its cause, sound. Fire is born of air. It has three attributes: its own, the

form, and the two previous ones, sound and touch. Water is born of fire. It has four attributes: its own, the taste, and the three previously named. Earth is born of water. It has five attributes, its own, the smell, and the four previously named.

From the Bhutas, the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of action and the mind, their lord, with its characteristics of doubt and volition (Sankalpa-Vikalpa), are formed. Then he created food for their support. Food produces vigour and strength which helps man to perform works. Different worlds were created for the enjoyment of fruits of actions. He created Tapas (meditation) for the purification of the minds of those who have deviated from the path of righteousness.

स यथेमा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रायणाः समुद्रं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति  
 भिद्येते तासां नामरूपे समुद्रं इत्येवं प्रोच्यते । एवमेवास्य परिद्रष्टुरिमाः  
 षोडशकलाः पुरुषायणाः पुरुषं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति भिद्येते चासां  
 नामरूपे पुरुषं इत्येवं प्रोच्यते स एषोऽकलोऽमृतो भवति तदेषु  
 श्लोकः ॥५॥

5. Just as these rivers flowing towards the sea, when they have reached the sea, disappear, their names and forms perish and all is called sea, so also these sixteen parts of the witness that go towards the Purusha, disappear, their names and forms are destroyed and all is called Purusha alone. 'He becomes without parts and immortal'. On this, there is this verse.

#### Notes and Commentary

Just as the ocean is the goal of the rivers, so also the Supreme Purusha is the goal of the sixteen Kalas, viz., Prana and the rest. Just as the rivers are absorbed in the ocean, so also the sixteen Kalas, produced by ignorance, desire and Karma, are absorbed in Brahman in Samadhi, the superconscious state. Then Brahman alone remains in His native, pristine glory and splendour. When the Kalas, produced by ignorance, the cause of death, are destroyed, the knower becomes immortal. He becomes identical with Brahman, just as the rivers become identical with the ocean. (Cf. Mundaka Upanishad III-ii-8.)

अरा इव रथनाभौ कला यस्मिन्प्रतिष्ठिताः । तं वेद्यं पुरुषं वेद यथा  
मा वो मृत्युः परिव्यथा इति ॥६॥

6. Know that Purusha, who ought to be known, in whom the Kalas are centred like spokes in the nave of a wheel, in order that death may not harm you.

### Notes and Commentary

*Vedyam*—knowable, worth knowing.

O disciples, know that Purusha, the Atman of all Kalas, worthy to be known, because He is the only immortal entity. By knowing Him you will all attain immortality, eternal bliss, and death will not harm you. If you do not know this Purusha, you will undergo pain, suffering and sorrow. You will be snatched by death.

Kalas are mere appearances. They are not real parts of the Purusha. They are manifestations of His illusory power.

तान्होवाचैतावदेवाहमेतत्परं ब्रह्म वेद नातः परमस्तीति ॥७॥

7. Then he (Pippalada) said to them: This much only I know of this Highest Brahman; there is nothing higher than this.

### Notes and Commentary

Sage Pippalada said: 'This far only I know the Supreme Brahman worthy to be known. There is nothing beyond this, more excellent or worthy to be known'. The disciples might be thinking that there would be yet something not known, something more excellent than this. To remove this doubt in their minds, and produce a belief in them that their objects had been accomplished, the sage said the above facts.

ते तमर्चयन्तस्त्वं हि नः पिता योऽस्माकमविद्यायाः परं पारं  
तारयसीति । नमः परमऋषिभ्यो नमः परमऋषिभ्यः ॥८॥

8. They, worshipping him, said: Thou art our father who helps to cross over the infinite ocean of our ignorance; salutations to the highest Rishis; salutations to the Highest Rishis.

### Notes and Commentary

In this Mantra, what the disciples, who received instructions on Brahavidya, the science of the Soul, from their preceptor, Pippalada, did, is explained. They realised that their object had been accomplished. They thought that they could not give anything in return for the knowledge received from their Guru. They worshipped him by throwing handfuls of flowers at his feet, and prostrated before him, and said: "You are our real father. You imparted to us the knowledge of Brahman. You have helped us to cross, by means of the boat of the knowledge of Brahman, the ocean of ignorance filled with perverse knowledge, and infested by such evils as birth, old age, death, sickness, sorrow, pain, misery, etc., and reach the other shore of fearlessness and immortality. How can we thank you, most venerable Master? We have nothing to pay in return. Even the father, who has given a physical body, is to be worshipped in the world. Then what to speak of an exalted spiritual father who has opened our inner eyes, who has raised us to the lofty state of Brahman-hood, who has removed all our mundane miseries, and who has freed us from the trammels of births and deaths!"

Salutations to the highest Rishis! Salutations to the highest Rishis! The repetition denotes extreme reverence to the spiritual teachers.

Here ends the Sixth Prasna.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।  
स्थिरैरंगैस्तुष्टुवा॑स्स्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः । स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो  
वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्ताक्षर्योऽरिष्टनेमिः  
स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

॥ इति प्रश्नोपनिषत्संपूर्णा ॥

Here ends the Prasnopanishad.

# **MUNDAKOPANISHAD**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **I**

Adorations to Brahman!

This is an Upanishad of the Atharva Veda. It belongs to Saunakiya Sakha. This Upanishad is called Mundaka Upanishad and each of its three chapters is called a Mundaka. This Upanishad cuts off the illusion and errors of the mind, like a razor. This Upanishad is intended for the Sannyasin. Hence, the significant name, Mundaka or 'the shaving' Upanishad. One gets the clue from the name of the Upanishad, that Sannyasa is necessary for the attainment of Para Vidya, or knowledge of the Self. A Sannyasin alone is a whole-timed aspirant, and he can devote the whole time in study and meditation.

Mundaka Upanishad is a Mantra Upanishad. It has the form of a Mantra. But it is not used like other Mantras for sacrificial purposes. The word 'Mantra' here means 'a sacred verse'. This Upanishad teaches the highest knowledge of Brahman.

You may restrain your breath a thousand times daily, but your ignorance will not vanish without the wisdom of the Upanishads. The Sannyasin alone, who has abandoned everything, is qualified to know and to become Brahman.

There are sixty-four verses (Mantras) in this Upanishad. This Upanishad is divided into three chapters (Mundakas). Each chapter comprises two sections (Khandas). I have translated the word Mundaka as Chapter and Khanda as Section.

Angiras taught this Upanishad to Saunaka. Angiras himself learnt it from Bharadvaja Satyavaha, the disciple of Atharvan, the eldest son and the student of Brahma.

The words 'Mundaka Upanishad' literally mean the 'Upanishad for the shaved ones, or Sannyasins'. This Upanishad draws a distinct and well-cut line, or marked

division, between the higher knowledge of Brahman (Para Vidya) and the lower knowledge of the phenomenal world (Apara Vidya). Apara Vidya, lower knowledge, cannot remove ignorance, which is the cause of Samsara, world-process. It is only Para Vidya, knowledge of Brahman, that can eradicate ignorance, root and branch.

Munda or Mundaka means a man whose head is shaved, evidently a Sannyasin who has entered the fourth order of life. Verse 10 of the Second Section of the Third Chapter says: "This knowledge of Brahman should be taught to those persons only who have performed the 'vow of the head' (Sirovrata) according to the rule". The vow of the head obviously means Sannyasa or renunciation, the fourth order of life.

## II

It is said in this Upanishad that the spiritual knowledge is transmitted from preceptor to disciple, and is acquired by great sages with strenuous effort, as a means to attain freedom from the round of births and deaths. The Upanishad eulogises Knowledge, in order to create a taste for it in the minds of the hearers. When the taste for Knowledge is created by praising it, people will eagerly seek to acquire it. How the knowledge of Brahman is related to salvation, as a means to its end, is also explained in this Upanishad.

The knowledge of Brahman (Brahma Vidya), which is a means to the attainment of the highest (Para), can be attained only by the grace of the preceptor, after renunciation of all desires for objects and egoism, and acquiring the four means of salvation.

The fruits of this Knowledge are given in this Upanishad: "He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman—*Brahmavit Brahmaiva Bhavati*. Having become Brahman while yet alive, all are liberated".

This Upanishad describes that the phenomenal world has sprung from Para Brahman, the Supreme Self, just as plants have sprung from the earth, hairs from the body, and thread from the saliva of the spider. It regards that the fruits of

sacrifices are transitory, and holds the Knowledge of Brahman, Para Vidya, as the *summum bonum*.

Brahman is not grasped by the senses as He is subtle and infinite, but is realised by intellect purified through Knowledge and meditation. The individual soul attains liberation through knowledge of Brahman. Just as the rivers, when flowing into the ocean, become one and the same with it, so also he who knows Brahman becomes one with Brahman.

### III

Saunaka, the great householder, questioned Angiras, "Kasmin bhagavo vijnate sarvamidam vijnatam bhavati: O Bhagavan, what is that which being known, all this—the entire phenomenon, experienced through the mind and the senses—becomes known or really understood?" Angiras gives a suitable and elaborate answer to this important philosophical question, in this Upanishad. He gives answers also to all possible questions implied in the one original, essential question.

In the First Section of the First Chapter, the line of tradition of the knowledge of Brahman from Brahma Himself, Saunaka's quest for the clue to an understanding of the world, and the two kinds of knowledge, the higher (Para Vidya) and the lower (Apara Vidya), are described. There is also a hint as to the nature of the Supreme Self, the imperishable source of all things. There is a definition of the science of Brahman.

In the Second Section, the Upanishad emphasises that all sacrificial works should be scrupulously practised for attaining purity of heart. It also describes that the fruits of sacrifices are but perishable and transitory, and exhorts the thirsting aspirants, who are endowed with discrimination, to cultivate dispassion, austerity, faith, concentration and love for solitude, for the attainment of immortality and eternal bliss, and to seek the knowledge of Brahman from a qualified teacher who is versed in the Vedas (Brahma Srotriya), and is established in Brahman (Brahma Nishtha).

According to the First Chapter, there are two sciences, the Apara (the lower) and the Para (the highest). The former is founded on the four Vedas and the six Vedangas; the latter

refers to Brahman who is all-pervading, immortal, indivisible and self-luminous. The creation proceeds from Him. It is subject to Him. It is part of Him. Just as the spider projects the web out of its body and then again withdraws it into itself, so also Brahman projects this world and then withdraws it into Himself. Then follows the order of creation. From Brahman is produced food, from food, life, mind, the five elements, the worlds, works and immortality.

The First Section of the Second Chapter gives a vivid, beautiful description of the cosmology—how the Jivas, the Prana, the mind, all the organs, the five cosmic elements, all religious rites, the oceans, the mountains, the rivers, the herbs are born. It gives a sketch of the science of Brahman. It describes Brahman in His own nature and in His relation to the world.

In the Second Section, the means of knowing or realising Brahman are given. Brahman is the target to be penetrated by meditation on Om. To render the meditation easy, the Supreme Self is here described as the Immortal Soul, the one warp of the world and the individual souls, the self-luminous light of the world, full of bliss, who is omnipresent, who is in front, behind, above, below, to the right and to the left, and who shines with all splendour in the heart of man.

The Third Chapter opens with the well-known 'allegory of the two birds' seated on the same tree. The spiritual discipline, the ethical virtues and the spiritual practices, which enable the aspirant to attain the knowledge of the Supreme Self, are very clearly laid down in detail in this Chapter. The results of this knowledge are also dealt with here.

Meditation on the deep significance of the sixty-four stanzas of this Upanishad will help the aspirants to develop dispassion, discrimination, faith, purity, and attain immortality and eternal bliss of Para Brahman, the Supreme Soul.

## CHAPTER I—SECTION I

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।  
 स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवा स्स्तनूभिर्वर्षशेम देवहितं यदायुः । स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो  
 वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्ताक्ष्योऽरिष्टनेमिः  
 स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om. O gods, may we, with our ears hear what is auspicious, O ye, fit to be worshipped, may we, with our eyes, see what is auspicious. May we enjoy the life allotted to us by the gods, offering our praise with our bodies strong of limb. May Indra, the powerful, the ancient of fame, vouchsafe us prosperity. May He, the nourisher and the possessor of all wealth, give us what is well for us. May the Lord of swift motion be propitious to us, and may the Protector of the great ones protect us too.

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

ॐ ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथमः संबभूव विश्वस्य कर्ता भुवनस्य गोप्ता ।  
 स ब्रह्मविद्यां सर्वविद्याप्रतिष्ठामथर्वाय ज्येष्ठपुत्राय प्राह ॥१॥

1. Brahma, the creator and protector of this universe, arose as the first among the gods. He expounded the science or knowledge of Brahman (Brahma Vidya), the foundation of all knowledge (all sciences), to Atharvan, his eldest son.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Brahma* means much grown, great (Mahan), excelling all others in virtue (Dharma), Knowledge (Jnana), dispassion (Vairagya) and power (Aisvarya).

Brahma (Masculine). Brahman (neutral). Brahma is the creator (Saguna). Brahman is the Impersonal, formless, attributeless, transcendental, Supreme Self, Paramatman.

*Devanam*—among Indra and others; literally, among those who shine, who are endowed with illumination or enlightenment.

*Prathamah*—first (before), first in time, or by qualities, or excellence (the principal god), the first begotten of Vishnu, the eldest son.

*Sambabhuva*—He was produced, or became manifest, by his own act, or had free choice, not like mortals or other creatures on account of their virtue or vice, for the Smriti says: 'He who is beyond the reach of the senses and cannot be grasped, etc'.

*Visvasya karta*—the maker of the universe; *Bhuvanasya gopta*—Protector of the world. These two epithets describe the greatness of Brahma.

*Brahma vidya*—Science of the Supreme Self or Brahman, Knowledge of Brahman. It is the Knowledge by which one knows the immortal Brahman, the true, undying Purusha. It may also mean the knowledge taught by Brahma, the first born.

*Sarvavidya-pratishtham*—the basis of all knowledge or all sciences, that on which all knowledge rests for support, because it is the cause of the manifestation of all other knowledge. Or it may be because the one supreme entity to be realised by all knowledge, is only known by this. For the Sruti says: 'By which, what is not seen becomes seen, what is not heard becomes heard, what is not thought of becomes thought of, what is not known becomes known'. Brahma Vidya is eulogised here, as it is the Supreme Science, Science of sciences.

In the Vaivasvata Manvantara, Atharvan was the first-born of Brahma. Sanaka and the rest were the first-born in Varaha Kalpa.

अथर्वे यां प्रवदेत ब्रह्माथर्वा तां पुरोवाचाङ्गिरे ब्रह्मविद्याम् ।  
स भारद्वाजाय सत्यवहाय प्राह भारद्वाजोऽङ्गिरसे परावराम् ॥२॥

2. Whatever Brahma told Atharvan, that knowledge of Brahman, Atharvan first told Angiras, and he taught it to Satyavaha of the family of Bharadvaja, and Satyavaha taught it to Angiras, the knowledge traditionally obtained by the succession of teachers.

### Notes and Commentary

*Paravaram*—because the knowledge was acquired from superiors or the elder people by the inferiors, the younger, in succession; the higher and the lesser science permeates the subject of all knowledge, great and small; the highest knowledge which is the goal of all learning.

शौनको ह वै महाशालोऽङ्गिरसं विधिवदुपसन्नः पप्रच्छ ।  
कस्मिन्नु भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवतीति ॥३॥

3. Saunaka, the great householder, approached Angiras in the manner laid down by the scriptures and questioned: What is that, O Bhagavan, which being known, all this becomes known?

### Notes and Commentary

*Saunaka*—the male issue of Sunaka; *Mahasalah*—the great householder; of the great Hall, means he who performed, annually, great Yajnas; *Angiras*—the disciple of Bharadvaja and his own preceptor; *Vidhivat*—in the manner laid down by the scriptures, properly, duly; *Upasannah*—having approached; *Paprachha*—questioned; *Sarvamidam*—all this (world), everything knowable.

Brahman is the cause of this world. By attaining knowledge of Brahman, the effect, the world is comprehended.

तस्मै स होवाच । द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म यद्ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति  
परा चैवापरा च ॥४॥

4. To him (Saunaka), Angiras replied: There are two kinds of knowledge to be acquired, so say those who know Brahman (the Vedas), namely *Para* and *Apara*, i.e., the higher and the lower.

### Notes and Commentary

*Brahmavit*—the knowers of Brahman, or those who know the import of the Vedas; *Para*—the knowledge of Brahman, Paramatman (Paramatma-vidya); *Apara*—that which treats of the means and fruits of good and bad actions (*Dharmadharma*

*sadhana tatphala vishaya*). The object of the lower science is to show the cause of virtue and vice and their consequences. Apara-vidya is ignorance. Ignorance should be dispelled.

It may seem that the answer given by Angiras does not agree with the question. It may be said that the reply of Angiras is something which he was not asked about. The passage, 'There are two kinds of knowledge, etc.', is not the direct answer to the question in Mantra I.i.3. This is certainly no fault at all. The answer needs this order of statement. The complete answer can only be given after the exposition is finished. Apara-vidya is verily ignorance. It teaches nothing real. It must therefore be rejected. The defective theory should be refuted first, and then the true conclusion should be stated.

तत्रापरा क्रग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः शिक्षा कल्पो  
व्याकरणं निरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषमिति । अथ परा यथा  
तदक्षरमधिगम्यते ॥५॥

5. Of these, the lower knowledge is the Rig-veda, the Sama-veda, Yajurveda and the Atharva-veda, the Siksha (phonetics), Kalpa (code of rituals), Vyakarana (grammar), Nirukta (etymology), Chhandas (metre) and Jyotisha (astrology). But the higher knowledge is that by which the Immortal is known.

#### Notes and Commentary

Of the two Vidyas, Apara Vidya is explained. This enumeration does not really exhaust the entire field of lower knowledge, the lesser sciences. It really includes everything that is not directly connected with knowledge of Brahman. All secular sciences come under the category of Apara-vidya.

The four Vedas, the Itihasas, the six Vedangas, the Smritis and the Mimamsa constitute the fourteen sources of the Vidyas.

'Six Vedangas'—six limbs of the Vedas, later elaborated as explanatory of the Vedas.

The Veda was one in the Krita age. It became threefold in the Treta age. In the Dvapara, it became fourfold. In the Kali age,

the Veda is almost going to disappear from everywhere. The theory of relativity, the theory of electrons, and only all human theories that help man to fill his stomach and live a sense-life, will remain.

Brahman can only be attained by the removal of ignorance. The attainment of the highest is merely the removal of ignorance. They mean one and the same thing.

Brahma Vidya is called Para-vidya, because it helps to attain salvation and leads to the attainment of the *summum bonum*.

Para-vidya is the knowledge of the Immortal, which could be known only through the Upanishads, and not the knowledge of the mere assemblage of words in them (Sabda Rasi). Vidya means the assemblage of words only.

The imperishable Brahman cannot be realised by a mere mastery of philosophical terms and phrases, without other efforts such as approaching a preceptor, and cultivation of the four means, etc. Therefore, the separate name for the knowledge of Brahman, as Para-vidya, is indeed proper.

यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णमचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम् । नित्यं  
विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तदव्ययं यद्भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति धीराः ॥६॥

6. That which cannot be seen nor seized, which has no origin, which has no properties, which has neither ear nor eye, which has neither hands nor feet, which is eternal, diversely manifested, all-pervading, extremely subtle and imperishable, the wise regard as the source of all beings (Bhutas), all creation.

### Notes and Commentary

Para-vidya is here explained with reference to Brahman.

*Adrisyam*—invisible; cannot be comprehended by the senses, for vision, that is directed externally, is the medium for the functioning of the five senses; *Agrahyam*—that cannot be seized by the mind of the ignorant, that cannot entirely be comprehended by the mind, that cannot be seized or grasped by the organs of action (Karma-Indriyas); *Agotram*—without caste or species, that which has no properties such as bigness, whiteness, etc.

*Achakshu-srotram*—without eyes and ears. It may be thought that Brahman accomplishes His purpose, like the people of the world, with the help of organs such as the eye, the ear, etc. It is not so. Brahman sees without eyes, hears without ears.

*Apanipaadam*—without hands and feet, as He is neither grasped nor grasps. He is Nitya, eternal, immortal. *Vibhum*—diversely manifested, of manifold expressions in the form of living things, from Brahma down to the blade of grass. *Sarva-gatam*—all-pervading like the Akasa, omnipresent, entering in all. *Susukshmam*—extremely subtle, because there is no cause like sound, colour, smell, etc., to make it gross.

*Avyayam*—undecaying. Brahman has no limbs (Niravayava). So decay or diminution of limbs, as in the case of the physical body, is not possible in Brahman. There is decay by way of diminution of treasure, as in the case of a king. Such a decay also is not possible in Brahman, as He is ever full, and self-contained. There is decay with reference to the attributes by which things are distinguished. This is also not possible in Brahman as He is attributeless, and is Himself all.

*Yat*—which; *Bhuta-yonim*—womb of elements, the source of creation, the source of all created things or elements; *Paripasyanti*—see everywhere the Atman of all; *Dhirah*—the wise, the intelligent, those who are endowed with discernment.

That knowledge, by which this immortal Brahman is known, is what is called Para-vidya.

यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः संभवन्ति ।

यथा सतः पुरुषात्केशलोमानि तथाक्षरात्संभवतीह विश्वम् ॥७॥

7. As the spider sends forth and draws in its web, as herbs grow from the earth, as hairs grow from the living man, so this universe proceeds from the Immortal (Brahman).

#### Notes and Commentary

It was stated in the previous Mantra that the Immortal is the source of all beings. How it is the source is explained by three beautiful analogies or similes. Giving many analogies is to facilitate easy understanding of the meaning. The three

analogies suggest that the creation is not a real transformation (Parinama), but only a projection by a certain inscrutable, illusory power of Brahman.

Just as the spider itself creates the web from its own body without requiring any other cause, so also this world proceeds from the Immortal (Akshara) without requiring any other cause. According to this analogy, the world proceeds from Brahman in an orderly manner, and not all at once, like the throwing of a handful of grains or Amalaka fruits.

Just as hairs come out quite naturally from the body without any effort, even so this universe comes out of Brahman without any effort on His part. These two analogies (of spider and hairs) also suggest that this universe comes out of Brahman, rests in Brahman, and gets itself absorbed in Brahman.

Just as seeds remain latent underground in the winter, and burst forth into herbs and plants in the rainy season, so also the Jivas remain latent in Pralaya, with their different Karmas, as their seed-form and come out at the time of creation, as beings of different kinds, but with their root always in Brahman.

तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभिजायते ।  
अन्नात्प्राणो मनः सत्यं लोकाः कर्मसु चामृतम् ॥८॥

8. By Tapas, Brahman swells (with the joy of creation) and from it food is produced; from food, the Prana, the mind, the Bhutas, the worlds, Karma and with it, its fruits.

### Notes and Commentary

The order of creation is stated in this verse.

*Tapas*—knowledge of the power of creation, preservation and destruction. This term is generally translated as austerity. This Tapas of Brahman here is knowledge of how to create. This is knowledge of the whole creation in the ideal form, before it assumes a distinct concrete shape. Tapas (brooding meditation or thought) denotes reflection on the shape and character of the world which Brahman is about to project. By Tapas Brahman increases, becomes distended. Just as a father, desirous of begetting a son, swells with joy, so also

Brahman, being desirous to create the world, swells with the joy of creation.

*Annam*—food, the primal matter, that which is eaten or enjoyed, *Avyakritam*, or the undifferentiated.

*Prana*—*Hiranyagarbha* or *Brahma*, the cosmic mind, the cosmic energy; literally the golden egg. *Hiranyagarbha* is the sprouting seed of the totality of creatures of this universe. He is the common thread-soul of this universe. He is the intelligent power that is at the back of all creation. He projects the manifold forms of this world.

From that *Prana*, mind, whose characteristic is volition, deliberation, doubt and determination, is produced. From that mind, *Satyam*, i.e., the five elements such as the *Akasa* etc., are produced, and from the five elements the seven worlds are produced. And in them, *Karma* for man, according to the social and religious order of life, is produced, and with *Karma* as the cause, its fruits. As long as *Karma* is not destroyed, even in hundreds of millions of *Kalpas*, that long its fruit is not destroyed. Therefore it is called *Amritam*. *Karma*, with its fruits, is an endless chain. As soon as one gets Knowledge of the Self, and through it, the final Emancipation, this chain is broken, and all *Karmas* are burnt by the fire of wisdom.

Immortality, in the Mantra here, means the effect of works which, comparatively speaking, continues for a long time, as long as the effects of the works last.

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः ।  
तस्मादेतद्ब्रह्मा नाम रूपमन्वं च जायते ॥९॥

॥ इति प्रथममुण्डके प्रथमः खण्डः ॥

9. From the Brahman who knows all and knows everything of all in detail, whose penance has the nature of knowledge, are produced this *Brahma*, name, form and food.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who, above described and named *Akshara*, *Brahman*.

*Sarvajna*—he who knows all generally, who knows all things as a class, all-wise.

*Sarvavit*—he who knows everything of all, specially, in detail, in particular, omniscient.

*Etad-Brahma*—manifested Brahman, Hiranyagarbha; the same Hiranyagarbha referred to as Prana (cosmic energy) in the previous verse.

Thus ends the First Khanda of the First Mundaka.

## CHAPTER I—SECTION II

तदेतत्सत्यं मन्त्रेषु कर्माणि कवयो यान्यपश्यंस्तानि त्रेतायां बहुधा  
संततानि । तान्याचरथ नियतं सत्यकामा एष वः पन्थाः सुकृतस्य  
लोके ॥१॥

1. That thing which is such is true. The sacrificial works, which the wise found in the Mantras (of the Veda), are true and were much performed in the Treta age. Practise them always diligently (regularly), ye lovers of truth. That is your path that leads to the world of good works.

### Notes and Commentary

The Rig-veda, the Yajur-veda, etc., with their limbs or Angas, have been stated to be Apara-vidya in Mantra I-i-5. Para-vidya has been definitely stated to be that Knowledge by which the Immortal, the Akshara, is known, as described in the text beginning with 'That which cannot be seen', etc. and ending with 'Name, form and food' (Mantras I-i-6 to 9). In the First Section, the inferior and higher sciences have been defined. The Second Section is intended to show their objects, which are the world and the Supreme Brahman. Now, what is bondage, what is emancipation—these are dealt with. The subject of Apara-vidya is Samsara or ignorance, which consists of the variety of action and its fruits. It brings misery, births and deaths, with their concomitant evils. It should be abandoned. The subject of Para-vidya is emancipation, or the attainment of Brahman, the Supreme Self, which is beginningless, endless, birthless, deathless, fearless, immortal, pure and undecaying. It is resting in one's own all-blissful Self, the Atman.

In the beginning of the Second Section, the knowledge required for the performance of sacrifices and other good deeds, is first described. The reward of these ritualistic works is perishable, and therefore, a desire is awakened after the higher knowledge. At first, the inferior science (Apara-vidya) is described, because without knowing it, there cannot be a desire to abandon it.

The object of eulogising the performance of ritualistic works is that men will gain experience, of the ephemeral nature of the worldly and heavenly enjoyments, only by performing them. It is only when it is experienced, that it is possible to get disgusted with it. They will entertain the sublime ideas of renunciation, dispassion, discrimination, self-restraint and longing for liberation, only when they have clearly understood the hollow and transitory nature of worldly and heavenly pleasures.

*Satyam*—true, the fruits promised as true; *Kavayah*—seers like Vasishtha and others; *Apasyan*—have seen.

*Tretayam*—wherein, there is the combination of the three Vedas, of the three modes of rites performed with the help of Hota, Adhvaryu and Udgata, or it may mean that they were generally done in the Treta age. Therefore, you should do them always. The Treta age is frequently mentioned as the age of sacrifices. Some commentators take Treta in the sense of *Trayi-vidya*.

*Satya-kamah*—ye lovers of the truth, those who love the fruits or ritualistic works. Truth here refers to the fruits of sacrifices. *Sukritasya*—of good deeds. *Loka*—what is found or enjoyed, the fruits of Karma.

These Karmas, Agnihotra, etc., which are prescribed in the Vedas, form the road, the route or the path, i.e., the means, for the attainment of the necessary fruits.

यदा लेलायते ह्यर्चिः समिद्द्वे हव्यवाहने । तदाज्यभागावन्त-  
रेणाहृतीः प्रतिपादयेत् ॥२॥

2. When the fire is kindled and the flame begins to move, let the sacrificer offer his oblations with faith, on the space

between the two portions of the fire, where the ghee should be poured.

### Notes and Commentary

In this verse, reference is made to the Agnihotra, which is the first of all sacrifices. When the flame moves after the fire is well fed by fuel, one should offer the oblation in the place called Avapasthana. At the Agnihotra, two portions of Ajya (ghee) are sacrificed on the right and left side of the Ahavaniya altar, with the invocations 'Agnaye Svaha' and 'Somaya Svaha'. The place between the two is called the Avapasthana, and here the oblations to the gods are to be offered.

This is the road to the attainment of good worlds, but it is not easy to perform Agnihotra in the proper manner, as there are many impediments.

Flame is the tongue of the fire. Therefore, all oblations are offered into the very mouth of Agni, the god of fire.

यस्याग्निहोत्रमदर्शमपौर्णमासमचातुर्मास्यमनाग्रयणमतिथिवर्जितं च ।  
अहुतमवैश्वदेवमविधिना हृतमासप्तमांस्तस्य लोकान्हिनस्ति ॥३॥

3. If a man's Agnihotra sacrifice is not accompanied by the new moon and full-moon sacrifices (Darsa and Paurnamasa), by the four months' sacrifices (Chaturmasya), and by the sacrifice in the autumnal season (Agrayana), if it is unattended by guests (Atithi), if it is not done in proper time, or performed without the rite to the Visvadevas, or not performed according to rule, then it destroys his worlds till the seventh.

### Notes and Commentary

He who performs Agnihotra should necessarily perform Darsa, Paurnamasa, Chaturmasya, Agrayana, Vaisvadeva rituals. He should propitiate guests daily.

*Ahutam*—oblation not offered properly by himself at the time of Agnihotra, devoid of offerings; *Avidhinahutam*—is irregularly performed, oblations not offered in the proper manner, not according to the rules laid down in the Grihya Sutras. *Asaptaman lokan*—till the seventh world, inclusive of the seventh.

When the Karma is properly performed, the seven worlds, beginning with 'Bhu' and ending with 'Satya', are obtained as a result, according to the fruition of Karma. By irregular performance of the Agnihotra, one cannot attain any of the seven worlds, viz., Bhur, Bhuvah, Svar, Mahar, Jana, Tapa and Satya Lokas. They are therefore said to be, as it were, destroyed. Irregular performance of the Agnihotra destroys one's future in the seven worlds. It may mean that the three ancestors, viz., the father, the grandfather and the great-grandfather, and the three descendants, viz., the son, the grandson, and the great-grandson, who are connected by the offer of oblations, do not confer any benefit on him on account of the irregular performance of the sacrifice. The seven worlds may also be the worlds of the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, of the son, the grandson, and great-grandson, and of the sacrificer himself.

काली कराली च मनोजवा च सुलोहिता या च सुधूप्रवर्णा ।  
स्फुलिङ्गिनी विश्वरुची च देवी लेलायमाना इति सप्त जिह्वाः ॥४॥

4. The seven flickering tongues of the fire are: Kaali (black one), Karali (the terrific one), Manojava (swift as the mind), Sulohita (the deep-red), Sudhumravarna (the smoke-coloured), Sphulingini (sparkling), and the Visvarupi or Visvaruchi (having all forms).

#### Notes and Commentary

The Agnihotra is to be performed only in a well-lit fire, not in a fire which is smoking. The seven flames are the seven tongues of the fire. The seven tongues of the flaming fire, from Kaali down to Visvaruchi or Visvarupi, are intended to swallow the oblations thrown on it.

*Visvaruchi*—all gleaming; *Visvarupi*—having all forms.

एतेषु यश्चरते भ्राजमानेषु यथाकालं चाहृतयो ह्याददायन् ।  
तं नयन्त्येताः सूर्यस्य रश्मयो यत्र देवानां पतिरेकोऽधिवासः ॥५॥

5. Whoever performs his Karma (Agnihotra), when these flames are shining and in proper time, then these oblations

lead him through the rays of the sun to where the one Lord of the Devas dwells.

### Notes and Commentary

When these oblations are offered in these different bright tongues of the fire, properly and in proper seasons, they become so many rays of the sun (solar rays), and conduct the performer of the Agnihotra to Heaven, where Indra, the Lord of the Devas, dwells or reigns supreme.

*Adadayan*—offering, taking (the sacrificer); *Suryasya rasmayah*—rays of the sun.

एह्येहीति तमाहुतयः सुवर्चसः सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिर्यजमानं वहन्ति ।  
प्रियां वाचमभिवदन्त्योऽर्चयन्त्य एष वः पुण्यः सुकृतो ब्रह्मलोकः ॥६॥

6. 'Come hither, come hither', the brilliant oblations say unto him, and carry the sacrificer through the rays of the sun, addressing to him the pleasant words of praise, 'This is the holy world of Brahma (heaven) gained by the good works'.

### Notes and Commentary

How these oblations carry the performer of the sacrifice along the solar rays, is now explained. They say, 'Welcome, Welcome'. These oblations greet him with sweet words, words of praise, and propitiate him. They address him with such pleasing words as 'this is thy holy world of Brahma gained by thy good works'. The word 'Brahmaloka' means Svarga or heaven, by the force of the context.

प्लवा ह्येते अदृढा यज्ञरूपा अष्टादशोक्तमवरं येषु कर्म । एतच्छ्रेयो  
येऽभिनन्दन्ति मूढा जरामृत्युं ते पुनरेवापि यन्ति ॥७॥

7. Perishable and transient are, verily, the eighteen supporters of the sacrifice, on whom this lower ceremonial depends. Those ignorant persons, who delight in this as the highest good, are subject again and again to old age and death.

### Notes and Commentary

"But frail in truth are those boats, the sacrifices with their eighteen members, on which such inferior work (devoid of knowledge) rests." This is another interpretation.

*Plavah*—boats, ephemeral, perishable.

This Karma, devoid of knowledge, is a source of misery. It is accomplished by ignorance, desire and action. It is sapless. It does not confer any permanent result. Therefore it is condemned.

*Adridha*—not permanent; *Yajnarupah*—the forms of sacrifice, those necessary for the performance of the sacrifice. *Ashtadasa*—eighteen in number, consisting of the sixteen priests (Ritviks), the sacrificer (Yajaman) and his wife. All these eighteen members are necessary for the performance of a sacrifice. Karma stated in the Sastras depends on these.

*Avaram karma*—the inferior work, mere Karma devoid of knowledge. The performance of this inferior Karma depends upon these eighteen persons who are not permanent. The Karma performed by them, and its fruit, are ephemeral, transitory or impermanent, just as, when the pot is broken, the destruction of the milk or curd in it follows. Therefore, those ignorant persons, who take delight in this Karma as the means of bliss, fall again and again into the domain of old age and death, after staying some time in heaven.

In the beginning, the Upanishad eulogised the sacrifices, as they help a man in attaining heavenly enjoyments and then, developing disgust for these enjoyments as they are ephemeral. Now, it clearly points out that they cannot help him a bit in the attainment of the final emancipation.

अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितमन्यमानाः ।  
जड़न्यमानाः परियन्ति मूढा अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धा: ॥८॥

8. The ignorant beings, in the midst of ignorance, but fancying themselves wise and learned, go round and round, oppressed and miserable, as blind people led by the blind.

### Notes and Commentary

Steeped in ignorance, yet thinking in their own minds, 'We alone are intelligent and have known all that should be known', fools wander about flattering themselves, much afflicted by old age, sickness and a lot of other troubles over and over again, as the blind people in this world, walking in the path pointed out by other equally blind people, fall into ditches and pits.

Cf. Kathopanishad I.ii.5 and Maitrayani Upanishad 7-9. The Katha has *Dandramyamanah*—going round and round deluded in many crooked ways; for *Janghanyamanah*—going round and round oppressed and miserable, in this verse.

अविद्यायां बहुधा वर्तमाना वयं कृतार्था इत्यभिमन्यन्ति बालाः ।  
यत्कर्मिणो न प्रवेदयन्ति रागात्तेनातुराः क्षीणलोकाश्च्यवन्ते ॥९॥

9. Living in various ways in ignorance, the ignorant imagine that they have obtained their end. Because the performers of work are not wise, owing to their passions, they become miserable, and after the fruits of their Karma are finished, fall from heaven.

### Notes and Commentary

The ignorant act in a variety of ways, in ignorance. They foolishly think that they have attained the end of life. They flatter themselves that they have attained what they should. They consider themselves happy. They have no foresight or wisdom on account of their attachment to rewards. They do not learn the truth, as they always long for the fruits of Karma. They fall and become miserable when their life in the world, which they had gained by their good works, is finished. When their merits are exhausted, they fall miserably back into rebirth. They fall from heaven after the fruits of their Karma are exhausted.

One can attain the final liberation, or the immortal state, only by attaining the knowledge of Brahman. Knowledge can only dawn when man annihilates desires and attachment. Life in heaven is also impermanent. When the merits of one's deeds are exhausted, he is reborn on earth. Vide Bhagavad Gita IX-21: They, having enjoyed the spacious heaven-world, their holiness withered, come back to this world of death.

इष्टापूर्त मन्यमाना वरिष्ठं नान्यच्छ्रेयो वेदयन्ते प्रमूढाः । नाकस्य पृष्ठे  
ते सुकृतेऽनुभूत्वेमं लोकं हीनतरं वा विशन्ति ॥१०॥

10. These ignorant persons, fancying sacrifice and charitable gifts as their highest object, do not know any higher good. Having enjoyed the fruits of their works on the high place of heaven, which they gained by their good works, they enter again this world, or a lower one.

### Notes and Commentary

*Ishtam*—Karma, enjoined by the Srutis as sacrifices, etc. This includes Agnihotra, austerity, truthfulness, learning and teaching of the Vedas, and Vaisvadeva. In the performance of Vaisvadeva, the householder will have to feed the animals (cows, etc.) and birds (crows, etc.)

*Purtam*—Karma, enjoined by the Smritis, such as the digging of wells, tanks, construction of temples, hospitals, feeding the poor, laying out of gardens for the use of the public and other charitable works. Ignorant men, who are deluded, think that these alone are the most important aids to the attainment of the end of life. They are attached to their wives, sons, relatives, cattle and property. Considering sacrifices and gifts to be the best, these deluded persons know no higher ideal. They do not know the other called Knowledge of the Self, Brahma Jnana, which is the means to the attainment of eternal bliss, the Supreme Peace. Having enjoyed in the highest heavens, the place of sensual pleasures, the fruits of their Karma, they enter again into this world of men, or even inferior worlds, according to the residue of their Karma. They fall into their old human life, or into what is lower still. Vide Katha-Upanishad II-ii-7: 'Some Jivas enter the womb in order to have a body, others go into the inorganic matter according to their Karma and knowledge'.

तपःश्रद्धे ये हृपवसन्त्यरण्ये शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्ष्यचर्या चरन्तः ।  
सूर्यद्वारेण ते विरजाः प्रयान्ति यत्रामृतः स पुरुषो हृव्ययात्मा ॥११॥

11. But those who practise penance and faith, in the forest, with subdued senses, learned, and living the life of a mendicant

(living on alms), go, freed from sin, through the sun to where the immortal and imperishable Purusha dwells.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yehi*—those who. These include men of all the four orders of life, who devote themselves exclusively to the practice of austerity and devotion.

*Tapah*—penance, the Karma enjoined on one's order of life; *Sraddha*—faith, the worship of Hiranyagarbha and other deities; *Upavasanti*—live, follow; *Aranye*—in the forest; *Santah*—tranquil, with mind-control, having control over the group of senses; *Vidvamsah*—the wise, the learned, includes also householders who possess knowledge.

Mendicants or Sannyasins live by begging. They have nothing to call their own. Living on alms is connected with living in the forest.

*Suryadvarena*—through the path of the sun, through the orb of the sun, through the northern route (Uttarayana) indicated by the sun, through the path that leads to gradual liberation (Krama-Mukti), Deva Yana, the path of the gods; *Virajah*—purged of all impurities, their good and bad actions being consumed, freed from sins; *Prayanti*—go; *Yatra*—where, Satyaloka, world of Brahma, where the Immortal Purusha, the first-born, undecaying Hiranyagarbha is.

Those who worship Saguna Brahman, Personal God, attain gradual emancipation (Krama Mukti). They go to Satyaloka. They attain knowledge in Satyaloka, and are finally emancipated at the end of the cycle. Along with Brahma, they merge in the Nirguna Brahman, the Impersonal Absolute, at the end of the cycle. But sages, Jivanmuktas, who have attained knowledge of the Self, attain Kaivalya Mukti. They do not go to any world. Their Prana, etc., are directly absorbed in Brahman. They become one with the Supreme Self. They attain liberation in this very life.

This verse does not refer to the Highest Brahman, but to the inferior Brahman, Hiranyagarbha, the creator. The immortality of Hiranyagarbha is relative only. It lasts no longer than the world (Samsara). This verse refers to those who know the

uselessness of sacrifices, and have attained the knowledge of the qualified Brahman (personal god), Hiranyagarbha.

परीक्ष्य लोकान्कर्मचितान्ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः  
कृतेन । तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत्समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं  
ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ॥१२॥

12. Let a Brahmana (an aspirant), after he has examined the worlds gained by Karma, acquire freedom from all desires, reflecting that nothing that is eternal can be gained by Karma. Let him, in order to obtain the knowledge of the eternal, take sacrificial fuel (Samit) in his hands, and approach that preceptor alone, who is versed in the Vedas and is established in Brahman.

#### Notes and Commentary

It is said in this Mantra that he, who is thoroughly disgusted with this Samsara, is fit to attain the knowledge of Brahman, Para-vidya.

*Brahmana*—an aspirant, a man of spiritual inclination; *Parikshya*—having examined; *Nirvedam*—Vairagya or dispassion, freedom from all desires, not desiring the fruits of Kanya Karmas.

He who scrutinises or understands the true nature of all these worlds, attainable within the domain of Samsara, with the aid of experience, inference, analogies and Sastras, will naturally get disgust.

The aspirant will now naturally think: "I do not want to attain heaven. The performance of Karmas is full of troubles. It leads to misery. The worlds that are attainable by Karmas are like the waters of the mirage, like dreams, water-bubbles and foam, like the city in the clouds (Gandharva-nagar). They are acquired by Karma induced by the faults of ignorance and desire. I cannot attain anything eternal by performance of Karmas. I wish to attain now the eternal which is immortal, changeless, fearless and full of bliss".

*Akritah*—the uncreated, *Moksha*; *Srotriya*—well-versed in the *Vedas*; *Brahmanishtha*—one who is established in *Brahman*.

Having duly approached the Guru, with fuel in hand as a sign of discipleship, let the aspirant propitiate him and question him about the true and immortal *Brahman*.

तस्मै स विद्वानुपसन्नाय सम्यक्प्रशान्तचित्ताय शमान्विताय ।  
येनाक्षरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम् ॥१३॥

॥ इति प्रथममुण्डके द्वितीयः खण्डः ॥

॥ इति प्रथममुण्डकं समाप्तम् ॥

13. To that pupil who has approached him respectfully, whose mind is at rest, and whose senses are subdued, let the wise teacher truly teach that *Brahma-vidya* (science of *Brahman*), through which the true, immortal *Purusha* is known.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sa vidvan*—that learned Guru; *Upasannaya*—who has approached; *Samyak*—well, perfectly, in proper manner, according to the *Sastra*.

The student approaches the Guru with humility, in the proper manner that is laid down in the *Sastras*, and prostrates before him, immersed in faith and devotion.

*Prasanta chittaya*—whose mind is tranquil, who is endowed with *Sama*, peace of mind, whose thoughts are not troubled by desires.

*Samanvitaya*—who has controlled his senses, who has turned away from everything in the world; *Aksharam*—imperishable, because it knows neither decay nor destruction since it is scatheless; *Purusha*—because it is all-pervading, or seated in the city of the body; *Veda* knows. Let the preceptor teach that knowledge of *Brahman* in its very essence, as it should be taught.

It is the duty of the preceptor to remove all doubts of the disciple, to teach him the hidden meaning of *Vedas*, and to help

him in all possible ways to cross the ocean of ignorance and attain the knowledge of Brahman.

*Tatvatah*—in its essence, the hidden meaning of the Vedas.

Thus ends the First Mundaka

## CHAPTER II—SECTION I

तदेतत्सत्यं यथा सुदीप्तात्पावकाद्विस्फुलिङ्गाः सहस्राः प्रभवन्ते  
सरूपाः । तथाक्षराद्विविधाः सोम्य भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र  
चैवापियन्ति ॥१॥

1. This is the truth. As from a blazing fire, sparks, being like unto fire, issue forth by thousands, so various Jivas are produced from the indestructible (Brahman), O beloved youth, and also they return to Him.

### Notes and Commentary

*Pavakat*—from fire; *Visphulingah*—sparks; *Prabhavanti*—come out; *Sarupat*—of the same form; *Aksharat*—from the Imperishable; *Saumya*—gentle youth, young friend; *Bhavah*—beings, Jivas, souls, objects; *Prajayante*—are born, produced; *Apiyanti*—return, go at the time of Pralaya to dissolution.

The First Mundaka gives an exposition of the inferior knowledge (Apara-vidya). The Second describes the Knowledge of Brahman (Para-vidya, Brahma-vidya). Both commence with the declaration that it is truth which they teach.

All Jivas have the same nature (Svarupa) as Brahman, like sparks and the fire. God made man after His own image (Svarupa).

Everything made as the result of Apara-vidya has already been stated. Brahman, the Purusha, is the immortal source for this world or Samsara. This world has come out of Brahman. It exists in Brahman, and is absorbed in Brahman during Pralaya. This world derives its strength from Brahman only. Brahman is the support, abode or resting place (Adhishthana) for this world. This Brahman is true (Satyam). The subsequent portion of the book describes the nature of Brahman, who being known, all will become known. Brahman is the subject of

Brahma-vidya, Para-vidya. The Satyam, truth, which is the subject of the Apara-vidya, which is of the nature of the fruits of Karma, is only relatively true, but that which is the subject of Para-vidya is absolutely true. It is Existence Absolute. This Satyam, the subject of Knowledge, is real. The other Satyam, the subject of ignorance, is false.

The ether in the pot, room and clouds is the same. On account of the various limiting conditions, the ether assumes various names such as Ghatakasa (pot ether), Mathakasa (room ether), Meghakasa (cloud ether). So also, the one Brahman assumes various forms as Jivas, on account of various limiting conditions, names and forms. When the pot and walls of the room are broken, the pot ether and the room ether become one with the universal ether. Even so, when the limiting adjuncts, viz., various bodies and minds are no more, the Jivas become identical with Brahman. Just as from the flaming fire, issue forth, by thousands, sparks of the same form, so also from the immortal Brahman, proceed diverse Jivas, and they verily find their way back into Brahman. (Cf. Bri. Up. II-i-20.)

दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः सबाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः । अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो  
ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः ॥२॥

2. He is very luminous, without form, he is both without and within, unborn, without Prana, without mind, pure and greater than the great, indestructible One.

### Notes and Commentary

The nature of that Immortal Brahman is described in this verse.

*Divyah*—bright, self-effulgent, or born of itself, or entirely distinct from all that is worldly (*Divi svatmanibhava*); *Hi*—because, verily; *Amurtah*—formless, without physical body; *Purushah*—all-pervading or seated in the city of the body; *Sabahyabhyantarah*—existing both without and within.

*Ajah*—unborn, not produced, not born of anything, neither from itself nor from any other, as there is no other being from which It could be born. As He is unborn, He is undecaying,

immortal, changeless, eternal and fearless. He does not exist in time. He neither increases nor decreases. He is not liable to destruction.

*Apranah*—without Prana, breathless; *Amanah*—without mind; *Subhra*—pure; *Aksharat paratah*—than the imperishable Prakriti or the Avyakta, the seed condition of all names and forms.

The Purusha is beyond even this unmanifested Akshara.

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च । खं वायुज्योतिरापः  
पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥३॥

3. From Him are born the Prana (life), the mind, all the organs, Akasa, the wind, the fire, water and the earth, which supports all.

#### Notes and Commentary

Prana, mind, senses, and the rest are modifications of ignorance. They exist in mere name only. They are non-entities. The Sruti says: "The name is mere speech, a modification and a falsehood. Brahman is without Prana, mind and senses". Brahman is pure consciousness. As a man, who has no son, cannot be said to have a son just by seeing a son in his dream, so also Brahman cannot be said to have mind, Prana and senses, as they are in name only, as they are non-entities, as they are modifications of ignorance, as they did not really exist before the creation, and will not exist after absorption.

*Kham*—ether, *Akasa*; *Visvasya*—of all; *Dharini*—the support.

Verse two, "He is very luminous, without form, etc.", gave a brief description of the immortal, eternal Brahman or Purusha, the object of Para-vidya. The Sruti now proceeds to explain this nature in detail and at length. When Brahman is explained in detail, only then one will be able to comprehend it easily.

The five elements, the ten senses, the Prana and the mind came out of Brahman. These seventeen Tattvas, or principles, include the form side of creation.

अग्निर्मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्रसूर्यौ दिशः श्रोत्रे वाग्विवृताश्च वेदाः । वायुः  
प्राणो हृदयं विश्वमस्य पद्म्यां पृथिवी होष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ॥४॥

4. Fire is His head, His eyes the sun and the moon, the four quarters or directions His ears, His speech Vedas disclosed, the wind is His breath, His heart the universe; from His feet came the earth; He is indeed the inner Self of all beings.

### Notes and Commentary

In this Mantra there is a description of the Virat-Purusha who is born of Hiranyagarbha, the first-born.

*Hridayam*—heart; *Visvam*—the whole universe.

The whole universe is only a modification of the mind, for it is absorbed into the mind during deep sleep, and because it issues from the mind when waking, like sparks from fire.

This Deity, which is all-pervading, endless, which is the first embodied existence, which has for its body the three worlds, is the interior Atman of all created beings, because He is the seer, the hearer, the thinker, the knower in all created objects, and He is the cause of all. It is said in the next verse that all living beings, who come into this world through the five fires, are also born of the same Purusha. The five fires are heaven, rain, earth, man and woman.

The various Angas, or limbs, of the Divya Purusha are co-related with the cosmos. The world is the body of the Lord. This verse shows the Anga-Srishti or creation of limbs.

तस्मादग्निः समिधो यस्य सूर्यः सोमात्पर्जन्य ओषधयः पृथिव्याम् ।  
पुमानेतः सिञ्चति योषितायां बह्वीः प्रजाः पुरुषात्संप्रसूताः ॥५॥

5. From Him is produced the heaven world, which is the first fire whose fuel is the sun; from the moon, clouds (the second fire); from the clouds, the herbs that grow on the earth (the third fire); from these, man (the fourth fire) sheds semen into the woman (the fifth fire). Thus many living beings are produced from the Purusha.

### Notes and Commentary

*Agni*—the Dyuloka, heaven.

The sun is, as it were, a fuel for the fire, for the Dyuloka or heaven is lighted by the sun.

From the Purusha, the Dyuloka or heaven has originated. From the moon in the Dyuloka, the clouds are produced. Rains fall on earth from the clouds and produce plants and herbs. Man eats the plants and herbs, and secretes semen. Man sheds this semen on the woman and produces living beings. Thus gradually from the Purusha are formed many living beings. The Purusha is the final cause of the origin of beings. Moreover, the auxiliaries, or helps to Karma and their fruits, also proceed from the Purusha.

Heaven, rain, earth, man and woman are here represented as five fires. This is the Panchagni-vidya or the science of five fires. This is dealt with elaborately in the Chhandogya Upanishad.

तस्मादृचः साम यजूँषि दीक्षा यज्ञाश्च सर्वे क्रतवो दक्षिणाश्च ।  
संवत्सरश्च यजमानश्च लोकाः सोमो यत्र पवते यत्र सूर्यः ॥६॥

6. From Him come the Rig, the Sama, the Yajur Mantras, Diksha (initiatory rites), all sacrifices and offerings of animals (Kratus), the fees given to priests, the year, the sacrificer, and the worlds in which the moon purifies, and the sun shines brightly.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tasmat*—from the Purusha; *Diksha*—the observances of the performer of a sacrifice such as wearing the Mounji, Kusa grass, etc., *Yajnas*—all sacrifices as Agnihotra, etc.; *Kratu*—sacrifices which require a Yupa, i.e., sacrificial post; *Dakshina*—rewards distributed to priests during sacrifice, from a single cow to unbounded whole wealth; *Samvatsarah*—the year, the stated time; *Yajamanah*—the performer of a sacrifice.

*Lokah*—the worlds which are the fruits of his Karma, 'in which the moon purifies (the world of the forefathers), and the sun shines brightly (the world of gods)'. These are attainable by

the Southern (Dakshinayana) and the Northern (Uttarayana) paths, and are the fruits of the Karma, performed by the ignorant and the knowing, respectively.

तस्माच्च देवा बहुधा संप्रसूताः साध्या मनुष्याः पश्वो वयांसि ।  
प्राणापानौ व्रीहियवौ तपश्च श्रद्धा सत्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं विधिश्च ॥७॥

7. From Him also were produced the gods of various orders (celestials), the Sadhyas, men, cattle, birds, Prana, and Apana, rice and barley, austerity, faith, truth, celibacy and law.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tasmat cha*—from Him also, from the Purusha; *Bahudha*—in many ways, in various groups such as Vasus, etc.; *Samprasutah*—were born or produced; *Sadhyas*—a species of Devas, celestials; *Vayamsi*—birds; *Vrihi*—rice; *Yava*—barley (for making Havis or oblation); *Tapas*—austerity, this is an indispensable adjunct to Karma, a man with pure heart will perform the Karma very efficiently, Tapas purifies the heart; *Sraddha*—faith, faith in the Sastras, in the words of the Guru, in one's own Self, and in a future state necessary to the accomplishment of all human ends; *Satyam*—truth, i.e., avoiding falsehood and speaking out what has really happened, without harm to others; *Brahmacharya*—purity in thought, word and deed, absence of sexual intercourse, celibacy or abstinence; *Vidhish*—injunction, observance, law, the ordinances, the statement of what ought to be done.

सप्त प्राणाः प्रभवन्ति तस्मात्सप्तार्चिषः समिधः सप्त होमाः । सप्त  
इमे लोका येषु चरन्ति प्राणा गुहाशया निहिताः सप्त सप्त ॥८॥

8. From Him proceed the seven Pranas (senses), the seven flames, the seven kinds of fuel, the seven oblations, the seven Lokas (worlds) where the Pranas move, which rest in the cave (of the heart), and are placed there seven and seven.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sapta Pranah*—the seven Pranas or senses, the seven cognitional senses, viz., hearing, touch, sight, taste, smell, mind, intellect, or the two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils

and the mouth. Prana here is a term for 'sense'. That it means here 'sense' and not vital air, is evident from its attribute 'seven' which would not agree with vital air. The senses are called seven, because there are seven openings in the head which lead to them.

*Sapta-archishah*—seven flames, rays or lights; or acts of sensation, seven kinds of functions, perceptions or powers of cognition, their light which enlightens their objects, the power of the senses to manifest their respective objects.

*Samidhah sapta*—seven fuels, or the objects by which the senses are lighted; it is by these objects that the organs of sense are fed.

*Homah sapta*—sevenfold oblations (knowledge), the perception of the sevenfold objects. Sruti says: 'He offers the oblation which consists in the perception of the objects by the senses'. Homah are the results of sensation due to the conjunction of the senses with the objects.

*Sapta lokah*—seven worlds, seven seats of sense-life, i.e., the seats or places of the senses where the Pranas move. The clause, 'where the Pranas move', is intended to exclude the vital airs, i.e., Prana, Apana, etc. These seven worlds are the internal nerve-centres of the senses, without which the external senses cannot by themselves perform their respective functions.

*Guhasayah*—lying in the cave, resting in the heart, lying during sleep in the heart. That which rests in the cavity is called 'Buddhi', the intellect.

Each sense moves in an approximate world of its own; but all the senses are all co-ordinated by the mind (Manas) which is located in the heart.

All Karmas, performed by men of knowledge who propitiate the Atman and their fruits, as well as the Karmas performed by the ignorant persons, their means and fruits, all these proceed only from the highest and the omniscient Purusha.

As the Jivas have to acquire the experiences of the seven planes, they are endowed with seven life-energies, seven senses, seven relations, seven objects. In every world there is this seven-fold division. Thus the Pranas become forty-nine

(Vide Vedanta Sutras II-iv-5 and 6, which say Pranas are eleven).

अतः समुद्रा गिरयश्च सर्वेऽस्मात्स्यन्दन्ते सिन्धवः सर्वरूपाः । अतश्च  
सर्वा ओषधयो रसश्च येनैष भूतैस्तिष्ठते ह्यन्तरात्मा ॥९ ॥

9. From Him proceed the oceans and all the mountains and the rivers of every kind; from Him also emanate the annual herbs and the juice, by which, the inner Self (subtle body) exists encircled by the gross elements.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Atah*—from Him, from the Purusha; *Syandante*—flow; *Sarvarupah*—of every kind; *Oshadhayah*—herbs, plants such as corn, barley, paddy, etc.; *Rasah*—the juice, the sap, sixfold taste such as sweetness, etc.; *Bhutaih*—by the five gross elements.

*Antaratma*—the internal Atman, the subtle body. The subtle body is the Atman, as it were, intermediate between the gross body and the soul proper. The physical body envelops the subtle body or astral body (*Lingasarira*). It takes its origin from food derived from herbs and saps. It is also sustained by food. Therefore, it is called by the name *Annamaya Kosa*, food-sheath. The subtle body consists of the three sheaths—*Pranamaya* (vital sheath), *Manomaya* (mental sheath) and *Vijnanamaya* (intellectual sheath)—the three sheaths of life, mind and intellect.

पुरुष एवेदं विश्वं कर्म तपो ब्रह्म परामृतम् । एतद्यो वेद निहितं  
गुहायां सोऽविद्याग्रन्थिं विकिरतीह सोम्य ॥१० ॥

॥ इति द्वितीयमुण्डके प्रथमः खण्डः ॥

10. The Purusha alone is all this universe, Karma (sacrifice), penance (knowledge), Brahman, the highest immortal; He who knows this hidden in the cave of the heart, breaks the knot of ignorance even here (on earth), O gentle youth!

### Notes and Commentary

Thus all this is born out of Purusha. The Sruti says:

"The name is mere speech, a modification and falsehood; the Purusha alone is true." Therefore, all this is only Purusha. The universe has no separate existence apart from Purusha, Brahman. Brahman is the support or abode (Adhishthana) for this world.

*Idam*—this; *Visvam*—universe; *Para amritam*—the high or supreme immortal; *Guhayam*—cavity of the heart; *Granthim*—knot, bond, the bond of ignorance; *Saumya*—O disciple, initiate, good-looking.

To the question asked by Saunaka, 'O Bhagavan, what is that which being known all this becomes known?' (I-i-2), the answer has been given, i.e., 'when this Purusha, the Supreme Self, the first cause, is known'. It becomes obvious that all this universe is Brahman only, and nothing else exists except Him.

*Karma*—Agnihotra, etc.; *Tapas*—penance, knowledge.

All this has come out of Brahman. Therefore everything is Brahman.

He who knows that he himself is this Brahman, the highest and the immortal, placed in the hearts of all living beings, destroys ignorance, attains knowledge of the Self and becomes Immortal.

*Iha*—here, even while living in this world, in this body, and not merely after death.

Thus ends the First Khanda of the Second Mundaka.

### CHAPTER II—SECTION II

आविः संनिहितं गुहाचरं नाम महत्पदमत्रैतत्समर्पितम् ।  
एजत्प्राणन्निमिषच्च यदेतज्जानथ सदसद्वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानाद्यद्विरिषं  
प्रजानाम् ॥१॥

1. Bright, near, moving in the cave (of the heart), is the great Being, the support of all. In Him is centred all that moves, breathes and winks. Know this as what is all that has form (gross), and all that is formless (subtle), which is to be adored

by all, which is beyond the reach of man's knowledge, and the highest of all.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sannihitam*—near, as Brahman is our innermost Self, there is nothing closer to us than Him; *Avih*—bright; *Guhacharam*—moving in the cavity, dwelling in the heart; *Mahat*—the great, because Brahman is greater than all; *Padam*—goal, that which is attained (*Padyate*), always by everybody in deep sleep, or in *Mukti*, reached by all, because it is the seat of all.

Why is Brahman said to be great? Because all this universe is centred in Brahman, just as the various spokes are centred in the nave or wheel-ring of the chariot.

*Ejat*—moving, i.e., birds, etc.; *Pranat*—breathes, men, horses, cattle, etc.; *Nimishat*—winking; *Sat*—that which has form, gross; *Asat*—that which has no form, subtle; *Varenyam*—the adorable of all, the highest, the best, because of all objects, it is the only eternal entity, therefore it is to be sought after or desired by all; *Param*—beyond understanding, beyond the reach of worldly knowledge, higher than, beyond the reach of common people; *Varishtham*—the highest of all, because Brahman is free from all faults, is the support for all, is the innermost Self of all, is the inner ruler of all, is the only immortal entity.

Know this Brahman, which is beyond the reach of intellect and senses, through intuition, or direct spiritual experience in deep meditation. Knowledge of Brahman is not mere intellectual knowledge. To know Brahman is to become Brahman. To realise Brahman is to merge in Brahman and become identical with Brahman. Brahman cannot be reached or realised by those who are endowed with gross or impure mind. But those thirsting aspirants, who are endowed with the four means and a pure, subtle mind, who are equipped with the instructions of their preceptors, will surely attain Brahman. There is no doubt of this.

यदर्चिमद्यदणुभ्योऽणु च यस्मिँलोका निहिता लोकिनश्च । तदेतदक्षरं  
ब्रह्म स प्राणस्तदु वाङ्मनः । तदेतत्सत्यं तदमृतं तद्वेद्ब्यं सोम्य  
विद्धि ॥२॥

2. That, which is brilliant, smaller than the smallest, that on which all the worlds are founded and their inhabitants, is this Immortal Brahman. That is the Prana, speech and mind. That is true and immortal. That is to be targeted. Strike it. O gentle youth!

#### Notes and Commentary

*Archimat*—brilliant, because the sun, the moon and the stars, the fire and the lightning, shine by the light of Brahman.

*Anubhyonucha*—subtler than the subtlest grain or atom. From the particle 'cha', it is clear that it is also bigger than the biggest, such as earth.

Brahman is the abode of this world with all its inhabitants. He is life, speech, mind and all the instruments. Brahman is the Prana of Pranas, mind of minds, ear of ears, eye of eyes. Prana, mind, eye, etc., derive their power and intelligence from Brahman. This immortal Brahman is the internal intelligence of Prana, mind and the senses. Therefore Brahman is true and endless.

*Veddhavyam*—that which is to be pierced or aimed at, the target, should be seized by the mind. The mind should be fixed or concentrated on Brahman. Therefore, O gentle youth, strike that, concentrate your mind on Brahman.

धनुर्गृहीत्वौपनिषदं महास्तं शरं ह्यपासानिशितं संदधीत । आयम्य  
तद्वावगतेन चेतसा लक्ष्यं तदेवाक्षरं सोम्य विद्धि ॥३॥

3. Having taken the bow supplied by the Upanishads, the great weapon, and fixed in it the arrow sharpened by incessant meditation, and having drawn it with the mind fixed on the Brahman, strike, O gentle youth, that mark, the immortal Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

How Brahman is targeted, is now explained. The first verse taught that Sravana (hearing) should be done. The second verse taught that Manana (reflection) should be done. The third verse now teaches that meditation also is necessary.

*Dhanuh*—bow, *Pranava* is the bow; *Grihitva*—having taken or seized; *Upanishadām*—pertaining to the Upanishad, i.e., the syllable Om. The mystic word Om which is the chief topic of explanation in all Upanishads; *Mahastram*—great weapon, i.e., the arrow; *Saram*—the arrow, i.e., the mind; *Upasya*—by meditation.

The arrow, i.e., the mind, is sharpened, or rendered pointed, by constant meditation.

*Sandhayita*—let him put or place, must be fixed; *Ayamya*—drawing the bow, having drawn.

After fixing the arrow in the bow and drawing it, i.e., drawing the mind and the senses from their external objects, and bending, i.e., concentrating on Brahman, hit the mark or target, the immortal Brahman, i.e., merge in Brahman through deep meditation.

*Tat-bhava-gatena*—with the sole aim, with thought or idea directed or absorbed in Brahman; *Viddhi*—penetrate, aim, hit, know, meditate upon.

प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते । अप्रमत्तेन वेद्वद्व्यं  
शरवत्तन्मयो भवेत् ॥४॥

4. *Pranava* (Om) is the bow, the *Atman* is the arrow, and Brahman is called its aim. It is to be hit by a man who is self-collected (with concentration), and then as the arrow becomes one with the target, he will become one with Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

What the bow and the rest referred to, in the previous verse, is explained.

Just as the bow is the cause of the arrow entering the target, so the *Pranava*, the sacred Om, is the cause of the mind, the *Jivatma*, entering the immortal Brahman. The constant

repetition of Om purifies the mind. When the mind is purified by Japa of Om, it becomes fixed in Brahman, just as the arrow is fixed in the target by the force of the bow. Just as the bow helps the arrow to enter the target or mark, so also the repetition or Japa of Om, and meditation on Om, helps the mind to get itself fixed in Brahman. Therefore, the Pranava is like a bow.

*Sarah*—the arrow, the mind is the arrow; *Lakshyam*—the mark, the aim, the target; *Apramattena*—by one undistracted in mind, not heedless, not thought-distracted; *Veddavyam*—to be pierced, to be hit or should be hit, to be known and meditated upon.

The Brahman, which is the mark or target, should be targeted by one who is self-collected, who has an undistracted or one-pointed mind, who has subdued his senses and mind, who is disgusted with sensual pleasures, who is free from attraction for sensual objects, who is free from the excitement caused by the thirst to possess sensual objects.

*Saravat*—like the arrow; *Tanmayah*—entered in Him, fixed in Brahman; *Bhavet*—let him become.

When Brahman is hit or meditated upon with an one-pointed mind, the mind or the individual soul becomes like the arrow, one with the mark, Brahman.

When the arrow becomes one with the mark, he who aims attains success. So also, the aspirant who meditates on Brahman attains success, obtains the fruit of his meditation, when he merges himself in Brahman, removing the erroneous notion that the body, etc., is the Atman.

Thus Sravana (hearing), Manana (reflection) and Nididhyasana (deep meditation) of Brahman have been taught. This is the method of Brahma-upasana, Jnana-abhyasa or Brahma-abhyasa.

यस्मिन्द्यौः पृथिवी चान्तरिक्षमोत्तमनः सह प्राणैश्च सर्वैः । तमेवैकं जानथ आत्मानमन्या वाचो विमुक्त्वा मृतस्यैष सेतुः ॥५॥

5. In Him the heaven, the earth, the sky, the mind with the Pranas (senses), are centred. Know Him alone as the Atman of all, and leave off all other speech; this is the bridge to Immortality.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yasmin*—in whom; *Dhyau*—the heaven; *Prithvi*—the earth; *Antariksham*—the sky, the interspace, the astral plane; *Otam*—are woven, sewn, fixed, are based.

The three worlds, mind, all senses and all life-breaths, are supported by Brahman. They are centred in Brahman. He is the one support for all.

Brahman is exceedingly subtle. It cannot be easily grasped or comprehended by the mind. The repetition of ideas is for the purpose of making it more easily comprehensible.

Atman is the internal principle, the Self, of all living beings.

*Esha amritasya setuh*—this Brahman is the bridge to the shore of Immortality, across the ocean of life.

Know Him alone as the one Self of all. Leave off all other speech of the nature of Apara-vidya, and Karmas with their aids and fruits, because the knowledge of Brahman is the road to Moksha, final emancipation, the bridge, as it were, by which the great ocean of Samsara is crossed.

Another Sruti says: "Having known Him thus, one goes beyond death; there is no other road to salvation".

अरा इव रथनाभौ संहता यत्र नाड्यः स एषोऽन्तश्चरते बहुधा  
जायमानः । ओमित्येवं ध्यायथ आत्मानं स्वस्ति वः पाराय तमसः  
परस्तात् ॥६॥

6. He moves about, becoming manifold within the heart where the nerves meet, like spokes fastened to the nave of a wheel; meditate on Om as the Self. Hail to you, that you may go to the other side beyond darkness.

### Notes and Commentary

*Arah*—spokes; *Ratha-nabhau*—in the nave or hub of the wheel of the chariot; *Samhatah*—fastened or fixed, meet; *Antascharate*—moves within the heart; *Bahudha jayamanah*—becoming manifold, such as Visva, Taijasa, Prajna, the apparent modifications that the Atman undergoes in the ignorant state when swayed by anger, joy, etc., according to the

conditions of the mind; the manifold modifications of seeing, hearing, wishing, thinking, knowing, etc.

Within the heart, where all the nerves that run through the body meet together, as the spokes in the nave of the wheel, the Atman dwells as the silent witness of the three states of consciousness, viz., waking, dream and deep sleep, and all actions such as seeing, hearing, thinking, feeling, knowing, etc. The heart is a vital centre, where the aspirant should meditate on the Atman. All faculties and divine attributes are centred in the heart.

Brahman is the Antaryamin, the inner ruler. He resides in the heart. He moves within the heart in order to give life and energy to the organs.

*Svasti*—may it be well, hail; *Vah*—to you (disciples); *Paraya*—in crossing to the further shore beyond darkness.

*Svasti va paraya*—the preceptor gives his benediction to his disciples that they may attain Brahman without hindrance.

It has been said: 'The preceptor who knows must instruct the disciples'. The disciples are those who are thirsting for attaining the knowledge of Brahman, who, therefore, have abandoned Karma and taken to the path of renunciation, the road to salvation.

*Parastat*—beyond. Beyond what? Beyond the darkness of ignorance, for the realisation of the true nature of the Atman devoid of ignorance. After crossing the ocean of Samsara, you will have to reach Brahman, who is the subject of Para-vidya.

Meditate on Om with all its attributes. Meditate on Om as the Self or Brahman. Meditate in the heart, in order to attain the Supreme Brahman, with the help of the sacred Mantra Om. All evils will cease. You will attain immortality and eternal bliss.

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्यस्यैष महिमा भुवि । दिव्ये ब्रह्मपुरे ह्येष व्योमन्यात्मा प्रतिष्ठितः ॥७॥

मनोमयः प्राणशरीरनेता प्रतिष्ठितोऽन्ने हृदयं सन्निधाय । तद्विज्ञानेन परिपश्यन्ति धीरा आनन्दरूपममृतं यद्विभाति ॥८॥

7-8. This Atman who is omniscient, who knows everything in detail, whose glory is manifested in the world, is placed in the ether, in the bright city of Brahman. He is of the nature of the mind, and becomes the guide of life and the body. He subsists in food, in close proximity to the heart. The wise behold, with the aid of their superior knowledge, the Atman which shines forth, full of bliss and is immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yat*—who; *Sarvajna*—all wise; *Sarvavit*—who knows everything in detail.

Where Brahman is, is now explained. He, who is all-wise, whose greatness is thus manifested in the world, is to be meditated upon as the Atman residing in the ether in the shining city of Brahman (the heart).

The glory of Brahman is celebrated on this earth. What is that glory? This world itself is the manifestation of His glory. The law that prevails in this world, the beauty in the flowers, landscape and Himalayan scenery, the power in the electricity, all bespeak of His glory.

By whose command the sun and the moon stand apart, the heaven and the earth stand upheld in their places? By whose command, minutes, hours, days and nights, half-months, seasons, years, all stand apart? By whose command the sun and the moon always rotate as the flaming firebrand? By whose command do the rivers and the oceans not overstep their limits? By whose command all Karma, their performers and their fruits do not likewise go beyond their appointed time? By whose command all that is movable and immovable obey the universal law? By whose command do the seasons, the solstices and the years not transgress? It is His. This is His glory.

*Yasya*—whose; *Easah*—this; *Mahima*—glory; *Bhuvi*—in the world.

*Brahmapure*—in the city of Brahman, the body, the temple of God, the lotus of the heart. Brahman is always manifesting Himself there, in the form of intelligence and consciousness. So the lotus of the heart is called Brahmapuri.

*Divye Brahmapure*—in the shining city of Brahman. The lotus of the heart is very effulgent because the self-luminous Brahman dwells there. Aspirants meditate on Brahman in the lotus of the heart as self-effulgent light. So the lotus of the heart is called the effulgent city of Brahman.

*Vyomi*—in the Akasa or ether within the cavity of heart. Brahman is all-pervading. Beginners cannot meditate on the all-pervading Brahman. So to begin with, they meditate on Brahman, as a mass of light of the size of a thumb, seated in the cavity of the heart. Gradually, when they advance in meditation, they become fit to meditate on the all-pervading consciousness. The previous meditation falls away by itself, and meditation on the all-pervading Brahman comes by itself, in a mysterious manner, through the inscrutable force of meditation (Achintya-sakti).

*Manomaya*—of the form of mind. In the embodied state, the Atman is conditioned by the mind.

*Prana sarira neta*—leader of the Prana and the body, the controller of the Prana and body. *Neta*—the inciter, the guide, the controller. Because He leads or guides the Prana and the body from one gross body into another body, He is called 'Prana sarira neta'.

*Pratishtitah*—fixed, abides, is placed; *Anne*—in the food, i.e., in the body which is a modification of the food eaten, and which grows and decays day by day; *Hridayam*—heart, intellect; *Sannidhaya*—being seated, fixing in the cavity of the lotus, for the Atman is really seated in the heart and not in the food; *Tat*—That, the Atman.

*Vijnanena*—through direct knowledge, intuition, (Aparoksha) direct perception, through the illumination produced by constant meditation on Brahman, with a pure heart and a heart free from desires. When the aspirant, who is equipped with the teachings of the Sastras and the preceptor, and the four means of salvation, who is free from desires and cravings, who has controlled the mind and the senses, and who is full of dispassion, discrimination, renunciation, meditates constantly on Brahman, direct knowledge of the Self dawns in him.

*Paripasyanti*—see, realise; *Dhirah*—the wise who have practised Sravana (hearing of Srutis), Manana (reflection on Brahman) and Nididhyasana (meditation); *Anandarupam*—of the nature of Bliss; *Vibhati*—manifests Himself, shines as the Self always.

The Atman, Brahman, pervades the whole body. It will be easy for neophytes to concentrate on the heart. So it is said that the Atman is seated in the heart.

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः । क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि  
तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥९॥

9. The knot of the heart is broken, all doubts are solved and all his Karmas perish, when He who is both high and low is beheld.

### Notes and Commentary

The fruit of knowledge of Brahman is described in this verse.

*Bhidyatē*—is broken, destroyed or pierced; *Hridaya*—the heart; *Granthi*—knot of the heart, bond, fetter, which consists of ignorance, love and hatred, worldly desires, and the group of tendencies in the mind due to ignorance and Karma.

The bonds are Avidya-bond (ignorance), the Lingadeha-bond (subtle body), the Prakriti-bond, Kama-bond (lust) and the Karma-bond (actions).

The group of desires and tendencies cling to the intellect. They do not belong to the Atman. The Atman is ever pure. These knots constitute the basis of ignorance. When these knots are cut asunder, ignorance is destroyed and knowledge of Self dawns.

*Chhidyante*—are cut asunder; *Sarva samsayah*—all doubts.

The doubts trouble worldly men up to their death. Their flow is continuous like the stream of Ganga. Even advanced aspirants are sometimes assailed by doubts. All doubts are caused by ignorance. All doubts are cut asunder when one attains Self-realisation, when ignorance is dispelled.

*Kshiyante*—are destroyed; *Karmas*—there are three kinds of Karma, viz., Sanchita (accumulated results of works), Agami

or Kriyamana (results of current works done in this present life which will bear fruit in future lives), and Prarabdha (the effects of one's works which brought about this birth, which have already begun to germinate and bear fruit in this life).

When one attains Self-realisation, only the Sanchita and Agami are destroyed. Prarabdha still remains. It must be worked out, enjoyed. It must be exhausted by actual enjoyment in the present life. On account of Prarabdha only, this body continues to exist even after the attainment of knowledge of the Atman. The body will fall only when the Prarabdha is completely exhausted. The potter stops rotating the wheel, but the wheel still continues to revolve on account of the momentum of the previous force given by the potter. Even so, the body of the sage continues to function on account of the force of Prarabdha, which has already begun to operate. You cannot withdraw the arrow that has already been discharged. It must work out. Even so is this Prarabdha.

*Paravare*—both high and low, high as being the cause and low as being the effect.

When Brahman is realised directly as 'I am He', one attains liberation, ignorance, the cause of Samsara being destroyed.

हिरण्मये परे कोशे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम् । तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां  
ज्योतिस्तद्यदात्मविदो विदुः ॥१०॥

10. In the innermost golden sheath, there is the Brahman without stains and without parts. That is pure, that is Light of lights. That is what the knowers of the Atman realise.

### Notes and Commentary

This and the next two verses briefly express the meaning already given.

*Hiranmaye*—luminous, full of light, bright with intelligence and knowledge; *Pare*—the highest, the deepest core; *Kose*—in the sheath; *Pare kose*—in the highest sheath, the deepest core of man (dwells Brahman, stainless, indivisible and pure). Just as the sheath envelops the sword, so also the five sheaths, viz., Annamaya Kosa (food-sheath), Pranamaya Kosa (vital sheath), Manomaya Kosa (mental sheath),

Vijnanamaya Kosa (intellectual sheath) and Anandamaya Kosa (Bliss sheath) envelop the Soul. So man is not able to behold his Atman. These sheaths stand as veils between man and the Soul.

Why is it called the highest sheath? Because it is the place where the Atman is realised or located, because it is the innermost of all, the deepest core of man.

*Virajam*—stainless, without Rajas or passion, free from evil, free from all the Gunas of Prakriti, free from the taint of ignorance and all other faults; *Brahma*—Brahman, so called because it is the greatest of all and the Atman (Soul) of all; *Nishkalam*—indivisible, without parts, free from the 16 Kalas or parts (See Prasna Up. VI); *Subhram*—pure, white, because it is stainless and devoid of parts, therefore it is pure.

*Jyotishamjyoti*—the Light of all lights. The Light of Brahman illumines even the sun, the moon, the stars and the fire which illumine all other things. The light of the sun, etc., is due to the splendour of the intelligence of the Brahman within. The Light of the Atman is the highest Light, which is not illumined by other lights. Hence Brahman is Self-luminous.

*Atmavidah*—the knowers of the Atman; *Viduh*—know, realise.

The knowers of Atman, who know the Self as the witness of the three states of consciousness, waking, dreaming and deep sleep, know and realise this Brahman who is stainless, indivisible, pure, who is the Light of all lights and who dwells in the luminous sheaths of intelligence. Those persons whose minds are impure, whose vision is of an objective nature, cannot realise or know this Brahman.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।  
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥११॥

11. The sun does not shine there, nor do the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings and much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him. By His Light all this is illumined.

### Notes and Commentary

How Brahman is Light of all lights is explained in this verse.

The sun cannot reveal that Brahman. Brahman illumines the sun, the moon, the stars and the lightning. The sun, etc., shine after Him. The light of the sun, etc., depends upon the Light of Brahman.

The sun, etc., do not illumine Brahman, i.e., do not make Him manifest.

The sun illumines the whole universe with the Light of the Atman. Just as water, exposed to the sun or the fire, borrows its heat from the sun or the fire, so also the sun, the moon, etc., borrow their light from Brahman. They have not the inherent capacity to illuminate.

That which is not light itself cannot illuminate others. The pots are not endowed with luminosity. So they cannot illuminate others. The sun and the rest have light and so they illuminate the objects of this universe. As Brahman illumines the sun and the rest, and as it is not in need of any other extraneous light for its own illumination, the self-luminous nature of Brahman is inferred.

The intellect also borrows its light from Brahman only. Through the Light of Brahman only, you attain knowledge of any object. The Light of Brahman only reveals the object. There cannot be memory, remembrance, recognition and knowing without the Light of Brahman. Cf. Katha Up. II-ii-15, and Svet. Up. VI. 14.)

ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्ताद्ब्रह्म पश्चाद्ब्रह्म दक्षिणतश्चोत्तरेण । अथश्चोर्ध्वं  
च प्रसृतं ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम् ॥१२॥

॥ इति द्वितीयमुण्डके द्वितीयः खण्डः ॥

॥ इति द्वितीयमुण्डकं समाप्तम् ॥

12. That immortal Brahman is before, that Brahman is behind, to the right and to the left, below and above, all-pervading, Brahman alone is all this, it is the highest.

### Notes and Commentary

It was stated before that Brahman alone is true, and all else is only its modification, is a mere name and falsehood, a matter of speech only. This is again affirmed as a conclusion in this verse.

All this is the immortal Brahman. He is everywhere, above, below, in front, at the back, to the right and to the left. All this world is indeed the Supreme Brahman.

He is in the east and the west, in the north and the south, in the zenith and the nadir. Brahman alone pervades in all directions. This Brahman is the best (Varishtham), the highest of all.

Brahman was taught to be meditated upon, as in the heart and the golden sheath (Hiranmaya Kosa). But, lest one should mistake that Brahman is thus limited in these two places only, this Mantra declares that He is everywhere, though the heart is selected as the best place for the purpose of meditation.

All perception except Brahman is mere ignorance, just as the perception of a snake in a rope. Srutis emphatically declare that the one Brahman alone is really true.

Thus ends the Second Mundaka

### CHAPTER III—SECTION I

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।  
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वृत्यनशनन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥१॥

1. Two birds, inseparable companions, dwell upon the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fruit of the Asvattha tree, the other looks on without eating.

### Notes and Commentary

The Para-vidya, by which the immortal Purusha, Brahman, could be known and realised, by whose knowledge the cause of Samsara, such as the knot of the heart (ignorance, desire and action) can be totally destroyed, has been explained. Yoga, which is the means to the attainment of Brahman, the supreme Self, has also been explained, by an illustration of the

bow and the arrow. Now, the present section deals with the auxiliary means to that Yoga, such as truth, austerity, celibacy, etc., by which the knowledge of Brahman is obtained.

*Suparna*—of handsome plumage, birds.

The two birds are Jiva (the individual soul) and Isvara (Lord). The Jivatman is limited by Avidya, ignorance. Therefore, he is bound by body, mind and works. Isvara is conditioned by Maya, but Maya is under His control. Therefore He is free, omnipotent and omniscient.

Some take mind as the one bird, as it is the real doer and enjoyer, and Brahman, the Supreme Self, who is the silent witness (Sakshi) of the modifications of all minds, and three states of consciousness (the waking state, the dreaming state and the deep sleep state), and who is not tainted in the least by the effects of Samsara (good and evil), as the other bird. The Jiva has to eat both the sweet and the bitter fruit (has to experience pleasure and pain).

*Sayuja*—inseparable friends, constant companions; *Sakhaya*—bearing the same name, having same cause of manifestation; *Samanam*—the same; *Vriksham*—the tree (Asvattha), the body.

Two birds perch or nestle on the same tree. Tree here means body. A tree can be cut or destroyed. This body also can be cut or destroyed. So the body is compared to a tree.

The two birds are inseparable. The Jivatman (the individual soul) and the Paramatman (the Supreme Soul) are inseparable. The Jivatman is only a reflection or image of Paramatman. Just as the sun's image in the water cannot be separated from the sun, so also the individual soul cannot be separated from the Paramatman. The reflection of Paramatman in the mind-mirror is Jivatman.

*Parishasvajate*—dwell upon, embrace, cling to, nestle, just as birds go to the same tree for tasting the fruits. This mysterious tree has its root high up in Brahman and its branches (Prana, senses, etc.) downwards. It is impermanent. It has its source in Avyaktam, Maya, the unmanifested Mula Prakriti. This tree goes by the name Kshetra, the field. The fruits of the Karma of all living beings hang on it.

*Pippalam*—the fruit of the Asvattha tree, the effects of Karmas generated by the body (pleasure and pain); *Svadu*—sweet, with relish; *Atti*—eats; *Anasnan*—not eating; *Abhichakasiti*—looks on.

The Jiva or Kshetrajna, who is subject to ignorance, passion and attachment, eats or tastes the fruits of Karma in ignorance, viz., happiness and misery. The Lord, who is pure and omniscient, does not eat, for He is the director of both the eater and the thing eaten, and He is the eternal witness of all. He does not taste but simply looks on. His mere witnessing is direction, as in the case of a king. On account of ignorance, the Jiva identifies himself with the body, mind, Prana and the senses, and feels that he is the real doer and the enjoyer, although it is the Prakriti or the mind that really works and enjoys. The Atman, Brahman, is always the silent witness. He is non-doer (Akarta) and non-enjoyer (Abhokta). Enjoyment and agentship are superimposed on the Jiva by the mind. When the ignorance is destroyed, when the heart is purified, when knowledge of the Self dawns, the knots of the heart are cut asunder, all his Karmas perish, the ideas of doer and enjoyer are annihilated. He becomes identical with the Supreme Self and attains liberation. (Cf. Svet. Up. 1V-6 and Katha. Up. I-iii-1)

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः ।  
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः ॥१२॥

2. Being seated on the same tree, the Jiva, immersed (in ignorance) and deluded, grieves on account of helplessness. But when he sees the other, the Lord, who is adored by all and His glory, then he becomes free from grief.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Nimagnah*—immersed in worldliness, ignorance; *Anisaya*—for its impotence; *Sochati*—grieves.

The Jiva, on account of his passion, attachment and desire for the fruits of Karma, is deluded. He is immersed in ignorance. He thinks that the body is the Atman and that he is the son of this man. He thinks 'I am lean', 'I am stout', 'I am

happy', 'I am miserable', 'I did that work', 'I will enjoy such and such fruit', 'I lost my property', 'My son is dead', etc. He grieves with helplessness. He is born again and again in this world. On account of the result of virtuous actions stored up in many previous births, he comes across a compassionate preceptor and gets spiritual instructions. He controls the senses and the mind, develops virtuous qualities and practises meditation on the Self and experiences 'I am the Immortal Self, which is beyond pleasure and pain, virtue and vice'. Then he becomes free from sorrow, pain and death and enjoys the eternal Bliss of his own Self.

*Vitasoka*—free from sorrow or grief.

The first half of the verse describes the cause of bondage, namely, the soul being immersed in bodily enjoyment and the delusion of 'I' and 'mine'. The next half shows the method of emancipation. He sees the Lord, the ever-content and the adorable, wishes to become like the Lord, frees himself from ignorance and attains God-consciousness. (Cf. Svet. Up. IV-7.)

यदा पश्यः पश्यते रुक्मवर्णं कर्तारमीशं पुरुषं ब्रह्मयोनिम् ।  
तदा विद्वान्पुण्यपापे विधूय निरञ्जनः परमं साम्यमुपैति ॥३॥

3. When the seer beholds the golden-coloured (self-effulgent) creator (of the world), the Lord, the Purusha, the source of Brahma, then that wise one, shaking off good and evil, becomes stainless and attains supreme equality.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Rukmavarnam*—golden-coloured, self-effulgent, of imperishable brightness, like that of gold; *Yada*—when; *Pasyah*—the seer, one who sees, i.e., a learned man, a man of practice; *Pasyati*—sees; *Kartaram*—the creator of the world; *Brahma yonim*—Brahman, who is the source of the manifested Brahma or Hiranyagarbha; *Vidvan*—the wise, the Aparoksha Jnani; *Niranjana*—without blemish, the stainless; *Paramam*—the superior; *Samyam*—equality, similarity, unity; *Upaiti*—attains.

When he realises Brahman, he shakes off merits and demerits, i.e., burns away good and bad deeds, which form a

bondage, to their very root, and being freed from sorrow, attains that supreme equality or identity with Brahman.

The Seer realises that virtue and sin are creations of the mind only. He knows now that good and evil, merit and demerit cannot touch the ever-pure Atman. All dualities, distinctions and differences vanish from him now. He realises that the Lord whom he was worshipping upto this time, is his own Self and his self is identical with the Supreme Self, Paramatman.

प्राणो ह्येष यः सर्वभूतैर्विभाति विजानन्विद्वान्भवते नातिवादी ।  
आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिः क्रियावानेष ब्रह्मविदां वरिष्ठः ॥४॥

4. This is verily, Prana, i.e., the Lord shining forth in all living beings. The wise, who thus knows, does not talk of anything else. He sports in the Self, he delights in the Self, and performing works, he is the greatest among the knowers of Brahman.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Prana*—here, Prana means Isvara; *Sarvabhutaiah*—in all beings from Brahma down to the worm; *Vibhati*—shines forth; *Ativadi*—much talker, a vain babbler.

He, who has attained Self-realisation, who feels 'I am He', who is the knower of the one Atman that dwells in all beings, who sees, hears and knows none other than the Atman, cannot talk of anything else. How could he talk of anything else?

*Atma krida*—one who delights, disports in his own Atman and not elsewhere, such as in son, wife, etc. *Atmaratih*—one who delights in his own Atman, Self. Krida or play needs some external help, but delight does not require any external help. In delight, there is no attachment to an external object.

*Kriyavan*—the performer of devotional practices, performer of pious works, who constantly meditates on the Lord; one whose activities consist of knowledge, meditation, worship, prayer, freedom from desire, etc. He explains to others the scriptures. He is active in teaching those who are inferior to him. He becomes a teacher among seekers of Brahman.

*Atmaratikriyavan*—some contend that this single compound term denotes a combination of both Karma, i.e., Agnihotra and

the rest, and the knowledge of Brahman. It is not possible for one to be playing with external objects, and at the same time, to delight in the Atman. He who has abandoned all external activities only can delight in the Self. Action and delight in the Atman are opposed to each other like darkness and light. Therefore the statement, that a combination of Karma and Knowledge is inculcated in this verse, is certainly the prattle of the ignorant.

*Brahmavidam*—among the knowers of Brahman; *Varishthah*—the best.

Sporting in the Self, delighting in the Self, performing pious works (enjoined), this man is the best of those who know Brahman.

Realisation of Brahman as the one common consciousness in all beings, alone is real wisdom. The so-called thrilling lectures on worldly topics or secular sciences, is only idle talk or vain babbling.

सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम् ।  
अन्तःशरीरे ज्योतिर्मयो हि शुभ्रो यं पश्यन्ति यतयः क्षीणदोषाः ॥५॥

5. This Atman is to be verily obtained by the constant practice of Truth, penance, perfect knowledge and celibacy. He, whom the sinless behold, is the pure and effulgent within the body.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Satyena*—by truthfulness; *Labhya*—is to be attained.

The direct vision of Brahman, Aparoksha Brahma Jnana, is to be attained by truth, by abstaining from falsehood, etc.

*Tapas*—concentration. This is usually translated as austerity. Concentration of the mind is the highest Tapas, because withdrawing the mind and the senses from the external objects and concentrating it on the Atman, is the most difficult form of austerity. Concentration is of greatest help to the aspirant, because the mind is turned inside towards the Atman. The performance of the Chandrayana Vrata (a penance), etc., is not as helpful as concentration.

*Samyag-jnanena*—by perfect, sound, ripe, Aparoksha knowledge of Brahman; by true knowledge of the Atman. Aparoksha is direct perception of the Atman, through intuition or Anubhava (spiritual experience).

*Brahmacharyena*—by celibacy, by controlling the senses, by abstinence from sexual pleasures.

*Nityam*—always, constant. This word should be read with every one of the words 'truth', 'penance', 'perfect knowledge', 'celibacy', thus: constant practice of truth, constant practice of penance, etc.

The Atman, that should be attained by these means, viz., truth, Tapas, etc., is now explained.

That Atman is resplendent, pure. He is within this body.

*Jyotirmayah*—resplendent, full of light, abounding in luminosity; *Subrah*—pure, untouched by matter; *Yatayah*—the anchorites, those who are habitually seeking the Truth, i.e., the Sannyasins, self-controlled Sannyasins or ascetics.

Pure and pious householders, who are freed from faults, who have devoted their lives for the worship of the Lord and who constantly practise meditation, are also Yatis.

*Antah sarire*—within the body, in the midst of the body, i.e., in the Akasa of the lotus of the heart; *Kshinadosha*—sinless, whose faults have become exhausted, spotless, devoid of all taints of mind such as anger, etc.; *Pasyanti*—see.

This Atman is attained by Sannyasins or ascetics with these aids, such as constant practice of truth, Tapas, etc. This Atman cannot be attained by occasional practice of truth, Tapas, etc.

This Atman is attained by meditation. This verse describes some accessories to meditation such as truthfulness, penance, celibacy, etc. Meditation leads to direct or intuitive Knowledge.

सत्यमेव जयते नानृतं सत्येन पन्था विततो देवयानः ।  
येनाक्रमन्त्यृष्यत्यो ह्याप्तकामा यत्र तत्सत्यस्य परमं निधानम् ॥६॥

6. Truth alone triumphs, but not falsehood; by truth is opened Devayana, or the path of the Devas, by which the sages,

satisfied in their desires, proceed to where there is that highest place of the True One.

### Notes and Commentary

*Satyam*—truth; *Jayate*—conquers; *Anritam*—falsehood; *Pantha*—path; *Vitatah*—is opened, is laid out; *Devayana*—the path of the Devas, the divine path, the spiritual path; *Aptakama*—whose desires are satisfied; *Paramam nidhanam*—highest place or abode.

He who speaks truth, wins. He who speaks falsehood is treated with contempt by the people. He is not trusted by anybody. Truth is, therefore, a strong auxiliary to the attainment of Brahman. Brahman is Truth. Brahman is to be attained by speaking truth.

Further, it is only by speaking truth that the *Devayana*, the path of gods, the divine path, is widened or opened, i.e., is kept up continually, by which road the sages (Rishis), free from desires, deceit, delusion, pride, vanity, fraud and falsehood, ascend to the Supreme abode of the True, which is attainable by the important aid, Truth.

The divine path (*Devayana*), in a general sense, is the spiritual path of aspirants, wherein they practise rigorous discipline to purify and steady the mind and to fix it on the Atman. Truth is the most important discipline.

In a technical sense, *Devayana* is the path of gods which takes the devotees, who are entitled for gradual liberation, *Krama Mukti*, to *Brahmaloka*.

बृहच्च तद्विष्मचिन्त्यरूपं सूक्ष्माच्च तत्सूक्ष्मतरं विभाति ।  
दूरात्सुदूरे तदिहान्तिके च पश्यत्स्वहैव निहितं गुहायाम् ॥७॥

7. That (true Brahman) shines forth, vast, divine, inconceivable, subtler than the subtle; It is far beyond what is far and yet near here, and seen fixed in the cave (of the heart) by the wise.

### Notes and Commentary

*Brihat*—vast, grand, great; *Divyam*—divine, heavenly, effulgent, self-luminous; *Achintya*—inconceivable, beyond imagination, unthinkable.

The Brahman, that is attainable by truth, etc., is vast, because it is all-pervading. Brahman is self-luminous. It is imperceivable by the senses and subtler than even the subtle. Therefore it is unthinkable.

*Sukshmat* *sukshmataram*—more subtle than even the subtle, such as Akasa and the rest. As it is the cause of all, it is exceedingly subtle; *Vibhu*—shines forth diversely, in various forms; *Durat-sudure*—greatly farther than the far, distant than the farthest distance, it is farther even from the most distant places because it is infinite, it cannot be, in the least, approached by the ignorant; *Iha*—here in the body itself; *Antike*—within.

Brahman is also very near. He is in the body itself. He dwells in the heart. He is the innermost self of all beings. He is the Life of life. He is within the Akasa of the heart. Brahman is very far for those who are worldly-minded, is very near to those sages who have attained Self-realisation, and also to those thirsting aspirants who meditate on the Self in the heart. As Brahman is all-pervading, he is said to be both far and near.

*Guhayam*—in the cavity, in the intellect; *Nihitam*—placed, hidden, residing, resides; *Pasyatsu*—among the seers, among the wise, in those who see.

Brahman is seen or realised by the Yogis, seers or sages, in the cavity, the intellect. He is not seen by the ignorant as He is veiled by ignorance.

न चक्षुषा गृह्णते नापि वाचा नान्यैर्देवैस्तपसा कर्मणा वा ।  
ज्ञानप्रसादेन विशुद्धसत्त्वस्ततस्तु तं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः ॥८॥

8. He is not grasped by the eye, nor by speech, nor by the other senses, nor by penance nor by good work. When a man's mind is purified by the serene light of knowledge, then alone he beholds the invisible Brahman by meditation.

### Notes and Commentary

A special aid to the attainment of Brahman is explained in this verse. That special aid is Jnana-Prasada.

Brahman cannot be seen by the physical eyes, because It is formless and exceedingly subtle. It cannot be grasped by speech, because it cannot be the subject of words, nor by the other senses. The senses can bring only the messages or vibrations from the objective world. They cannot reach the transcendental realm of bliss. Though Tapas is an aid or auxiliary to the attainment of Brahman, Brahman is beyond the reach of Tapas. Brahman cannot be reached by Karma, enjoined by the Vedas, such as Agnihotra and the rest.

What is then the means by which Brahman can be attained? It is by Jnana-Prasada that Brahman can be obtained. What is Jnana-Prasada? The aspirant is able to behold or realise Brahman through the pure intellect. The ordinary intellect of worldly persons is tainted by passion, greed, jealousy, hatred, etc. It is impure and unclean. Just as you cannot see your face in a dirty mirror or muddy water, so also you cannot see the pure Atman in an unclean or dirty intellect, though the Atman is very near. When this intellect is rendered pure through enquiry, dispassion, selfless service, Japa, Pranayama, etc., it becomes competent to realise Brahman. It is the pure intellect that reveals Brahman. The removal of impurities of the intellect, the refinement and purification of the intellect, is what is called Jnana-Prasada. It is the grace of wisdom, pure intellect.

He who is endowed with Jnana-Prasada, beholds the Atman which is indivisible, by meditation with the help of Truth, one-pointed mind and self-restraint.

*Nishkalam*—without Kalas, parts, without the sixteen-fold body.

एषोऽणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यो यस्मिन्नाणः पश्यथा संविवेश ।  
प्राणैश्चित्तं सर्वमोतं प्रजानां यस्मिन्निशुद्धे विभवत्येष आत्मा ॥१॥

9. This subtle Atman is to be known by the mind, as being in the body, whose Prana fivefold divided, entered. The mind of every creature is pervaded by these Pranas. When the mind is purified, then the Atman shines out of itself.

### Notes and Commentary

*Chetasa*—by thought, by that mind in which the Pranas have entered, by pure intellect; *Chittam*—according to Sri Sankara, it is the Antahkarana, the internal instrument. This subtle Atman should be known, realised, by the purified intellect.

*Tasmin sarire*—within the body, in the heart. He should be known by the mind as existing in the body, in the heart.

Mind in all beings is pervaded by the Pranas and the senses, as milk by butter, and fuel by fire.

When the mind is purified, freed from passion, delusion, anger, jealousy, etc., then this Atman shines forth by itself.

The mind is connected with the senses and objects of the world. Mind is interwoven with the senses. It is contaminated by being in constant touch with the sensual objects.

The mind is again and again withdrawn from the senses and the sensual objects. This will lead to purification of the mind. This subtle Atman is to be known by thought in which Prana has entered fivefold, for every thought of man is interwoven with the senses. When thought is purified, then Atman shines forth. The Prana enters completely into the mind and disables the mind to behold the Atman.

यं यं लोकं मनसा संविभाति विशुद्धसत्त्वः कामयते यांश्च कामान् ।  
तं तं लोकं जयते तांश्च कामांस्तस्मादात्मजं ह्यर्चयेद् भूतिकामः ॥१०॥

॥ इति तृतीयमुण्डके प्रथमः खण्डः ॥

10. A man of purified mind gains that world and those desires, which he imagines in his mind. Therefore, let a man who is desirous of prosperity (happiness), worship him who knows the Atman.

### Notes and Commentary

This verse declares the glory of the knower of Self, the Brahma Jnani.

*Visuddha sattvah*—one of purified nature; *Bhutikamah*—who desires happiness, prosperity.

The Jivanmukta, who identifies himself with the all-pervading Atman, obtains whatever worlds or objects he longs for, either for himself or for others, because he is the Atman of all. The wishes of a man for Self-realisation are always accomplished.

Let a man who wishes to obtain Bhutis, prosperity, worship the knower of the Atman, the Jivanmukta, by cleaning his feet with water, personal service, prostration, etc.

A sage is certainly worthy of worship. He helps the aspirant to cross this ocean of Samsara and attain the knowledge of the Atman. He is Brahman himself.

Here ends the first Khanda of the Third Mundaka

### CHAPTER III—SECTION II

स वेदैतत्परमं ब्रह्म धाम यत्र विश्वं निहितं भाति शुभ्रम् ।  
उपासते पुरुषं ये ह्यकामास्ते शुक्रमेतदतिवर्तन्ति धीराः ॥१॥

1. He knows this supreme Brahman, the place where all this universe rests and which shines brightly. The wise who, free from desires, worship that person, transcend this seed (are not born again).

#### Notes and Commentary

This verse has connection with the last verse of the previous section.

*Sah*—he, the knower of the Self, the man of Self-realisation; *Paramam*—the Supreme; *Brahma-dhama*—the abode of Brahman; *Dhirah*—the wise; *Sukram*—the seed, human birth.

If the wise, who are free from desires, who do not long for Bhuti, who yearn for emancipation, worship the knower of the Self, a Jivanmukta, they are not born again. They travel beyond this seed, they transcend the seed, they are not born again.

In verse III-i-10, it was said that those who wish to attain worldly prosperity (Bhuti), should worship the knower of the Atman. In this verse, it is said that if people worship the knower of the Self without any kind of desire, they will attain the final emancipation.

We have taken the word 'Purusha' in the second line as a common noun, referring to the knower of the Atman of the previous stanza.

कामान्यः कामयते मन्यमानः स कामभिर्जायते तत्र तत्र ।  
पर्याप्तकामस्य कृतात्मनस्त्विवैव सर्वे प्रविलीयन्ति कामाः ॥२॥

2. He who forms desires in his mind, is born again through his desires here and there. But for him, whose desires are fulfilled and who has realised the Atman, all desires vanish, even here on earth.

### Notes and Commentary

He who thirsts for objects of desire, and constantly thinks on the objects, is born here and there with such desires. He is born here and there for the gratification or satisfaction of those desires. He who longs after objects of desire, thinking that they are the highest, is born with those same desires in those places where those objects of desire can be enjoyed.

*Kaman*—objects of desire; *Kamayate*—desires, longs after; *Tatra tatra*—here and there, he is carried to those places and spheres which he had desired; *Paryapta kamasya*—of him who desires the highest, Moksha, Brahman; *Kritatmanah*—of the perfected soul; *Praviliyanti*—vanish; *Iha eva*—here even, even while his body lasts.

Aparoksha Brahma Jnana, direct Self-realisation, is the only means for the entire annihilation of all desires. When desires are destroyed, one is freed from further birth.

He who wishes to attain the final emancipation, must renounce all desires. This is the first step in the spiritual path. The desires goad a man to do good and bad deeds. He is caught in the wheel of Karma, the net of Maya. He has to take births after births to enjoy the fruits of his actions.

He who has attained Self-realisation is absolutely free from all desires, because the Atman is all-full and self-contained. He enjoys eternal bliss, everlasting peace and supreme satisfaction. How can desires enter the mind of such an exalted person, who is ever drinking the nectar of immortality?

All desires, that goad him to perform good and bad deeds, are totally destroyed, even while his body lasts. Desire cannot spring up in him because the cause of their rising, viz., ignorance, is annihilated *in toto*.

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।  
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूं स्वाम् ॥३॥

3. This Atman cannot be obtained by much study of Vedas or intelligence or much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained. To him this Atman reveals Its true nature.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Pravachanena*—by discourses, study of Vedas, sacred scriptures. The study of sacred scriptures is not the principal means of acquiring direct knowledge of Brahman, Self-realisation. *Medhaya*—intelligence, retentive memory; *Srutena*—by hearing, learning.

There is no gain greater than the attainment of Self-realisation. Self-realisation is the highest object of human desire. This Atman cannot be obtained by study of Vedas or intelligence or much learning.

One should thirst for the final emancipation. He should have a burning yearning for attaining Brahman. He should long for Self-realisation wholeheartedly. He should earnestly seek to know Him, after renouncing all others. Then only he can attain Brahman.

Just as a pot reveals its form in the presence of light, so also this Atman, which is concealed by ignorance, reveals His true nature, when there is Knowledge, when one attains Knowledge.

When ignorance is dispelled, the Atman, who is already shining in the heart, reveals Himself. Moksha is not a thing to be achieved. It is not something produced. It is already there. One has to know Brahman, by dispelling ignorance, as his own innermost Self. Brahman is not a thing to be brought from some place. He is the Life of life. He ever dwells in the heart of all beings. He is the Soul of all beings. The only effort is to remove

the veil of ignorance. When the veil is removed, the self-luminous Brahman shines forth by Itself.

The Bhakti school of thought brings the doctrine of grace in this verse. They interpret as follows: "He is attained only by one whom He chooses, to such a one He reveals His own person or true nature". (Cf. Katha Up. I-ii-23.)

नायमात्मा बलहीने लभ्यो न च प्रमादात्तपसो वाप्यलिङ्गात् ।  
एतैरुपायैर्यतते यस्तु विद्वांस्तस्यैष आत्मा विश्वे ब्रह्मधाम ॥४॥

4. This Atman cannot be attained by one who is destitute of strength, or without earnestness, or by penance without 'mark'. But if a wise man strives after It by those means, then his Self enters into Brahman.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Pramadat*—by the heedless, not earnest; *Tapas*—knowledge, concentration that leads to knowledge; *Alingat*—not having authority for it (Linga), non-scriptural, non-authoritative. This word qualifies 'Tapas'; the penance must not be non-scriptural, Tamasic, such as torturing of the body, etc.

*Linga*—according to Sri Sankara, it means Sannyasa. According to him, Sannyasa is necessary for attaining Self-realisation. A Sannyasi only is a whole-timed aspirant. He can devote the whole time in study and meditation. He is free from all sorts of worldly distractions, ties and attachments. His garb puts a check on the aspirant from going astray or doing evil actions. When there is internal change, when one is ready for entering the fourth Asrama of life, why should he be afraid of putting on the orange-coloured robe? Why should he say, 'I have given colouring to my heart'? It is a sort of timidity and hypocrisy. Vasanas still lurk in his heart. Why did Yajnavalkya, Sankara and Ramakrishna Paramahamsa take Sannyasa? Sannyasa has got its own glory and advantages. A Sannyasi only can entirely cut off all connections and ties. Though you have coloured your heart, still all members of your family will cling to you like a leech. Till the end of life, you cannot entirely eradicate Moha, infatuated love and attachment for your family.

Only when you take Sannyasa, they will leave you free. You become dead for them. Only then they will not approach you.

*Balahinena*—by one devoid of strength. Physical, mental and moral strength is necessary. Mere physical strength alone is not sufficient. The aspirant should have power of endurance, fortitude, faith, self-reliance, courage, mental vigour, patience, etc. Then only will he be able to bear the difficulties on the path and conquer obstacles. Then only he will not be affected by failures.

The Atman cannot be attained by Knowledge without Sannyasa. He who earnestly strives, intent after the Atman, with these helps or auxiliaries, viz., strength, earnestness, absence of excitement, Knowledge and Sannyasa, will attain union with Brahman.

संप्राप्यैनमृषयो ज्ञानतृप्ताः कृतात्मानो वीतरागाः प्रशान्ताः । ते  
सर्वगं सर्वतः प्राप्य धीरा युक्तात्मानः सर्वमेवाविशन्ति ॥५॥

5. When the sages have attained the Atman, they become satisfied with their knowledge, their purpose is fulfilled, they become free from desire and they are tranquil. Having attained the all-pervading Atman on all sides, and devoted to the Self, they enter into everything.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Jnana-triptah*—satisfied through Knowledge; *Kritatmanah*—perfected in the Soul, who have realised the Atman, the Supreme Self; *Vitaragah*—devoid of attachment, with passions all gone; *Sarvagam*—the all-pervading; *Dhirah*—the wise; *Avisanti*—enter.

How the sages enter into Brahman is explained in this verse. They know Brahman well, find satisfaction in wisdom, and long for nothing else. They do not find delight in external objects. They become free from attachment and passions. Their purpose is fulfilled. They are serene. They have subdued the senses. Their Atman has become one with the Supreme Self. They have realised the all-pervading Self everywhere. They have removed all limitations imposed by ignorance. Thus, the

knowers of Brahman enter into the abode of Brahman. They enter into the All.

वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थः संन्यासयोगाद्यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः ।  
ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे ॥६॥

6. Having, without doubt, well-ascertained the import of the knowledge of Vedanta, and having purified their minds by the Yoga of renunciation, all anchorites attain the world of Brahman, and at the time of death, become fully liberated.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Vedanta-vijnana-sunischitarthah*—having well-ascertained the significance of the knowledge of Vedanta. The seekers purify themselves by renunciation of all works. They study Atma-Jnana books on Vedanta, and come to the definite conclusion that Brahman should be known and realised through direct intuition. They meditate on Brahman and attain the highest, immortal, Brahman.

*Parantakale*—at the time of death, at the time of enlightenment. Sri Sankara interprets this word as, 'at the time of enlightenment'. Its literal meaning is 'at the time of death'. For a worldly man, physical death is the end of the body. When one attains knowledge of the Self, Enlightenment, he identifies himself with the all-pervading Brahman, and realises from that time onwards that he is not the body. He has no body-idea or body-consciousness. This is death for the man of Knowledge or illumination.

*Paramritah*—highest immortality; they whose Atman has become the highest immortal, i.e., Brahman. They become the highest and immortal Brahman even while living. They become absorbed in Brahman. They do not go to any world or place.

Just as the ether in the pot becomes one with the universal ether when the pot is broken, so also the knower of Brahman becomes one with Brahman, when the body is no more, as it were. The Sruti and Smriti say: "Just as the footmarks of the birds in the air, and that of aquatic animals in water, are not visible, so also the track of the Jivanmukta is not seen". He does not go by any road. His Prana is directly absorbed in Brahman. In the phenomenal world only, you have motion,

place, space and all sorts of limitations. Brahman is all-pervading and infinite. It is the all. It is the all-full. There is no motion in Brahman. Where will it go or move when It is all-pervading? It cannot be reached in a limited space as It is the all. If the Brahman were limited in space, or place, it would have, like an ordinary object of the world, form, parts, a beginning and an end. It would be non-eternal, changing and dependent on another. It would be an effect, modification or product. But, Brahman certainly cannot be so. Therefore, its attainment also cannot be limited by conditions of places.

The seekers are many; the world of Brahman, though one, appears to be many or is realised by many. Brahman, although one, is perceived as manifold. So, the plural "worlds of Brahman" is used.

As Brahman is the world that is attained, the expression 'in the worlds of Brahman' means 'in Brahman'.

गताः कलाः पञ्चदश प्रतिष्ठा देवाश्च सर्वे प्रतिदेवतासु । कर्माणि विज्ञानमयश्च आत्मा परेऽव्यये सर्वं एकीभवन्ति ॥७॥

7. Their fifteen Kalas (parts) enter into their elements, their Devas into their corresponding Devas. Their Karmas and their Self, full of knowledge, become all one in the highest and imperishable Brahman.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Kala*—parts, *Prana*, etc. (See *Prasnopanishad* VI-4); *Devah*—the senses, the powers lodged in the senses, such as the eye, etc.; *Pratishtha*—source, the elements; *Vijnanamaya Atma*—the Self, full of Knowledge.

The knowers of the Self consider that salvation is the release from bondage, *Samsara*, ignorance and the rest. During liberation, the Kalas, i.e., *Pranas*, etc., go back to their source. The senses go to the corresponding deities, such as sun, etc.

Karmas refer to those actions which have not begun to bear fruit. The Self full of Knowledge, means the Atman limited by the intellect. When the limiting conditions are removed, they become one in the Brahman, the highest, the imperishable, endless, immortal, all-pervading like the *Akasa*, birthless,

decayless, indescribable, fearless, having neither before nor after, nor in, nor out, without a second, unconditioned, just as the images of the sun become one with the sun, when the vessels of water in which the sun is reflected are removed, just as the ether in the pot is said to become one with the universal ether, when the pot is broken.

यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रेऽस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाय ।  
तथा विद्वान्नामरूपाद्विमुक्तः परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥८॥

8. Just as the flowing rivers disappear in the sea, losing their names and forms, so also a seer, freed from name and form, goes to the Divine person who is greater than the greatest.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Nadyah*—rivers; *Syandamanah*—flowing; *Paratparam*—greater than the greatest, who is beyond the *Avyakta*; *Divyam*—divine; *Purusha*—the person.

Just as flowing rivers, such as the Ganga, the Yamuna and the rest, abandon their distinct individuality, and lose both their names and forms when they join the ocean, so also the Jivanmukta loses his name and form, which are created by ignorance, and reaches the resplendent Purusha, above-described, who is beyond the *Avyakta*, who is the highest of the high.

*Nama-rupa*—name and form, individuality.

स यो ह वै तत्परमं ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति नास्याब्रह्मवित्कुले  
भवति । तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं गुहाग्रन्थिभ्यो विमुक्तोऽमृतो  
भवति ॥९॥

9. He who knows that highest Brahman, becomes verily Brahman. In his line, no one who does not know Brahman will be born. He overcomes grief, good and evil, and being freed from the fetters of the heart, becomes Immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

Sa—he; Ya—who; *Ha vai*—verily (directly); *Tat*—That; *Paramam-Brahma*—highest Brahman; *Veda*—knows; *Brahma eva bhavati*—becomes verily Brahman.

*Sa yo ha vai tat paramam brahma veda brahma eva bhavati*—He who knows directly the highest Brahman, becomes verily Brahman.

*Na asya abrahmavit kule bhavati*—in his family, no one who is ignorant of Brahman is born.

*Tarati sokam tarati papmanam guhagranthibhyo vimukto amrito bhavati*—he crosses grief and sin, and being freed from the fetters of the heart, becomes Immortal.

The word, 'Paramam—highest', is used with regard to the Supreme Brahman, who is pure and free from Maya, in order to distinguish Him from the Saguna Brahman, Isvara.

No obstacles can stand in the way of the knower of Brahman. No Deva can tempt him to enter the heaven or take any other course. All obstacles have already been removed by Knowledge. He becomes the Atman of all Devas and others.

He goes beyond good and evil, virtue and vice, and being freed from the fetters of the heart caused by ignorance, attains Immortality.

The fetters of the heart are ignorance (Avidya), desire (Kama) and action (Karma). These fetters stand in the way of obtaining the knowledge of the Self. When these are cut asunder, one attains Illumination.

तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम्—

क्रियावन्तः श्रोत्रिया ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः स्वयं जुह्वत एकर्षि श्रद्धयन्तः ।  
तेषामेवैतां ब्रह्मविद्यां वदेत शिरोव्रतं विधिवद्यैस्तु चीर्णम् ॥१०॥

10. This is declared by the following Rig-verse: 'Let one teach this knowledge of Brahman to only those who perform the Karma enjoined, who are versed in the Vedas and firmly established in Brahman (lower), who, endowed with full faith, offer oblations themselves to the fire called Ekarshi, and who

perform the vow called Sirovrata (who carry fire on the head) according to the rule (of the Atharvanas).

### Notes and Commentary

In this verse, the rule regarding the teaching of the Knowledge of Brahman is explained.

*Kriyavantah*—performers of the sacred rites; *Srotriyah*—well-versed in the Vedas; *Brahmanishthah*—devoted to Brahman, centred in Brahman; who, being engaged in the worship of the Saguna Brahman (manifested), yearn to know the Nirguna, the unmanifested, transcendental, Trigunatita Brahman.

This knowledge of Brahman should be taught to those who have purified their hearts by performing the Karmas enjoined by the scriptures, who are therefore fit to receive the instructions, who are centred in Brahman, who make oblations to the fire called Ekarshi, and who have duly practised the Sirovrata.

*Sirovrata*—this is the well-known Vedic vow mentioned in the Atharvana Veda. This is the vow of carrying fire on the head. This obviously means the head-vow, Sannyasa, renunciation, the fourth order of life. It evidently refers to the Sannyasa ceremony in which the head is shaven. This Upanishad is also called by the name 'Mundaka', of the 'shaven-headed'. This preliminary requisite to the study of this Upanishad, viz., shaving the head, gave it the title Mundakopanishad. Therefore, it is right to say that 'Sirovrata' means here the Sannyasa ceremony in which the head is shaven.

तदेतत्सत्यमृषिरङ्गिराः पुरोवाच नैतदचीर्णव्रतोऽधीते ।  
नमः परमक्रषिभ्यो नमः परमक्रषिभ्यः ॥११॥

॥ इति तृतीयमुण्डके द्वितीयः खण्डः ॥

11. No one, who has not observed the vow, should study this. This is the truth. Rishi Angiras declared it (to Saunaka) in ancient times. Prostrations to the great Rishis. Prostrations to the great Rishis.

### Notes and Commentary

The Rishi Angiras taught this true science of Brahman in ancient days to Saunaka, who had duly approached him and questioned him about this. Similarly, all sages also should teach this supreme science, Brahma Vidya, to any one who is duly qualified, who longs for liberation, and who has duly approached the spiritual teacher for attaining the knowledge of Brahman.

He, who is spiritually inclined, who is endowed with dispassion, discrimination, self-restraint, serenity, purity, renunciation and longing for final liberation, who has taken the vow of Ahimsa, Satya and Brahmacharya, can take to the study of Upanishads. Such a man only will be really benefitted by this study. Upanishad is not a book to be studied as a hobby or for mental amusement. Study will bear fruit in those who observe the vow and stick to their resolves tenaciously.

The Knowledge of Brahman has been handed down from Brahma and the rest, from preceptor to disciple.

Prostrations to the Great Rishis, Sages and all Brahma-vidya Gurus, Narayana, Brahma, Vasishtha, Sakti, Vyasa, Suka, Gaudapada, Govindapada, Sankara and the rest, who have directly seen Brahman through intuition and realised Him. Prostrations again to them.

The repetition, 'Namah Parama Rishibhyo, Namah Parama Rishibhyah', is to indicate extreme reverence to the great Rishis, the Sages, and to show that the Mundakopanishad ends here.

Thus ends the Third Mundaka

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।  
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवा ऽस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः । स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो  
वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्ताक्ष्योऽरिष्टनेमिः  
स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

॥ इति मुण्डकोपनिषत्संपूर्णा ॥

Thus ends the Mundakopanishad.

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।  
 स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवा स्सतनूभिर्व्यर्शेम देवहितं यदायुः । स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो  
 वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्ताक्ष्योऽरिष्टनेमि:  
 स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om, O gods, may we, with our ears, hear what is auspicious; O ye! fit to be worshipped, may we, with our eyes, see what is auspicious; may we enjoy the life allotted to us by the gods, offering our praise with our bodies strong of limb. May Indra, the powerful, the ancient of fame, vouchsafe us prosperity. May He, the nourisher and the possessor of all wealth, give us what is well for us. May the Lord of swift motion be propitious to us, and may the protector of the great ones protect us too.

Om Peace, Peace, Peace.

ओमित्येतदक्षरमिद् सर्वं तस्योपव्याख्यानं भूतं भवद्विष्यदिति  
 सर्वमोक्तार एव । यच्चान्यत्रिकालातीतं तदप्योक्तार एव ॥१॥

1. Om, the word, is all this. Its further explanation is this. All that is past, present and future is verily Om. That which is beyond the triple conception of time, is verily Om.

### Notes and Commentary

Om—Om; *Iti*—thus; *Etat*—this; *Aksharam*—word; *Idam*—this; *Sarvam*—all; *Tasya*—its; *Upakhyanam*—explanation; *Bhutam*—the past; *Bhavat*—the present; *Bhavishyat*—the future; *Iti*—thus; *Sarvam*—all; *Omkara*—Om; *Eva*—verily; *Yat*—what; *Cha*—and; *Anyat*—the other; *Trikalatitam*—beyond the threefold time; *Tat*—that; *Api*—also; *Omkara*—Om; *Eva*—verily

In this Upanishad, Varuna, the Lord of Waters assumes the form of a frog (*Manduka*) and praises Om. Varuna is the Rishi or Revealer of this Upanishad. Brahman is the Devata; Anushtup is the metre. The person qualified to study this Upanishad is anyone who wants to attain liberation.

Om, the Pranava, the Omkara, is the only symbol of Brahman, the Absolute. Just as a sick man regains his equilibrium when the cause of the disease vanishes, so also the Jiva, the individual soul regains his equilibrium, the original state of pristine glory or divine splendour, oneness or unity with the Supreme Self, when the illusion of duality caused by ignorance is destroyed by the knowledge of the Self.

The sacred monosyllable Om is the only name of Brahman, the Supreme Soul. Brahman is nameless but, in the relative plane, a name is necessary for giving instructions to the aspirants. Even the highest Brahman is realised by means of a name only.

Name is a symbol or representative of the person or thing named. Name of a person or a thing denotes the person or thing of which it is the name. The words 'Buddha', 'Rama', etc. are the names of certain persons who lived at certain periods of time. These words are the symbols of those persons. A picture of a person or a thing is also a symbol of the person or the thing which it represents. When you look at the photo or picture of a person, you give a description of the person by naming the person. The name of a person is remembered for a very long time. We still remember the names of Lord Jesus, Lord Rama, Sri Sankara and others. The person dies but the name lives for ever. Therefore the name is more comprehensive than the picture.

"Om is this"; "Om is the support"; "Om is Brahman"; "Om is the Akshara, the Immortal"; "Om is the Atman"; "Om is pure Chaitanya Consciousness"; "The word Om is all"; "One should, with purity of heart, fix his mind on the Atman, through Om which is the Atman"—these texts of the Upanishads declare that Om, Brahman and the Atman are one and the same.

The famous Mantra of Sri Guru Nanak begins with "Sat Nam Ek Omkar", i.e., Real Name, One Om. Om is this all. It clearly means that Brahman, or the Supreme Self, denoted by the

syllable Om is this all. Its explanation should be known. What was, what is, and what will be, all is verily the word Om. Every object has a name. The name and the object denoted by it are identical. All objects are not different from their names. The connection between Sabda (sound) and Artha (object) is inseparable. Names and forms are inseparable. Name is a sound-symbol. Thoughts cannot be separated from forms and names. Brahman willed. There was Brahma-sankalpa: "May I become many". There was a Spandan, vibration. Then creation began. This original vibration or sound-symbol is Om. This Om is the most universal, all-inclusive sound. All names are not different from Om, because Om is the basis or matrix for all sounds, words and names. Therefore, it is proper to say that all this is indeed Om. Om is the right symbol of Brahman. Through Om alone, you will have to approach Brahman. Just as heat is inseparable from fire, just as fragrance is inseparable from the flower, so also Om is inseparable from Brahman. Om is a means to the knowledge of Brahman. Om is the means by which the Immortal Self, denoted by Om, is realised. Om is very intimately related to Brahman. Om is very near to Brahman. Om is in the vicinity of Brahman. If you know Om, you know Brahman also. Therefore, it is very necessary to have a comprehensive understanding of Om. A clear explanation of Om is very essential. A very lucid and elaborate explanation is given in this Upanishad. The Karikas of Sri Gaudapadacharya are very illuminating. The method of approach to Brahman, through the sacred monosyllable Om, is very clearly enunciated in this remarkable Upanishad, which is an abridgment or a short summary of all the hundred and eight Upanishads.

Just as an object is known through its names, so also Brahman, the Supreme Self, is known through Om alone. If anyone utters the words, 'that is a mango tree', you at once know all about the mango tree, its leaves, flowers, fruits, nature of the fruits, benefits of the fruits, etc., through the name 'mango tree'. Just as you know all about mango through the name 'mango', so also you can know all about Brahman through Om alone. Therefore, Brahman is indeed Om. Brahman, the Atman, Chaitanya, Purushottama, Svarupa, Supreme Self and Om are identical.

The sacred monosyllable Om denotes the all-pervading immortal, indivisible, self-luminous, unchanging Brahman, the Supreme Self, of which it is a name.

*Akshara*: This word means, that which is imperishable or immortal, that which does not decay or decompose. It also means a letter of the alphabet. In the Gita you will find, "Aksharanam Akarosmi—amongst all the letters, I am the letter 'A'."(X-33). It also means the monosyllable *Ekaksharam Om* (X-25). The word 'Akshara' here clearly means the monosyllable Om, but not the immortal Brahman.

*Tasya*: of Om. *Upavyakhyanam*: clear explanation.

All that is subject to the threefold time, such as past, present and future (manifold), is verily Om or Brahman. All that is beyond the triple conceptions of time (unmanifest—Avyakrita), and yet present in Consciousness through its effects, is also verily Om, is not apart from Om. Brahman is denoted by the word Om. Brahman is above the three periods of time (Trikalatita). Therefore, Om also is beyond the three periods of time. That which is beyond the three periods of time, is Om alone. Om means, literally, that by which everything is pervaded (Otam). This word Om is woven in Brahman like warp and woof, and therefore, denotes Brahman. That which enters into everything is Om.

Just as the rope is the substratum for the illusion of snake, so also Om is the substratum for the illusion of speech. All is mere play of words. Ideas or thoughts are communicated through words only. Experiences are expressed through words only. Incidents are narrated through words only. Everything is held together by the string of speech, by the cord, rope, or thread of specific names. The world cannot exist without names or words. The world cannot run without names or words. Therefore, it is proper to say that 'All is the word'.

Names cannot exist apart from Om which is Brahman. Brahman is one with Om. The Atman is one with Om.

This treatise is the explanation of this Om, the word (Akshara) which is of the same nature as the higher Brahman without attributes, as well as the lower Brahman with attributes.

सर्वं ह्येतद् ब्रह्मायमात्मा ब्रह्म सोऽयमात्मा चतुष्पात् ॥२॥

2. All this is verily Brahman. This Atman (the Supreme Self) is Brahman. This Atman has four quarters (four feet, portions, aspects or conditions).

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sarvam*—all; *Hi*—verily; *Etat*—this; *Brahma*—Brahman; *Ayam*—this; *Atma*—the Atman (the Supreme Self); *Brahma*—Brahman; *Sah*—that (he); *Ayam*—this; *Atma*—the Atman; *Chatushpāt*—is with four quarters (four feet, portions, aspects or conditions).

This Atman called Om is Para (higher) Brahman as well as Apara (lower) Brahman, and has four quarters, four feet, not like those of a cow, but like the fractions of a coin.

The Sanskrit word 'Pada' literally means foot. In the first Mantra, it is said that Om the word is all this. In this Mantra, it is said 'All this is verily Brahman'. This clearly denotes that Om is Brahman.

All this is verily Brahman: all—the manifested and the unmanifested world, comprised in the word, 'all', is Brahman. All that has been declared to consist of Om, in the above Mantra, is Brahman. In the previous text, the whole of the objective manifestation has been said to be of the form of Om or Brahman. In this Mantra, it is said that Brahman is not only the visible, manifested world, but also the very innermost Self or the Atman.

This Atman is Brahman. Brahman cannot be demonstrated. But it is possible to infer its existence from certain empirical facts. The existence of Brahman is inferred, or known, on the ground of its being the self of everyone. For, everyone is conscious of the existence of his self and never thinks 'I am not'. If the existence of the Self were not known, everyone would think 'I am not'. And this Self, of whose existence all are conscious, is Brahman. That Brahman, whose existence is inferred by certain empirical facts, by the study of the Upanishads, is now pointed out as being directly cognised or realised by the text, "Ayam Atma Brahma—this self or Jivatma is Brahman". The word 'Atma' means that which pervades all.

Direct realisation of Brahman (Aparoksha Anubhuti) is pointed out here. The author, or the seer, points out with his fore-finger to the region of the heart or breast, 'this Atman is Brahman'. People generally have the belief that the region of the heart is the seat or abode of the Atman, Brahman, the Soul. That is the reason the seer points out with his forefinger to the region of the heart. The words 'this Atman' indicates something very near. A sage is a seer who possesses direct intuitional knowledge of Brahman. He knows Brahman through Self-realisation (Atma-sakshatkara). Just as one knows the Amalaka fruit in his hand, so also he knows Brahman. That is the reason he declares with certainty with a gesture of the hand, "This Atman is Brahman".

There are four Mahavakyas, or great sentences, in the Upanishads. Each Veda contains one Mahavakya. "Ayam Atma Brahma—This Atman is Brahman" is the fourth Mahavakya. This is contained in this Mandukya Upanishad of the Atharva Veda. This is Anubhava-bodha-vakya, the great text or the great sentence, that gives expression to the inner intuitive experience, or Aparoksha Anubhuti, the direct perception of the innermost self by the aspirant through meditation (Nididhyasana). This Mahavakya denotes the identity or oneness of the individual soul with Brahman, the Supreme Soul. The other three Mahavakyas are:

1. "*Prajnanam Brahma*—Consciousness is Brahman." This is Svarupa-bodha-vakya, the great sentence that explains the nature of Brahman, the Self. This is contained in the Aitareya Upanishad of the Rig-veda.

2. "*Aham Brahmasmi*—I am Brahman." This is Anusandana-vakya. The aspirant tries to fix his mind on the idea 'I am Brahman'. This is contained in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad of the Yajur-veda.

3. "*Tat-tvam-asi*—Thou art That". This is Upadesa-vakya. The teacher instructs the student "my child, Thou art That, Thou art Brahman. Realise this and be free". This is contained in the Chhandogya Upanishad of the Sama-veda.

*Chatushpad*: four feet; four quarters; Pada means foot or instrument. Visva (Jagrat Avastha, the waking state), Taijasa (Svapna Avastha, the dreaming state), Prajna (Sushupti

Avastha, the state of deep sleep) and (Turiya, super-consciousness which is same as Brahman, the Atman), are the four feet or the four conditions of the Atman.

Just as a quarter-coin is merged in the half-coin, the half is resolved in the three-fourth and the three quarters is finally resolved in the full coin, so also Visva is resolved in Taijasa, Taijasa in Prajna, and ultimately Prajna is merged in Turiya. The fourth is realised by merging the other three states in it, in the order of the lower in the higher. The word 'quarter' means here an 'instrument' that helps one in the realisation of the fourth, the Turiya.

Visva is the individual soul who experiences the gross objects in the waking state. Visva is the reflected intelligence (Chaitanya, Chidabhasa). Taijasa is the reflected Chaitanya, the individual soul, who experiences the dream objects in the dreaming state. Prajna is the individual soul, the reflected Chaitanya or intelligence, who experiences the bliss of deep sleep state. Visva, Taijasa and Prajna are one. The experience of Prajna in deep sleep is expressed by Visva in the waking state. It is Visva who says: "I enjoyed sound sleep last night. I did not know anything".

जागरितस्थानो बहिष्प्रजः सप्ताङ्गः एकोनविंशतिमुखः  
स्थूलभुग्वैश्वानरः प्रथमः पादः ॥३॥

3. The first quarter is Vaisvanara, whose sphere is the state of waking, who is conscious of the external objects, who has seven limbs and nineteen mouths and who enjoys the gross objects.

### Notes and Commentary

*Jagaritasthanah*—whose sphere is the state of waking; *Bahih prajnah*—whose consciousness is outward; *Saptangah*—seven-limbed; *Ekonavimsatimukhah*—nineteen-mouthed; *Sthulabhuk*—enjoyer of gross objects; *Vaisvanarah*—Vaisvanara; *Prathamah*—first; *Padah*—foot or quarter or condition.

The text now begins to explain how Om is made up of four quarters. Through the force of Avidya or ignorance, the Visva,

the individual soul, in the waking state, enjoys the gross objects of the external visible world.

The seven limbs are members:

1. Heaven is the head of Vaisvanara or Visva.
2. The sun and the moon are His eyes.
3. Air is His breath.
4. Fire (Ahavaniya fire, one of the three fires of the Agnihotra sacrifice) is His mouth.
5. Sky is His middle or body.
6. Water is His urinary organ (kidney or bladder).
7. Earth is His feet.

The nineteen mouths are:

1. The five Jnana Indriyas, organs of knowledge (sensory organs) are ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose. Sound, touch, form, taste and smell are experienced by these five organs respectively.
2. The five Karma Indriyas, organs of actions (motor organs) are mouth (organ of speech), hands, feet, generative organ and anus, the excretory organ.
3. The five Pranas or vital airs are Prana, Apana, Samana, Vyana and Udana.
4. The fourfold Antahkarana consists of Manas (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta (subconscious mind or the faculty by which things are remembered) and Ahamkara (egoism or self-arrogating principle).

These nineteen are called mouths, because through these the Jivatma enjoys the external gross things of the objective universe. These are the avenues of knowledge and experience. The text gives here a description of Vaisvanara or Visva and not the Virat. Virat is the universal, or the macrocosmic aspect of Isvara and Visva is the individual or microcosmic aspect. The sum total of all Visva is Virat. Jiva is a microcosm of the great macrocosm. The meaning of the common saying, "Joi pinde soi brahmande", is "whatever exists in one's own body also exists in the universe". Physical body of the Jiva is also the body of the Virat. The whole world is the body of the Virat-purusha. The sum total of the physical bodies is Virat. The totality of the gross universe is Virat. The human

body is a miniature universe. The astral body (Linga Deha, Sukshma Deha) of the Jiva, or the individual soul, is also the astral body of Hiranyagarbha. The causal body (Karana Sarira) of the Jiva is also the Karana Sarira of Isvara. Jiva is not separate from Virat, Hiranyagarbha and Isvara. The sum total of all subtle bodies is Hiranyagarbha. The sum total of all causal bodies is Isvara.

The members and organs of the individual souls are also the members and organs of the universal soul.

*Vaisvanara*: Nara means leads; it leads all Visva in the same direction, viz., enjoyment of the gross external objects; or it means all beings, Nara means a collective name for all beings on the objective plane. Jagrat is that state during which the individual soul enjoys the gross objects of senses through the nineteen organs, having the sun and the rest as their presiding deities. The Jagrat Avastha, the wakeful state, is the last state in the evolution of the universe, but it is the first state in the order of involution. The dreaming state and the state of deep sleep follow the wakeful state, which quarter is called first with reference to experience, but not with reference to the order of evolution or creation. This is called the first because all the other quarters or conditions are approached or realised through this, and because from the waking state only, the dream state and the deep sleep state are known.

From a study of the waking state, you will have to proceed to the study of dream and deep sleep. When you begin to analyse this universe for the sake of realising the Atman, you will have to deal with the wakeful state first. Therefore, this is called the first quarter or the first condition. To begin with, you will have to understand the nature of the gross objects. Then you can gradually go to the subtle and causal nature of things. You will have to render the mind sharp and subtle through meditation and discipline, in order to comprehend the subtle and causal nature of things.

*Vaisvanara* is one with Virat on the physical plane. *Taijasa* is one with Hiranyagarbha on the astral or subtle plane. *Prajna* is one with Isvara on the causal plane. When the illusion of duality vanishes, you will very easily realise the unity of the Atman and Brahman. *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*—all indeed is Brahman.

There is no such thing as diversity. You will fully realise the truth of the Upanishadic texts, 'The Atman is one in all', 'All is in the one' and 'He who beholds all in the Self'. This unity or oneness is described in the Madhu-brahmana of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also. The Tejomaya (resplendent or self-effulgent) Purusha in this earth, and the Amritamaya (immortal) Purusha in this body, are both the same.

Virat, under the orders of Isvara, having entered this microcosmic body and having the intellect as his vehicle, reaches the state of Visva. Then he goes by the several names of Vijnanatma, Chidabhasa, Visva, Vyavaharic Jiva, the one presiding over the waking gross body and the one generated by Karma.

स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्तःप्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्गः एकोनविंशतिमुखः प्रविविक्त-  
भुक्तैजसो द्वितीयः पादः ॥४॥

4. The second quarter is the Taijasa, whose sphere or field or place is dream, who is conscious of internal objects, who has seven limbs and nineteen mouths and enjoys the subtle objects.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Svapnasthanah*—whose sphere or place or field is dream; *Antah prajnah*—whose consciousness is inward; *Saptangah*—seven-limbed; *Ekonavimsatimukhah*—nineteen-mouthed; *Praviviktabhuk*—enjoyer of the subtle objects; *Taijasah*—the Taijasa; *Dvitiyah*—the second; *Padah*—quarter.

During dream, the mind creates various kinds of objects out of the impressions produced by the experiences of the waking state. The mind reproduces the whole of its waking life in dream, through the force of Avidya (ignorance), Kama (desire and imagination) and Karma (action). The mind is the perceiver and the mind itself is the perceived, in the dream. The mind creates the objects without the help of any external means. It creates various curious, fantastic mixtures. You may witness in the dream that your living father is dead, that you are flying in the air. You may see in the dream, a lion with the head of an elephant, a cow with the head of a dog. The desires that are not

satisfied during the waking state are gratified in the dream. Dream is a mysterious phenomenon. It is more interesting than the waking state.

Dream is that state during which the Atman (Taijasa) experiences through the mind associated with the Vasanas of the waking condition, sound and other objects, which are of the form of the Vasanas created for the time being, even in the absence of the gross sound and the others. Like a businessman tired of worldly acts, in the waking state, the individual soul strives to find the path to retire into his abode within. The Svapna Avastha is that in which, when the senses are at rest, there is the manifestation of the knower and the known along with the affinities (Vasanas) of things enjoyed in the waking state. In this state of Visva alone, his actions in the waking state having ceased, reaches the state of Taijasa (of Tejas, effulgence or essence of light), who moves in the middle of the Nadis (nerves), illuminates by his lustre, the heterogeneity of the subtle dream world, which is of the form of Vasanas and enjoys himself according to his wish.

Sutratman or Hiranyagarbha, under the orders of Isvara, having entered the microcosmic subtle body, and having the mind as his vehicle, reaches the Taijasa state. Then he goes by the names of Taijasa, Pratibhasika and Svapnakalpita.

The dreamer creates a world of his own in the dreaming state. Mind alone works independently in this state. The senses are withdrawn into the mind. The senses are at rest. Just as a man withdraws himself from the outside world, closes the door and windows of his room and works within the room, so also the mind withdraws itself from the outside world and plays in the dream world, with the Vasanas and the Samskaras, and enjoys objects made up of fine or subtle ideas, which are the products of desire. Dream is a mere play of the mind only. The mind itself projects all sorts of subtle objects from its own body, through the potentiality of impressions of the waking state, and enjoys these objects. Therefore, there is a very subtle experience by Taijasa in the form of Vasanas only, whereas the experience of the waking state by Visva is gross.

You will find in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (IV-iii-9): "He sleeps, full of the impressions produced by the varied

experience of the waking state, and experiences dreams. He takes with him the impressions of the world during the waking state, destroys and builds them up again and experiences dream by his own light". The Atharvana-veda says: "All these are in the mind. They are experienced or cognised by the Taijasa". The experiencer of the dream state is called Taijasa, because he is entirely of the essence of light.

Just as pictures are painted on the canvas, so also the impressions of the waking state are painted in the canvas-mind. The pictures on the canvas seem to possess various dimensions, though it is on a plane surface only. Even so, though the dream-experiences are really states of the mind only, the experiencer experiences internality and externality in the dream world. He feels, while dreaming, that the dream world is quite real.

*Pravivikta*: Pra—differentiated; Vivikta—from the objects of the waking state. The objects perceived in the waking state have an external reality common to all beings, whereas the objects perceived in dreams are revivals of impressions received in the waking state, and have an external reality only to the dreamer.

*Antahprajna*: inward consciousness; the experiencer is conscious of the dream-world only; subtle is that which manifests itself in dreams, being impressions of objects perceived in the waking state. The state of consciousness by which these subtle objects are perceived is called Antahprajna or inner perception. The impressions of the waking state remain in the mind which, independent of the senses, are perceived in the dream. The mind is more internal than the senses. The dreamer is conscious of the mental states which are the impressions left in the mind by the previous waking state. Hence it is called Antahprajna.

The microcosmic aspect of Atman in the subtle or mental state is called Taijasa, and His macrocosmic aspect is known as Hiranyagarbha. Just as Virat is one with Visva in the waking state, so also Taijasa is one with Hiranyagarbha in the dreaming state.

यत्र सुप्तो न कश्चन कामं कामयते न कश्चन स्वप्नं पश्यति  
तत्सुषुप्तम् । सुषुप्तस्थान एकीभूतः प्रज्ञानघन एवानन्दमयो  
ह्यानन्दभुक्त्येतोमुखः प्राज्ञस्तृतीयः पादः ॥५॥

5. That is the state of deep sleep, wherein the sleeper does not desire any objects nor does he see any dream. The third quarter or condition is the Prajna, whose sphere is deep sleep, in whom all experiences have become one, who is verily a mass of consciousness, who is full of bliss, who enjoys bliss, and who is the way leading to the knowledge (of the two other states).

### Notes and Commentary

*Yatra*—where; *Suptah*—sleeping (man); *Na*—not; *Kanchana*—any; *Kamam*—desire (or object of desire); *Kamayate*—desires for; *Na*—not; *Kanchana*—any; *Svapnam*—dream; *Pasyati*—sees; *Tat*—that; *Sushuptam*—the deep sleep; *Sushupta-sthanah*—whose sphere is deep sleep; *Ekibhutah*—having become one; *Prajnanaghanah*—a mass of consciousness; *Eva*—only; *Anandamayah*—full of bliss; *Hi*—verily; *Ananda-bhuk*—who enjoys bliss; *Chetomukhah*—whose face is knowledge; *Prajnah*—Prajna; *Tritiyah*—the third; *Padah*—foot or quarter or condition.

The Jivatma experiences deep sleep when he does not experience sound, and other objects of sense, by the cessation of the functions of the nineteen organs. There is no functioning of the mind in this state. Egoism also is absent. But there is Avidya, the veil of ignorance.

Under the orders of Isvara, he who is coupled with Avyakta, the vehicle of Maya having entered the microcosmic Karana body, reaches the state of Prajna. He goes by the names of Prajna, Avicchinna, Paramarthika and Sushupti Abhimani. Just as a bird, tired of roaming, flies to its nest with its stomach filled, so the Jiva being tired of the actions of the world in the waking and dreaming states, enters Ajnana and enjoys bliss.

*Ekibhutah*: Having become one, as in darkness all things become one, being covered by darkness; Visva and Taijasa have entered the condition of oneness here. The knowledge of the wakeful and dreaming states has entered into oneness. All

the experiences of the waking and the dream states have become one, or unified, with the experience of the deep sleep. They melt or dissolve or merge in the experience of deep sleep. They are not annihilated but they remain in a seed state, they exist in a potential state, just as a tree exists in a seed as a unity, without particularisation, without variety or manifoldness. The experiences of the wakeful and dream states become a dense mass of consciousness during deep sleep, Prajnanaghana.

*Prajna*: All-knower; he knows the past and future also. *Sarvavishaya-jnatritvam* asya eva iti *Prajna*—who has a knowledge of every object, according to Sri Sankara.

In deep sleep, the mind is involved into its cause, the Mula Ajnana or Avidya. There is the veil of ignorance between the individual soul and Brahman. Therefore, the Jiva cannot attain knowledge of Brahman. The bliss enjoyed in deep sleep state is Avidya Avrita Sukha, i.e., bliss enveloped by ignorance.

That which is experienced only can be remembered. There is memory of the bliss of the deep sleep state in the waking state. When you return from sound sleep to wakefulness, you remember the bliss of the deep sleep state and say: 'I slept happily, I did not know anything'. You express: 'I did not know anything', because you do not get any knowledge of the Self, although you rest in Brahman. There is the veil of ignorance between you and Brahman. The remembrance of the bliss of deep sleep state, when you come back to the wakeful state, indicates that the Sakshi, or the witness of three states (viz., waking state, dream state and deep sleep state), exists. That Sakshi is Brahman, the Supreme Self.

*Anandamaya*: full of bliss. This is not absolute Bliss. This is not Bliss Infinite of the Atman. This is not the positive transcendental and highest bliss of Brahman, of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The mind is in a state of quiescence as there is no Sankalpa-vikalpa, thought and doubting. It is free from trouble. This is a negative condition of happiness. There is freedom from unhappiness.

*Chetomukha*: The deep sleep forms the doorway or gateway to the experience of waking and dream states. From sleep, you pass on to the definite cognitions of waking and

dream states. Sleep is the antecedent of the waking and dream states.

In deep sleep, one does not attain Brahmajnana, the knowledge of the Self, because as soon as he comes to the waking state, he is still ignorant, he beholds the multiple or manifold objects, he is affected by the external objects; whereas a sage who returns from Samadhi has full knowledge of the Self, he perceives unity or oneness everywhere. He is not affected by the worldly objects. This is the difference between sleep and Samadhi.

एष सर्वेश्वर एष सर्वज्ञ एषोऽन्तर्याम्येष योनिः सर्वस्य प्रभवाप्ययौ  
हि भूतानाम् ॥६॥

6. This is the Lord of all, this is the knower of all, this is the Internal Ruler, this is the cause of all, this is verily the Origin and End of all beings.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Eshah*—this; *Sarvesvarah*—Lord of all; *Eshah*—this; *Sarvajnah*—the all-knower; *Eshah*—this; *Antaryamee*—the cause; *Eshah*—this; *Yonih*—origin; *Sarvasya*—of all; *Prabhavapyyayau*—the origin and end; *Hi*—verily; *Bhutanam*—of all beings.

*Sarvesvara*: Lord of all, i.e., the Governor of the whole physical and super-physical universe. As all the mental and physical worlds proceed from Isvara, as He is omnipotent, as He controls everything, He is called the Lord of all. Isvara is not something separate from the world. Sri Sankara has refuted the theory of the Naiyayikas, who admit an extra-cosmic creator. Prajna is regarded as equal to Isvara. Just as the whole world has come out of Isvara, so also the waking and dream states have come out of deep sleep. That is the reason why, in the previous Mantra it is said that, the deep sleep state is the doorway or gateway to the waking and dream states. The waking and dream states dissolve also, in the deep sleep state.

This Prajna is the knower of all, as He is in all beings and all conditions. Hence He is called All-knowing. He is *Antaryami*, i.e., inner ruler, the governor of all beings, from within. He is the

controller from within. He has entered into all beings and directs everything from within. He is the source or womb of all. From Him proceeds the varied universe. Therefore He is also the origin, and the place of dissolution for all beings. All beings finally disappear in Him. He is the final resort for all beings.

Isvara does not exert from outside to create the worlds. He does not want any instrument or materials to work with, as a potter requires them to make a pot. He is omnipotent. He wills. Everything comes into being. He is the internal ruler. He resides or dwells within all beings and controls everything. He is the material cause, as well as the instrumental or efficient cause. He projects this world and withdraws it within Himself, just as a serpent lengthens its body and coils it up, just as the lotus opens and shuts itself, just as the tortoise projects its limbs and withdraws them.

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ।  
अदृश्यमव्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारं  
प्रपश्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स  
विज्ञेयः ॥७॥

7. The wise think that the fourth, Turiya, is not that which is conscious of the internal (subjective) world, nor that which is conscious of the external (objective) world, nor that which is conscious of both, nor that which is a compact mass of knowledge, nor that which is simple consciousness, nor that which is insentient. It is unseen, unrelated, incomprehensible, undefinable, unthinkable, indescribable, the sole essence of the consciousness of the Self, with no trace of the conditioned world, the peaceful, all-bliss, non-dual. This is the Atman, the Self, and it is to be realised.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Na*—not; *Antah prajnam*—inwardly cognitive; *Na*—not; *Bahih prajnam*—outwardly cognitive; *Na*—not; *Ubhayatah prajnam*—that which is conscious of both; *Na*—not; *Prajnana-ghanam*—a compact mass of knowledge; *Na*—not; *Prajnam*—simple consciousness; *Na*—not; *Aprajnam*—non-cognition; *Adrishyam*—unseen; *Avyavaharyam*—unrelated; *Agrahyam*—

incomprehensible; Alakshanam— indefinable; Achintyam— unthinkable; *Avyapadesyam*— indescribable; *Ekatmapratyaya-saram*— the sole essence of the consciousness of Self; *Prapanchopasamam*— with no trace of the conditioned world; *Santam*— the peaceful; *Sivam*— all blissful; *Advaitam*— non-dual; *Chaturtham*— the fourth (foot); *Manyante*— the wise think; *Sah*— He; *Atma*— Atman; *Sah*— He; *Vijneyah*— is to be realised.

The fourth, Turiya, cannot be described in words. It is the transcendental state that has to be realised through meditation. Therefore it is described by negative attributes.

The Atman is incomprehensible, because it is beyond the reach of the senses. It is undefinable, because it has neither qualities nor form, neither colour nor shape. It has neither sound nor touch, neither taste nor smell, and therefore it is indescribable. The reader may doubt here as to the very existence of the Atman. Hence, it is said that the Atman is the sole essence of the consciousness of Self, Existence Absolute, the Self of all, an embodiment of calmness and bliss, one without a second, partless, homogeneous essence, Akhanda-ekarasa.

*Antah-prajna*: knowledge of impressions as in dreams.

*Bahih-prajna*: consciousness of external objects.

It is Alakshanam. Therefore, it is beyond thought.

The fourth state, Turiya, is distinct from the waking state, the dreaming state, an intermediary state between waking and dreaming, and the deep sleep state. It is perfect awareness or pure Consciousness. Turiya is distinct from Isvara. Turiya, or Brahman, has no relation with the world, whereas Isvara governs the world. Brahman is Nirupadhika, i.e., free from the Upadhi of Maya, whereas Isvara is Sa-upadhika, i.e., with Maya. Brahman is supra-cosmic, Isvara has cosmic consciousness.

Strictly speaking, Turiya is not a state. Turiya, or Brahman, is an embodiment of peace and bliss. It is the substratum for the other three states, viz., waking, dreaming and deep sleep. It pervades the three states. It is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute.

Turiya or Brahman cannot be grasped by the senses. Therefore it is transcendental. It is Svatasiddha, self proved. It is the basis for all proofs. It exists before the act of proving.

सोऽयमात्माध्यक्षरमोक्तारोऽधिमात्रं पादा मात्रा मात्राश्च पादा  
अकार उकारो मकार इति ॥८॥

8. This is that Atman, even with regard to the letters (of the word Om); it is the Omkara with its parts. The quarters are the parts, and the parts the quarters. The parts of OM are 'A', 'U' and 'M.'

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sah ayam*—this; *Atma*—Atman; *Adhyaksharam*—from the point of view of a single syllable; *Omkarah*—(is identical with) the syllable Om; *Adhimatram*—with regard to Matras or parts; *Padah*—quarters; *Matrah*—are parts; *Matrah*—parts; *Cha*—and; *Padah*—are quarters; *Akara*—the letter 'A'; *Ukara*—the letter 'U'; *Makara*—the letter 'M'; *Iti*—thus.

In the previous Mantras, the Atman has been described from the viewpoint of the states of waking, dream, sleep and Turiya. The same Atman is described from the viewpoint of the sound Om, in the following Mantras. This will help meditation on Om. Om is analysed into its constituent sound elements 'A', 'U' and 'M', in order to identify them with the states of waking, dream and sleep. Those which constitute the quarters of the Atman are the letters of AUM, 'A', 'U' and 'M'.

जागरितस्थानो वैश्वानरोऽकारः प्रथमा मात्राऽप्तेरादिमत्त्वाद्वा-  
ऽप्नोति ह वै सर्वान्कामानादिश्च भवति य एवं वेद ॥९॥

9. The first part 'A' is Vaisvanara, whose sphere is the condition of waking, on account of all-pervasiveness, or on account of being the first. He who knows this, obtains verily all desires and becomes the first.

### Notes and Commentary

*Jagaritasthanah*—whose sphere is the condition of waking; *Vaisvanarah*—the Vaisvanara; *Akarah*—the letter A; *Prathama*—the first; *Matra*—part; *Apte*—on account of all-pervasiveness; *Adimatvat*—on account of being the first; *Va*—or; *Apnoti*—attains; *Ha vai*—verily; *Sarvan*—all; *Kaman*—desirable objects; *Adih*—the first; *Cha*—and; *Yah*—who; *Evam*—thus; *Veda*—knows.

As the word Om represents the Atman, so the Matras of Om represent, respectively, the different conditions in which the Atman manifests itself. Matra 'A' represents Vaisvanara, the first condition. Have the symbol 'A' before you, and meditate on Vaisvanara till you identify yourself with the object of meditation. Just as 'A' pervades in all the letters of the alphabets, so also Vaisvanara pervades all things of the universe. Just as 'A' is the first letter in 'AUM', so also Vaisvanara is the first condition of the Atman.

Sruti says, "The letter 'A' is the whole of speech". All sounds are pervaded by 'A'. In the Bhagavad Gita, you will find "*Aksharanam Akarosmi*—of letters, the letter 'A', I am" (X. 33). Sruti says, "The effulgent Heaven is the head of Vaisvanara". Therefore, Vaisvanara pervades the whole of this universe.

Just as 'A' is the first letter in 'AUM', just as 'A' is the first of all sounds and letters, so also the waking state is the first of the three states. You can derive the knowledge of the other states from the waking state. The experiences of the three states form the whole experience of the universe. Therefore, the waking state pervades the whole universe. The scientists and Western philosophers have ignored the experiences of the dreaming and deep sleep states, and have taken the experiences of the waking state only. Hence their data and conclusions are incorrect.

Now, the benefits of knowing this identity are described. He who knows it, has all his desires fulfilled. He becomes the first among the great. He becomes the first of all.

स्वप्नस्थानस्तैजस उकारो द्वितीया मात्रोत्कर्षादुभयत्वाद्वोत्कर्षति ह  
वै ज्ञानसंततिं समानश्च भवति नास्याब्रह्मवित्कुले भवति य एवं  
वेद ॥१०॥

10. Taijasa, whose sphere of activity is the dream state, is represented by the letter 'U', the second letter of Om, on account of superiority, or on account of being in the middle. He who knows this, becomes great in knowledge, and the equal of all. No one ignorant of Brahman is born in his family.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Svapnasthanah*—whose sphere of activity is the dream state; *Taijasah*—the Taijasa; *Ukarah*—the letter U; *Dvitiya*—the second; *Matra*—part; *Ubhayatvat*—on account of being in the middle; *Va*—or; *Utkarshati*—excels; *Ha*—vai—verily; *Jnana-santati*—the stream of knowledge; *Samanah*—equal; *Cha*—and; *Bhavati*—becomes; *Na*—not; *Asya*—this; *Abrahmavit*—a non-knower of Brahman; *Kule*—in the family; *Bhavati*—is born; *Yah*—who; *Evam*—thus; *Veda*—knows.

The letter 'U' is, as it were, superior to the letter 'A'. Taijasa too, is superior to Visva, because he enjoys the ideas of the subtle dream world. His enjoyment is of a very fine, subtle and refined nature. Just as 'U' is in between waking and sound sleep, Taijasa also is in between Visva and Prajna. He who knows this, attains the supreme knowledge. He is treated equally by all. His friends and enemies regard him in the same light. His enemies do not hate him. They do not show any jealousy towards him. Anyone ignorant of Brahman is not born in his family.

सुषुप्तस्थानः प्राज्ञो मकारस्तृतीया मात्रा मित्रपीतेर्वा मिनोति ह वा  
इदं सर्वमपीतिश्च भवति य एवं वेद ॥११॥

11. Prajna, whose sphere is deep sleep, is 'M', the third part (letter) of Om, because it is both the measure, and that wherein, all become one. He who knows this is able to measure all, and to comprehend all within himself.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sushuptasthanah*—whose sphere is deep sleep; *Prajnah*—*Prajna*; *Makarah*—the letter M; *Tritiyah*—the third; *Matra*—part; *Miteh*—on account of its being a measure; *Va*—or; *Apeeteh*—on account of absorption; *Minoti*—measures; *Ha*—verily; *Idam*—this; *Sarvam*—all; *Apeetih*—comprehends all within himself; *Cha*—and; *Bhavati*—becomes; *Yah*—who; *Evam*—thus; *Veda*—knows.

Just as a heap of rice is measured by a *Prastha*, a kind of measure, so also *Visva* and *Taijasa* are, as it were, measured by *Prajna* in *Pralaya* (involution) and *Utpatti* (evolution). *Visva* and *Taijasa* sink in *Prajna* during sleep, and emerge out of him afterwards. This is compared to measuring by *Prajna*.

When the syllable Om is chanted, or repeated again and again, 'A' and 'U' appear to merge themselves in 'M', and come out of it again. Similarly, the waking and dream states appear to merge in deep sleep (*Prajna*), and come out of it. *Visva* and *Taijasa* also merge in *Prajna* during sleep. Therefore, 'M' and *Prajna* are likened to a measure that is used in measuring rice or barley. *Prajna* is like a big vessel that contains two other vessels, viz., *Visva* and *Taijasa*. In *Prajna*, all things lose their identity, all become one. Therefore, *Prajna* is identical with the letter 'M'.

He who knows this is able to measure all. He is able to know the real nature of the world. He is able to penetrate into the real nature of the universe. He is also able to comprehend all within himself, i.e., to be the cause of all. He realises himself as the cause of the universe, *Isvara*.

अमात्रश्तुर्थोऽव्यवहार्यः प्रपञ्चोपशमः शिवोऽद्वैत एवमोक्तार  
आत्मैव संविशत्यात्मनाऽत्मानं य एवं वेद ॥१२॥

12. That, which has no parts, is the Fourth, transcendental, destitute of phenomenal existence, all bliss and non-dual. This verily is Omkara. He who knows this, merges his self in the Self.

### Notes and Commentary

*Amatrah*—without parts; *Chaturthah*—the fourth; *Avyavaharyah*—transcendental; *Prapanchopasamah*—destitute of phenomenal existence; *Sivah*—all bliss; *Advaitah*—non-dual; *Evam*—thus; *Omkarah*—the syllable Om; *Atma*—Atman; *Eva*—only; *Samvisati*—enters; *Atmana*—by his own self; *Atmanam*—the Self; *Yah*—who; *Evam*—thus; *Veda*—knows; *Yah*—who; *Evam*—thus; *Veda*—knows.

That, which has no parts, is called *Amatra*, without measure. *Amatra Omkara* is the fourth quarter, i.e., pure Atman. The benefit derived from the realisation of the Atman, the Fourth, is that the knower himself enters into the Self by means of the Self. He attains immortality. He is not born again. As the Atman is beyond the reach of mind and senses, It is transcendental. *Visva* merges in *Taijasa*, *Taijasa* in *Prajna*, and *Prajna* dissolves itself in *Turiya Atman*—Brahman.

Meditation on Om helps the aspirant in the attainment of Self-realisation, or the final realisation of Brahman. Just as the rope is realised when the illusion of snake vanishes, so also Brahman, who is Om, is realised when the illusion of duality or Avidya disappears, through the attainment of knowledge of the Self.

॥ इति माण्डूक्योपनिषत्संपूर्णा ॥

Thus ends the *Mandukyopanishad*.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णभिः शृणुयाम देवाः भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।  
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवा स्तनूभिर्वर्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः । स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो  
वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्ताक्षर्योऽरिष्टनेमि:  
स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Tat Sat

Om Santih Santih Santih!

# TAITTIKIYA UPANISHAD

## INTRODUCTION

This Upanishad belongs to the Krishna Yajurveda, forming part of the Taittiriya Aranyaka. The seventh, eighth and ninth Prapathakas of the Aranyaka make this Upanishad.

This is one of the important Upanishads. It enunciates some doctrines of Vedanta in an elementary form. Its texts are often quoted in the later philosophical works. The Taittiriya Upanishad contains the tenets of the Vedanta system. The notion of Brahman as the Supreme Self, and as entirely distinct from the world, is clearly defined. He is described as the source for everything. The ideas of this Upanishad are those of the other Upanishads, but they are systematically arranged here. Hindu philosophers hold this Upanishad in high estimation.

There is a wonderful tradition about the epithet, or name, Taittiriya. The great sage Yajnavalkya quarrelled with his preceptor Vaisampayana. He was asked by his Guru to return the Veda which Yajnavalkya had studied under him. Yajnavalkya vomited the Yajurveda he had learnt. The other Rishis, the pupils of Vaisampayana, assumed the forms of Tittiris (birds, partridges), and swallowed the Veda thus thrown out or vomited. Therefore, it came to be known as Taittiriya Samhita.

It is divided into three sections called Vallis—(1) Siksha Valli, or the instruction section, (2) Brahmananda Valli, or the Brahman-bliss section, and (3) Bhrigu Valli, or the Bhrigu section. These names are given from the first word of each, rather than from any signification. Sayana divides the chapters as (1) Samhiti, (2) Varuni and (3) Yajniki, according to the subject matter treated therein. (Valli literally means a creeper.)

The First Section deals with some mystic problems connected with the text, and the study of the Vedas. The preceptor gives clear instructions to the young Brahmacharins on character-building. He imparts to them rules of right conduct and right living. He places before them the moral virtues they

should try to possess and develop, and the ideals of life they should cherish in order to prepare themselves for the attainment of Brahma Jnana, or the knowledge of the Self.

It describes the course of instruction, and of the moral and mental training, preparatory to the initiation of the student in the science of Brahman. In short, it is the daily study of Vedas, the practice of sacred rites, and the leading of a virtuous and pious life in accordance with the precepts of the sacred scriptures, which prepare the student for the reception of the knowledge of Brahman. Though the first Valli has no connection with the other Vallis, though the first part is not necessary for the clear understanding of the doctrine, yet it is a very useful section. A preparatory course of study is needed for the aspirant. In this section alone, it is more systematically inculcated than in any other Upanishad.

The Second Section deals with the bliss of Brahman. It contains the doctrine of the Taittiriya Upanishad itself. It commences with the following memorial verse of the Rig-Veda, which contains the sum total of the whole Upanishad: "Whoever knows Brahman, who is Existence, Knowledge and Infinite, as dwelling within the cavity of the heart in the infinite ether, enjoys all desires at once, together, with the omniscient Brahman".

The order of creation is described in this Valli: "From the Soul (Brahman) verily sprung forth the ether, from the ether the air, from the air fire, from the fire water, from the water earth, from the earth annual herbs, from the annual herbs food, from food seed, from seed man; for man is verily the essence of food". This Valli describes that Brahman is Anandamaya, or Supreme Bliss. It deals with the knowledge of Brahman.

The Third Valli deals with the story of Bhrigu, son of Varuna, who under instructions from his father, understood Bliss as Brahman, after undergoing the penance. It gives a narrative in confirmation of the doctrine taught in the preceding Vallis. It is evident that the knowledge of Brahman is not acquired at once. There are different stages by which the aspirant approaches a clearer and clearer idea of Brahman. The means of obtaining the knowledge is the practice of Tapas or meditation. In this section only, the description of the five Kosas or sheaths is

clearly given. The Vedantic doctrine of three bodies and five sheaths is directly based upon the teachings of this Upanishad.

In Arundhati Nyaya, one big star is shown first to the man, then a small star, then a smaller star, and finally, the smallest star. Even so, the instructions given in this Valli or section, take the mind from the gross to the subtle, from the subtle to the subtler, and eventually, from the subtler to the subtlest of all—the Atman or the Self, which is encased within the five sheaths.

ॐ

I

### SIKSHAVALLI (INSTRUCTION CHAPTER)

#### FIRST ANUVAKA

ॐ शं नो मित्रः शं वरुणः । शं नो भवत्वर्यमा । शं न इन्द्रो  
बृहस्पतिः । शं नो विष्णुरुक्त्रमः । नमो ब्रह्मणे । नमस्ते वायो । त्वमेव  
प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि । त्वामेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्म वदिष्यामि । क्रतं वदिष्यामि ।  
सत्यं वदिष्यामि । तन्मामवतु । तद्वक्तारमवतु । अवतु माम् । अवतु  
वक्तारम् ।

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

॥ इति प्रथमोऽनुवाकः ॥

May the Sun (Mitra) be good to us! May the Varuna be good to us! May the Sun (Aryama) be good to us! May Indra and Brihaspati be good to us! May Vishnu, of great strides, be good to us! Prostrations to Brahman! Prostrations to Thee, O Vayu! Thou indeed art the visible Brahman! I shall proclaim Thee visible Brahman; I shall call Thee the Just! I shall call Thee the True! May He protect me! May He protect the teacher! May He protect me! May He protect the teacher! Om Peace, Peace, Peace!

### Notes and Commentary

Anuvaka means a subdivision of the Vedas, a section or a chapter.

The word Siksha has its general meaning of 'Instruction'. But here, it has a specialised, technical meaning, 'the science of pronunciation'. As the first stage in the instruction concerning the Vedas, this is elaborated as the formal discipline named Siksha, the first of the six Vedangas (limbs of the Veda).

Vayu is Hiranyagarbha, or the cosmic Prana. The utterance of peace-chant propitiates Devatas. The spiritual path is rendered smooth through their grace. All obstacles are removed. You will not forget what you have learnt. You will possess good health also by pleasing the Devatas who preside over the different organs of the body. Their favour is invoked, because it is only if they grant health, that the study of the books on wisdom can proceed without obstacles. You will have good meditation, if you repeat the peace-chant or Santi Mantra before starting your meditation. The repetition of 'Om Santih' thrice is to remove the three kinds of Taapas or obstacles, viz., the Adhyatmika (from one's self), Adhidaivika (from Devas) and Adhibhautika (from living beings).

Mitra is the presiding deity of the activity of Prana, and of the day. Varuna is the presiding deity of the activity of Apana, and the night. Aryama (the Sun) is the presiding deity of the eye, and the sun. Indra is the presiding deity of strength and hands, Brihaspati of speech and intellect. Vishnu is the presiding deity of feet.

Hiranyagarbha is visible or manifested Brahman. He is nearer than the senses, the eye, etc. May Brahman protect me by imparting knowledge to me. May the same Brahman protect the preceptor by bestowing on him ability and capacity to explain the scriptures.

As all works and their fruits are under the control of Prana (Hiranyagarbha), prostrations are offered to Thee. I call Thee the Just, because the Truth, ascertained by intelligence, study of scriptures and practice, is under your influence. I call Thee the True, because the Truth practised by speech is acquired, owing to Thy grace and influence.

[The Santi Mantra and the first Anuvaka have the same text. Hence the text and meaning of the first Anuvaka have not been repeated.]

Here ends the First Anuvaka

### SECOND ANUVAKA

ॐ शीक्षां व्याख्यास्यामः । वर्णः स्वरः । मात्रा बलम् । साम  
संतानः । इत्युक्तः शीक्षाध्यायः ॥१॥

॥ इति द्वितीयोऽनुवाकः ॥

1. Om. We shall now explain the science of pronunciation, the letters (Varnah), the pitch of the sound or accent (Svarah), the length or measure (Matrah), the effort or strength (in the utterance of letters (Balam), modulation (Samah), and conjugation or continuity (Santanah). Thus has been explained the chapter on the science of pronunciation (phonetics or orthoepy).

### Notes and Commentary

*Varnah*—letter, means guttural, palatal, dental and labial; *Svarah*—accent, means high, middle and low tunes (Udatta, etc.); *Matrah*—measure or length, short, long or treble length of tone known as Hrasva, Dirgha and Pluta; *Balam*—the effort in pronouncing; *Samah*—pronouncing the letters uniformly; *Santana*—flowing, continuity in utterance, conjunction of two letters or sounds, known as Sandhi.

Proper pronunciation of a Mantra is very necessary if you want to realise the fruits thereof. You should not repeat the Mantra in a hurried manner. If you repeat it hurriedly, for the sake of finishing a certain number of Maalas within a specified time, you may mispronounce the Mantra. The whole efficacy of the Mantra lies in its proper pronunciation or chanting. The Mantra-Sakti, or the power of a Mantra, is in the sound of the Mantra. Further, Sabda and Artha (sound and the object denoted by the sound) are inseparable. Only if the Mantra is properly pronounced, the desired object denoted by the Mantra will be attained.

Therefore, the science of pronunciation or orthoepy or phonetics, is highly necessary for the student. If he knows the principles of phonetics, he can utter the Mantra in a correct manner. So, this Upanishad begins with the chapter on phonetics, in order that the student may correctly pronounce the Mantras, that are to come in the succeeding chapters of this Upanishad.

Here ends the Second Anuvaka

### THIRD ANUVAKA

सह नौ यशः । सह नौ ब्रह्मवर्चसम् । अथातः सँहिताया उपनिषदं  
व्याख्यास्यामः । पश्चस्वधिकरणेषु । अधिलोकमधिज्यौतिषम-  
धिविद्यमधिप्रजमध्यात्मम् । ता महासँहिता इत्याऽचक्षते ॥१॥

1. The pupils say: May there be glory (fame) to us both. May the splendour (light) of Brahman (the lustre of spiritual knowledge) be on us both. The teacher says: Now we shall explain the Upanishad of the Samhita, under five headings, namely (1) concerning the worlds, (2) concerning the luminaries, (3) concerning the knowledge, (4) concerning the progeny, (5) concerning the soul. These, they say, are the great Samhitas.

### Notes and Commentary

*Nau*—to us both, the preceptor and the pupil; *Brahma-varchasam*—the Vedic light, the light of Brahman, or the effulgence of spirituality, the effulgence that beams out from the face of one who is meditating on Brahman, or who has studied the Vedas; *Adhilokam*—knowledge concerning the worlds; *Adhijyautisham*—with regard to heavenly lights; *Adhivid�am*—with regard to knowledge; *Adhiprajam*—with regard to offspring or progeny; *Adhyatmam*—with regard to the Self.

*Samhita*—a conjunction of two words or letters or sound, collection of Vedic Mantras. *Samhita* means a union, either of letters to a word, or of words to a sentence, or of sentences to a more comprehensive composition, as expressive of the mutual connection of any idea, to which the *Samhita* may be referred. It means, therefore, also a collection of hymns, as the

Rig-veda, etc., and is here especially meant as a collection of hymns according to each separate school. Such a Samhita is, for instance, the sentence: I-se-tva (I divide thee) where the syllable 'I' may represent the earth, 'Tva'—the heaven, 'Se'—the connection of both, and the union of all these elements to one word, the air. Mahasamhita is, where there is a Samhita, and where the things in unity are of such comprehensiveness, as the earth, etc.

May the glory arising out of the thorough knowledge of the Samhita and other Upanishads, be to us both, the spiritual teacher and the pupil. May the effulgence of spirituality be also to us. This is the prayer of the pupil, who has not attained the *summum bonum*. This cannot be the prayer of the preceptor as he has already attained the *summum bonum*, because he alone, who has attained Self-realisation, can be the spiritual teacher.

Rules as regards the pronunciation have been taught previously. The Sruti says that we shall now explain the esoteric teaching, which is the subject of the Samhita, in reference to the five Adhikaranas, or topics of knowledge.

Those who know the Vedas call the Upanishads, that treat on these five subjects, the great Samhitas, great because they treat on matters as vast as the worlds, etc.

Knowledge of the Brahman is called Upanishad, because it destroys ignorance, the root cause for births and deaths. It takes one near Brahman and so it is called Upanishad. The book is also called Upanishad, because its subject matter is Vidya or knowledge of the Self.

Here it means the sacred teachings.

अथाधिलोकम् । पृथिवी पूर्वरूपम् । द्यौरुत्तररूपम् । आकाशः  
सन्धिः वायुः सन्धानम् । इत्यधिलोकम् ॥२॥

2. Now with regard to the world: The earth is the first form. The heaven is the last form. The Akasa (ether) is the union. The Vayu (air) is the medium (of that union). This much as regards the world.

### Notes and Commentary

*Purvarupam*—first form; *Uttararupam*—last form; *Sandhi*—union; *Sandhanam*—the medium of effecting the union.

The knowledge concerning the worlds is mentioned. The earth is the first form, i.e., the first letter. The first sound, or the first letter of a conjunction, or Samhita, should be contemplated as the earth, the last as the heaven and the middle space between the two as the sky. The Akasa means the Antariksha, the sky, the world between heaven and earth. The link or union is that which is between the first and the last forms. It is so called because the first and the last forms meet in it.

अथाधिज्यौतिषम् । अग्निः पूर्वरूपम् । आदित्य उत्तररूपम् । आपः सन्धिः । वैद्युतः सन्धानम् । इत्यधिज्यौतिषम् ॥३॥

3. Now, as regards the luminaries or heavenly light: Fire is the first form. The Sun is the last form. Water is the union (link). Lightning is the medium (of that union). That is concerning the lights or luminaries.

अथाधिविद्यम् । आचार्यः पूर्वरूपम् । अन्तेवास्युत्तररूपम् । विद्या सन्धिः । ग्रवचन् सन्धानम् । इत्यधिविद्यम् ॥४॥

4. Next concerning knowledge: The spiritual preceptor is the first form. The pupil is the last form. Knowledge is the link or union. Instruction is the medium (connection or means of union). This is concerning knowledge.

अथाधिप्रजम् । माता पूर्वरूपम् । पितोत्तररूपम् । प्रजा सन्धिः । प्रजनन् सन्धानम् । इत्यधिप्रजम् ॥५॥

5. Next, as regards progeny: The mother is the first form. The father is the last form. The progeny is the link (union, conjunction). Procreation is the medium. This is the knowledge concerning progeny.

अथाध्यात्मम् । अधरा हनुः पूर्वरूपम् । उत्तरा हनुरुत्तररूपम् ।  
वाक्सन्धिः । जिह्वा सन्धानम् । इत्यध्यात्मम् । इतीमा  
महासँहिताः ॥६॥

6. Next concerning the soul: The lower jaw is the first form. The upper jaw is the last form. Speech is the union. The tongue is the medium. This is concerning the soul. These are the great Samhitas.

Here, the term 'soul' is used in the sense of the body.

य एवमेता महासँहिता व्याख्याता वेद । संधीयते प्रजया पशुभिः ।  
ब्रह्मवर्चसेनान्नाद्येन सुवर्गेण लोकेन ॥७॥

॥ इति तृतीयोऽनुवाकः ॥

7. He, who thus contemplates on these conjunctions, or these above-mentioned great Samhitas as explained, obtains progeny, cattle, the light of Brahman, all kinds of food and the world of Heaven.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Veda*—knows, here means, meditates upon.

The meditation should be done with uniform and unshakable faith. It should be done also in accordance with the instructions of the scriptures.

He, who constantly attends upon the spiritual preceptor with Bhava and faith, is said to be engaged in Upasana on the Guru. He gets the fruit of his service. He who meditates on the great Samhitas obtains the fruits, progeny, cattle, etc.

The mind of the pupil is trained and disciplined by the above five kinds of meditation. The mind is fixed on gross objects to begin with. Then it is fixed on subtle and subtler objects. The mind is thus rendered sharp, subtle and one-pointed. Eventually, it is rendered fit for contemplation on the subtlest Atman, the innermost Self of all beings.

Here ends the Third Anuvaka

## FOURTH ANUVAKA

यश्छन्दसामृषभो विश्वरूपः । छन्दोभ्योऽध्यमृतात्संबभूव । स मेन्द्रो  
मेधया स्पृणोतु । अमृतस्य देवधारणो भूयासम् । शरीरं मे विचर्षणम् ।  
जिह्वा मे मधुमत्तमा । कर्णाभ्यां भूरि विश्रुवम् । ब्रह्मणः कोशोऽसि  
मेधया पिहितः । श्रुतं मे गोपाय ॥१॥

1. May He, who is the supreme among all Devas, who is of cosmic form, who has been born of the immortal Vedas, who is the Lord of all, strengthen me with wisdom. May I become the possessor of wisdom that leads to immortality. May my body be fit (for meditation). May my tongue become extremely sweet. May I hear much with my ears. Thou art the sheath of Brahman, enveloped by intelligence (worldly knowledge). May Thou protect what I have heard.

## Notes and Commentary

In this section are given the hymns for prayer, and the hymns for offering oblations for obtaining wisdom and wealth. This is an invocation of the disciple to Pranava or Om, the symbol or Pratika of Brahman, the Mother of all the Vedas, for the benediction of knowledge and worldly possessions.

Some commentators have taken this as a prayer to Indra.

*Visvarupa*—having all or various forms, because Om runs through all speech. It is immanent in all articulate and inarticulate sounds. *Rishabha*—chief, bull, he who is like the bull among the Vedas, i.e., supreme or pre-eminent; this is Om.

Om is the most powerful syllable of the Vedas. It is the essence extracted from all the Vedas. It is a name of Brahman also. Therefore, the sacred syllable Om is pre-eminent or excellent. The monosyllable is the object of meditation here. It is quite proper to praise Om as 'excellent' or 'pre-eminent'. Om is identical with Brahman. Om surpasses the nectar, that is, the Vedas. Om is the essence of the Vedas. Prajapati (Brahma) performed penance in order to find out which was the best among the worlds, the Devas, the Vedas and the Vyahritis. Om presented itself before Him as being the most excellent. Om is a safe boat to cross the ocean of ignorance. One can realise

Brahman through the help of Om. Om is the image or symbol of Brahman. Brahman is obtained with the help of Om. Om is the Lord of all, because it can bestow anything desired.

*Sprinotu*—may strengthen. May Om, the Lord of all, strengthen me with wisdom. Knowledge of Brahman alone can give real strength and courage. *Amritasya*—of the immortal (knowledge of Brahman), of the knowledge of the Brahman which is the cause of immortality. This section deals with Brahma-Jnana, or knowledge of the Self.

May my body become fit for meditation. There is a change from the third to the first person. May my tongue become extremely sweet, i.e., may I speak sweet words, may I be sweet in speech. The body and the senses should be quite fit, healthy and strong. Then only, acquisition of the knowledge of the Self is possible.

Just as the scabbard is the sheath of the sword, so also Om is the sheath of Brahman. Om is veiled, i.e., hidden by worldly knowledge. Om is the shrine of Brahman covered by intelligence. Om is the sheath of Brahman enveloped by common understanding. The meaning is, Om or Brahman is not revealed to ordinary intellects.

*Srutam me gopaya*—protect what I have heard. *Srutam*—that which is heard (by me). *Me, Maya*—by me. *Gopaya*—protect, help me in retaining, make it useful and fruitful, protect the knowledge of Brahman I have learnt by hearing, make me not forget what I have learnt.

The next verse contains hymns for offering oblations into the fire, for one who wishes to possess wealth.

आवहन्ति वितन्वाना । कुर्वाणाऽचीरमात्मनः वासा॑ सि मम  
गावश्च । अन्नपाने च सर्वदा । ततो मे श्रियमावह । लोमशां पशुभिः सह  
स्वाहा । आमायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा । विमायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः  
स्वाहा । प्रमायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा । दमायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा ।  
शमायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा । यशो जनेऽसानि स्वाहा ।  
श्रेयान्वस्यसोऽसानि स्वाहा । तं त्वा भग प्रविशानि स्वाहा । स मा भग  
प्रविश स्वाहा । तस्मिन्सहस्रशाखे । निभगाहं त्वयि मृजे स्वाहा ।

यथापः प्रवता यन्ति । यथा मासा अहर्जरम् । एवं मां ब्रह्मचारिणः ।  
धातरायन्तु सर्वतः स्वाहा । प्रतिवेशोऽसि प्र मा पाहि प्र मा पद्यस्व ।  
वितन्वाना शमायन्तु ब्रह्मचारिणः स्वाहा । (धातरायन्तु सर्वतः स्वहैके  
च) ॥२॥

॥ इति चतुर्थोऽनुवाकः ॥

2. She who brings, increases and preserves my clothes, cattle, food and drink in plenty, and does these quickly and for all time, the Goddess of wealth, then bring me sheep, goats and cattle, Svaha. May the Brahmacharins come to me, Svaha. May the Brahmacharins come to me from every side, Svaha. May the Brahmacharins come to me in large numbers, Svaha. May the Brahmacharins control their senses, Svaha. May the Brahmacharins become calm in mind, Svaha. May I become famous among men, Svaha. May I become the best among the wealthy, Svaha. O Lord, may I enter into Thee, Svaha. May Thou O Lord, enter into me, Svaha. In Thee, of thousand branches, may I become well cleansed, O Lord, Svaha.

Just as the waters run to a lower level, just as the months run towards the year, so also, O Lord, may the Brahmacharins come to me from all sides, Svaha. Thou art my resting place. May Thou enlighten me. May I attain Thee.

#### Notes and Commentary

These Mantras are uttered when the oblations are poured into the sacrificial fire. The address is to the sacred syllable, Om. The student prays for such wealth as described above. The student says: "After giving me wisdom, bring me wealth, together with sheep, goats and cattle". With 'Svaha', each oblation is offered.

*Kurvana*—doing, that is fulfilling soon. *Atmanah*—to me. *Sahasra sakhe*—of thousand branches or divisions, all the different Mantras are regarded as different branches, or divisions or expressions, of the sacred syllable, Om. *Nibhagaham tvayi-mrije*—in Thee of many branches, may I become cleansed, that is, purify myself from my sins, by the repetition or chanting of Om. *Tam tva bhaga pravisani*—may I

enter Thee, O Lord and become one with Thee. *Sa ma bhaga pravisa*—Thou too, O Lord, enter me, may we become one. *Aharjaram*—into the years. *Aharjara* means a year, either because it makes the world old by rolling day by day, or because the day is worn out in it. *Dhatah*—preserver of the worlds, ordainer of all things, dispenser of all. *Prativeda*—resort, a resting place, a place in which those who take shelter in Thee, free themselves from their sins. Therefore, O Pranava, enlighten me. Take me into Thee. Absorb me into Thee. Make me one with Thee, as a metal coated with mercury, just as salt becomes one with water.

One can do virtuous actions with the aid of wealth. Virtuous actions will destroy sins. Knowledge dawns when the sins are destroyed. The Smriti also says: "Wisdom arises in men when their sins are destroyed. They realise the supreme Self, Paramatman, in themselves, just as one sees his face in a clean mirror".

Here ends the Fourth Anuvaka

#### FIFTH ANUVAKA

भूर्भुवः सुवरिति वा एतास्तिस्तो व्याहृतयः । तासामु ह स्मैतां  
 चतुर्थीम् । माहाचमस्यः प्रवेदयते । मह इति । तद्ब्रह्म । स आत्मा ।  
 अङ्गान्यन्या देवताः । भूरिति वा अयं लोकः । भुव इत्यन्तरिक्षम् ।  
 सुवरित्यसौ लोकः । मह इत्यादित्यः । आदित्येन वाव सर्वे लोका  
 महीयन्ते । भूरिति वा अग्निः । भुव इति वायुः । सुवरित्यादित्यः । मह  
 इति चन्द्रमाः । चन्द्रमसा वाव सर्वाणि ज्योतीँषि महीयन्ते । भूरिति वा  
 क्रचः । भुव इति सामानि । सुवरिति यजूँषि । मह इति ब्रह्म । ब्रह्मणा  
 वाव सर्वे वेदा महीयन्ते । भूरिति वै प्राणः । भुव इत्यपानः । सुवरिति  
 व्यानः । मह इत्यन्नम् । अन्नेन वाव सर्वे प्राणा महीयन्ते । ता वा  
 एताश्तस्तश्तुर्धा । चतस्तश्तस्तो व्याहृतयः । ता यो वेद । स वेद ब्रह्म ।  
 सर्वेऽस्मै देवा बलिमावहन्ति ॥१, २, ३॥ (असौ लोको यजूँषि वेद  
 द्वे च) ॥

॥ इति पञ्चमोऽनुवाकः ॥

1, 2 & 3. Bhuh, Bhuvah, Suvah—these three are the three sacred interjections or utterances (Vyahritis). Mahachamasya taught a fourth, viz., Mahah, which is Brahman, which is the Atman. The other Devatas (gods) are its limbs.

Bhuh is this world. Bhuvah is the sky. Suvah is the next world. Mahah is the sun. It is by the sun that all the worlds are nourished.

Bhuh is fire. Bhuvah is air. Suvah is the sun. Mahah is the moon. It is by the moon that all the luminaries thrive.

Bhuh is the Rik. Bhuvah is the Saman. Suvah is the Yajus. Mahah is Brahman (the syllable Om). It is by Brahman that the Vedas thrive.

Bhuh is Prana. Bhuvah is Apana. Suvah is Vyana. Mahah is food. It is by food that Pranas thrive.

These four above-said are fourfold, and the four Vyahritis are four each. He who knows these, knows the Brahman. All Devas (gods) carry offerings unto him.

### Notes and Commentary

The mode of meditation, which was the subject of the Samhita, was first dealt with. Then there was the description of the hymns or Mantras, meant for those who desire wisdom and wealth. These Mantras ultimately lead to the attainment of knowledge. Now, in this section, the Sruti teaches the secret of meditation on Brahman, in the shape of the Vyahritis. One can attain Self-realisation, by meditating on the Vyahritis.

This Mahah was discovered by Mahachamasyah, the son of Mahachamasa. Remembering the name of the seer is an essential part of the meditation. This Vyahriti Mahah is Brahman, for Brahman is Mahat (great) and the Vyahriti is Mahah. Further, it is the Atman covering all. The word Atman comes from the root, *Vyap*—‘to cover’, because the Vyahriti Mahah includes all the other Vyahritis. In the shape of the sun, the moon, Brahman and food, it includes all the worlds, the luminaries, the Vedas and the Pranas. Therefore, the other gods are its limbs or members.

Among the worlds, heaven, etc., are only limbs of Mahah. That is the reason it is stated that the worlds, etc., thrive by the sun. It is by the soul that the limbs thrive.

Besides the three Vyahritis Bhuh, Bhuvah, Suvah, there is a fourth Vyahriti named Mahah. The four Vyahritis should be meditated upon in four different ways. Therefore, there are, in all, four times four, i.e., sixteen aspects of the Vyahritis.

He who knows the Vyahritis, as described above, knows Brahman. All Devas, being his limbs, adore the knower when he becomes one with the self-luminous, all-blissful supreme Self, Brahman.

Here ends the Fifth Anuvaka

### SIXTH ANUVAKA

The nature of the entity to be meditated, the path by which Brahman can be attained, the fruits of meditation, and the way to meditate, are explained in this Anuvaka.

In the fifth Anuvaka, the object to be meditated is a symbol, the Vyahriti, regarded as the worlds, etc. In this sixth Anuvaka, the object of contemplation is Brahman, formed of thought and endowed with other attributes. In the former case, the fruit of meditation is 'The Devas offer tribute'. In the latter case, the meditator attains Lordship or independent sovereignty, also the fruits of meditation of the Vyahriti. In Agni, as Bhuh, he becomes established. The two together constitute one Upasana.

स य एषोऽन्तर्हृदय आकाशः । तस्मिन्नयं पुरुषो मनोमयः । अमृतो हिरण्मयः । अन्तरेण तालुके । य एष स्तन इवावलम्बते । सेन्द्रयोनिः । यत्रासौ केशान्तो विवर्तते । व्यपोह्य शीर्षकपाले । भूरित्यग्नौ प्रतितिष्ठति । भुव इति वायौ । सुवरित्यादित्ये । मह इति ब्रह्मणि । आप्नोति स्वराज्यम् । आप्नोति मनसस्पतिम् । वाक्पतिश्वक्षुष्पतिः । श्रोत्रपतिर्विज्ञानपतिः । एतत्ततो भवति । आकाशशरीरं ब्रह्म । सत्यात्म प्राणारामं मन आनन्दम् । शान्ति समृद्धममृतम् । इति प्राचीनयोग्योपास्त्व ॥१, २॥ (वायावमृतमेकं च)

॥ इति षष्ठोऽनुवाकः ॥

1 & 2. Here, in this space within the heart, resides the Purusha consisting of mind (Manomaya), immortal and resplendent.

Between the two palates, that which hangs down like the breast (the uvula)—that is the birth-place of Indra, (i.e., the path to the attainment of Indra, i.e., Brahman), where the root of hair splits up, dividing the two regions of the skull.

He resides in fire as Bhuh, in air as Bhuvah, in the sun as Suvah, in Brahman as Mahah. He Himself becomes the Lord (of all the gods). He becomes the Lord of the mind, the Lord of speech, the Lord of the eyes, the Lord of the ears and the Lord of intellect. Then, he becomes this—Brahman who has space (ether) for his body, whose nature is Truth, who sports in life (Prana), whose mind is bliss, who is full of peace, who is immortal.

Thus, do thou, O Prachinayogya (worthy descendant of the ancients, man of the ancient Yoga), meditate on Him.

### Notes and Commentary

In the fifth lesson, the contemplation of the lower gods has been taught. The sixth lesson deals with the contemplation of Brahman. Between the two palates, there is the uvula which hangs like the breast. It is the seat of Indra. There exists the root of hair after separating the two parietal bones of the skull. The right and left sides of the interior of the mouth, situated just above the root of the tongue are called the Talukas, the throats, two pillars.

*Antahhridaye*—within the heart. *Purusha*—He is called Purusha, because he is lying in this Puri, or city of body, or he pervades the worlds. *Manomaya*—endued with mind, full of mind, full of the knowing powers of the mind. *Manas* is knowledge, from the root, *man*—‘to know’. *Manomaya* means full of knowledge, because He is known by knowledge, or *Manas* is that by which one thinks. *Manomaya* means ‘made of *Manas*’, because He is the presiding deity of the mind, or because He is indicated by it, and He identifies Himself with the *Manas*, or because the soul is manifested through *Manas*. Those who take to meditation, have to meditate with the *Manas* or mind.

*Ayam purusho manomayah*—this Purusha or soul, who is formed of thought. *Hiranmayah*—of golden effulgence, resplendent. The aspirant finds it easy to meditate on Brahman, as a flame of light located in the cavity of the heart (Jyotir-dhyana). *Akasa-sariram*—having space or ether for body, or having a body which is subtle as space. *Satyatma*—one whose nature is Truth. *Pranaramam*—revelling in life, or in whom others revel or sport. *Mana-anandam*—one whose mind is ever-bliss. *Santi-samriddham*—full of peace, rich in peace. *Amritam*—immortal, deathless. *Indra*—here it means Brahman. *Prachinayogya*—one who has prepared himself for meditation on Brahman, by washing his sins by performing the obligatory rites, the Nitya and the Naimittika Karmas prescribed in the former section.

It has been said that the Devatas represented by Bhu, Bhuvah and Suvah are the limbs or parts of Brahman, the Hiranyagarbha represented by Mahah, the fourth Vyahriti. The cavity of the heart is His abode, just as the stone Salagram is the seat of Vishnu. When you meditate on Brahman in the heart, you perceive Him directly as a fruit in the palm of your hand.

Brahman pervades the whole body. It is difficult for beginners to concentrate on the all-pervading Brahman. So, the Rishis have prescribed the cavity of the heart as His seat, to enable the young aspirants to fix their mind on Brahman in the heart. This practice of concentration in the heart will be easy for them. Further, the heart is the vital center in man. It is the seat of life and is full of arteries. Therefore, it is regarded as the most suitable place of meditation on Brahman. This is a kind of Pratika Upasana. This sort of meditation on Brahman is known as Dahara Vidya and Sandilya Vidya (vide Chhandogya Upanishad VIII-1 and 2 and III-14).

There is a cavity within the heart like that within the pot. Many Nadis open into the heart. The heart is like the lotus with its head downward. Here resides the Purusha. Brahman is meditated as residing in the cavity of the heart. He is the knower, the Lord of all. He is the Atman of the knower who beholds Him in the heart.

How a Yogi leaves his body at the time of death, is described here. A very important Nadi, known as Sushumna Nadi, opens out above the heart. This Nadi runs in the middle, between the two palates. This Nadi is the path to reach Indra, the lower Brahman. It is the way to the realisation of Brahman. The Yogi enters into the Sushumna Nadi with the help of Udana Vayu, and leaves this body, having burst open the skull. Penetrating into this Nadi, the mind becomes one-pointed, and is then able to realise immediately, the Supreme Self, the Paramatman. The Sushumna Nadi is the abode of the Supreme Lord. It is the path by which to attain immortality. The Yogi practises Khechari Mudra, blocks the posterior nasal openings with his long tongue, suspends the breath and takes the Prana to the Brahmarandhra, the opening at the top of the head. He becomes Brahman. Saguna Brahman is meant here. The Yogi who leaves the body, having burst open the skull, becomes one with Hiranyagarbha. This is the path of Devayana.

He who knows the path of Sushumna, and sees the Atman goes out through the head, and resides in fire, who presides over this world as Vyahriti Bhuh, and who is a part of Brahman. He covers the whole world. Similarly, he resides in the air and in the sun. When he becomes the Atman of all, the senses of every being belong to him.

In this world, he who is himself a king, is said to be a Svaraj, an independent Lord. Even so, he who meditates on Brahman becomes such a king. He attains Lordship or kingship over mind, intellect, speech, ear, eye, etc. All gods pay homage to him. He attains the powers which Agni, Vayu and Aditya (the sun) possess. By meditation on the fourth Vyahriti, he becomes established in Brahman, abiding in the Brahmaloka or Satyaloka. He attains the power of that Brahman. He himself becomes the Lord of Agni and other subordinate gods. As he is their king, it is said that all the Devas offer tribute to him. As he has attained the state of the universal soul, he becomes the Lord of the mind, intellect, speech, eye and ear of all beings.

Meditate on Brahman as possessing the qualities described above. This is the instruction of the spiritual preceptor, Mahachamasya, in order to awaken reverence in the pupil who

is Prachinayogya. This exhortation of the preceptor reveals the high esteem he cherishes for the truth here taught.

Here ends the Sixth Anuvaka

### SEVENTH ANUVAKA

The main object of the Sruti is to teach that all is indeed Brahman. The aspirant is taken step by step to the realisation of the highest goal, i.e., all is Brahman only. Meditation on Brahman in the form of the Vyahriti has been already explained. Meditation on the same Brahman in the form of the Panktas, beginning with the earth (represented by the fivefold world, the five presiding deities and the fivefold sphere, referring to the soul), is explained in this section.

पृथिव्यन्तरिक्षं द्यौर्दिशोऽवान्तरदिशः । अग्निर्वायुरादित्यश्वन्द्रमा  
नक्षत्राणि । आप ओषधयो वनस्पतय आकाश आत्मा । इत्यधिभूतम् ।  
अथाध्यात्मम् । प्राणो व्यानोऽपान उदानः समानः । चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो  
वाक् त्वक् । चर्म मा॑स् स्नावास्थि मज्जा । एतदधिविधाय  
ऋषिर्वोचत् । पाङ्क्तं वा इदं सर्वम् । पाङ्क्तेनैव पाङ्क्तं  
स्पृणोतीति (सर्वमेकं च) ॥१॥

॥ इति सप्तमोऽनुवाकः ॥

1. The earth, the sky (interspace, mid-region, Antariksham), the heaven, (the main) quarters, and the intermediate quarters; the fire, the air, the sun, the moon, and the stars; the waters, the herbs, the forest trees, space and the Atman—thus far (so much) regarding creatures or all living beings (Iti Adhibhutam).

Now, as regards the soul (Adhyatmam). The Prana, the Vyana, the Apana, the Udana and the Samana; the eyes, the ears, the mind, the speech and the touch; the skin, the flesh, the muscle, the bone and the marrow.

After having analysed all this (fivefold arrangement of the worlds, the gods, beings, Pranas, senses and elements of the body), the seer (the Rishi) declared; "All this is Pankta (fivefold). He sustains (strengthens the Pankta by the Pankta itself)".

### Notes and Commentary

The Vedic texts declare: "A collection of five words is Pankti and the sacrifice is Pankta". Therefore, all commencing with the worlds and ending with the soul, are determined to be Pankta. This is regarded as sacrifice (worship). By the performance of the sacrifice, one attains Brahman in the nature of the Pankta. [Pankta is a Vedic metre consisting of five feet (Padas) of eight syllables each]. To regard this whole universe as the Pankta, as made up of the fivefold groups of objects, such as the earth etc., is tantamount to regarding it as a Yajna, sacrificial rite, itself.

The earth, the sky, the heaven, the primary quarters and the intermediate quarters constitute the Lokapankta, a collection of five worlds. Fire, air, the sun, the moon and the stars constitute the collection of the five Devatas. The waters, the herbs, the forest-trees, space and the Atman, constitute the collection of the five living beings (Bhutas). The Atman here means the Virat, the universal soul, manifesting Himself in the form of the visible, physical world. The collection of five objects that are external and gross is described (Adhibhuta).

Beginning with Prana is the collection of the five vital airs. Beginning with 'the eyes' is the collection of the five senses. Beginning with the skin is the collection of the five primary fluids of the body (Dhatu). Those concern the soul. Here is the collection of five objects, internal and subtle.

The Rishi, that is the Veda, or the seer, who attained a realisation of the same, after having analysed the whole of the objective world, classified it as fivefold, under the two divisions of Adhibhuta and Adhyatma.

All this is Pankta, i.e., fivefold by nature. The external collections of five are strengthened, or sustained, or filled by the internal collections of five (those that pertain to the soul). The two divisions are united under one heading. They are known as one and the same. One should regard the internal group as one with the external. He, who meditates all that is Pankta, becomes one with Brahman, Prajapati.

Thus ends the Seventh Anuvaka

## EIGHTH ANUVAKA

## (MEDITATION ON OM)

ओमिति ब्रह्म । ओमितीदं सर्वम् । ओमित्येतदनुकृतिः स्म वा  
 अप्यो श्रावयेत्याश्रावयन्ति । ओमिति सामानि गायन्ति ।  
 ओँ शोमिति शस्त्राणि शँ सन्ति । ओमित्यध्वर्युः प्रतिगरं  
 प्रतिगृणाति । ओमिति ब्रह्मा प्रसौति । ओमित्यग्निहोत्रमनुजानाति ।  
 ओमिति ब्राह्मणः प्रवक्ष्यन्नाह ब्रह्मोपाप्नवानीति ।  
 ब्रह्मैवोपाप्नोति ॥१॥

1. Om is Brahman. All this is Om. This Om is used (uttered) to indicate consent. By uttering Om, they begin chanting (reciting). With Om, they sing the Samans (Sama songs). 'Om Som'—they say, and recite the Sastras (tell the prayers). 'Om'—thus the officiating priest (Adhvaryu) says his answer. With Om, Brahma (a principal priest) makes his assent. Om—thus one permits the offering of an oblation to fire. 'May I obtain the Vedas (Brahman)'—thinks Brahma, and says Om, before he begins to recite the Vedas; and he does obtain the Vedas (Brahman).

## Notes and Commentary

The Sruti has taught the meditation of Brahman first in the form of the Vyahriti utterance, and subsequently in the form of Panktas, fivefold groups. The meditation of the syllable Om which is an accessory to all kinds of worship, which forms the necessary preliminary to all kinds of meditation, is explained in this Anuvaka or lesson.

The seventh lesson is intended for the lowest type of aspirants who are endowed with gross intellect. The form of meditation is gross. Meditation on Brahman, as manifested in the form of earth and other visible gross forms, is taught there. The sixth lesson is intended for the middling class of aspirants, where meditation of Brahman, manifested in the subtler forms of Manas and the like, is taught. This eighth lesson is meant for the highest class of aspirants. Meditation of pure Brahman, as

declared in the Vedanta and indicated by Pranava, is taught here.

Though the syllable Om is a mere sound, it forms indeed a means of attaining the higher or the lower Brahman. It is, verily, the abode or image of the higher as well as the lower Brahman, just as an idol is the abode or image of Vishnu. The Sruti says: 'By this means alone, he goes to one of them' (Prasna Up. V-2).

You should meditate on the syllable Om as being Brahman, in the form of a word, because Om is this all, all words are covered by the syllable Om. Pranava or Om is held by all in high esteem. Om is a mere sound. It is insentient in itself and, therefore, cannot be conscious of the worship offered to it and yet, as in the case of worship offered to an idol, the Lord is quite aware of the action of the worshipper. He dispenses the fruits to him.

Om is Brahman. Om is the entire universe. The singers of Sama songs, called Udgatris, sing with Om. With 'Om Som', they recite prose verses. 'Om', the Adhvaryu utters words of encouragement. When the Hotri has recited the hymns, the Adhvaryu addresses them a word of encouragement, known as Pratigara. When uttering the word of encouragement, the Adhvaryu utters Om. Everyone, who is desirous of performing a Vedic rite, utters Om in the beginning when any Mantra is uttered loudly. Chanting Om the Brahma priest extracts Soma juice. By uttering Om he orders Agnihotra.

Being asked 'Shall I offer oblation?', he says Om and assents to the oblation to the fire. As any action begun with the word Om is fruitful, the sacred syllable Om, or the Pranava, should be meditated upon as Brahman.

"As all leaves are fast bound in the stalk, so is all speech fast bound in the syllable Om. The syllable Om is all this" (Chh. Up. II-23-iii). Just as the Vata, Asvattha and other fig leaves are pervaded by fibres running through them, so is the whole speech or every form of sound, pervaded by the syllable Om.

As all that which is named is dependent upon the name, all that you see is said to be the syllable Om. Just as Brahman is the basis for everything, so Om is the basis for all sounds and speech.

Pronounce the syllable Om, the designation of Brahman. Do Japa of Om. Sing Om. Chant Om. While doing so, meditate on Brahman denoted by Om.

In Om, all this universe made up of names and forms is comprehended. All objects are included in Om through the words denoting them. As Om is present in everything, it can be the designation or symbol of Brahman who is also present in everything.

Thus ends the Eighth Anuvaka

#### NINTH ANUVAKA

It is said that one attains independence by mere knowledge. So one may think that the works enjoined in the Sruti and the Smriti are of no avail. This Anuvaka treats of works, in order to show that they are means of attaining the end of man.

It is stated in the eighth lesson that one should meditate on Brahman by means of Pranava, Om. One may think that the highest goal can be reached by Upasana alone, and that the works are of no use. This Anuvaka teaches that the performance of duties should be combined with the Upasana. If the duties are neglected, the Upasana cannot produce the desired effect.

These duties are prescribed for an Upasaka who cannot meditate constantly, who has some impurities in the mind. He who knows Brahman has nothing to do with works. It is not possible to perform Agnihotra by one who meditates incessantly. But, he will have to practise control of the body, the senses and the mind.

ऋतं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । सत्यं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । तपश्च  
स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । दमश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । शमश्च  
स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । अग्नयश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । अग्निहोत्रं च  
स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । अतिथयश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । मानुषं च  
स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । प्रजा च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । प्रजनश्च  
स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । प्रजातिश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च । सत्यमिति

सत्यवचा राथीतरः । तप इति तपोनित्यः पौरुशिष्टिः ।  
स्वाध्यायप्रवचने एवेति नाको मौद्रल्यः । तद्वितपस्तद्वितपः ॥१॥

॥ इति नवमोऽनुवाकः ॥

1. Right action (justice), the study and the teaching of the Vedas, ought to be practised. Similarly, Truth, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; penance, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; control of the senses, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; tranquillity, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; the (three holy) fires, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; offering to fires, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; (the entertaining of) the guests, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; (the performance of) human duties, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; children, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; procreation, the study and the teaching of the Vedas; propagation of the race, the study and the teaching of the Vedas (ought to be practised). Satyavachas, the son of Rathitara, holds that Truth alone is necessary (should be practised). Taponitya, the son of Purusishta, holds that Penance only is necessary (should be practised). Naka, the son of Mudgala, holds that the study and the teaching of the Vedas only are necessary (should be practised); that verily is penance; aye, that verily is penance.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Ritam*—the right (action); justice ; truthfulness in thought; right knowledge. *Svadhyaya*—study of the Vedas. *Pravachana*—lecture, discourse, teaching of the Vedas, loud chanting of the Vedas, the daily ceremony named Brahma Yajna, a daily solemn recitation of Vedas. *Tapas*—penance, the performance of Krichhra Vrata, fasting and other kinds of bodily mortification. *Damah*—control of the senses. *Samah*—tranquillity, serenity of the mind born of self-control, control of the mind. *Manusham*—worldly duties should be performed, performance of duties towards humanity; social duties such as marriage, etc. *Praja*— progeny, offspring, he should perform Garbadhana and other sacramental rites antecedent to child-bearing. *Prajanana*—sexual intercourse during the

periods. *Prajati*—the begetting of a grandson, that is the son ought to be married, the propagation of the race through children's children by getting the sons married. *Satyavachah*—that is whose speech is truth, or who is named *Satyavachah*. *Taponityah*—who is regular in penance, or whose name is *Taponityah*.

In this Anuvaka, the Sruti emphasises that the study of the Vedas must be combined with the practice of the prescribed duties, viz., the Nitya and Naimittika Karmas. A great emphasis has also been laid upon the study and the teaching of the Vedas. The duties of one who is desirous of the Vedic study, are that he must study the Vedas, and teach them to the religious students throughout his life. He must be righteous and truthful. He should control his senses and worship the Lord. He should kindle the fires, perform Agnihotra, serve and honour guests. He should perform his social duties properly. He should produce children and bring them up. The performance of duties, enjoined by the Sutris and the Smritis, is really a help to the attainment of the highest ends.

With all the above-mentioned duties, one ought to pay special attention to the study and the teaching of the Vedas. That is the reason "the study and the teaching of the Vedas" is repeated in each clause. The knowledge of the Vedas can really be acquired only by the proper study of the Vedas, and the supreme consummation or the highest good depends on that knowledge. The teaching of the Vedas is to help us in not forgetting it and also to increase virtue or merit (Dharma). The knowledge becomes perfect, and indelibly impressed by the teaching of the Vedas to others. The dissemination of spiritual knowledge is the highest Dharma of man. It is the highest form of charity also, as it helps to destroy the human sufferings, in toto, by eradicating ignorance. Therefore, the study and the teaching of the Vedas is of supreme importance. The study and the teaching of the Vedas constitutes in itself a penance. It is called here as the highest Tapas.

The last portion of the verse describes the different views of the sages. The son of Rathitara attaches greatest importance to Truth. The son of Purusishta is of the opinion that penance is the best of all. Naka, son of Mudgala, holds that the study and

the teaching of the Vedas are most essential. Having set forth the different views, the verse concludes that the austerities are most important of all.

The repetition of 'Truth', 'Penance' and the 'Study and the teaching of the Vedas', though they have been already mentioned, is to inspire or create special regard for them.

Here ends the Ninth Anuvaka

### TENTH ANUVAKA

The ninth lesson treats of right thinking and other virtuous acts. The tenth lesson, which treats of wisdom or spiritual experiences, comes after the ninth lesson. From this, we may conclude that divine visions, intuitive knowledge of Truth, which leads to Moksha, occur to him who is free from desires, who is thirsting for knowledge and who is engaged in the performance of the obligatory duties which are enjoined in the Srutis and the Smritis. Knowledge which reveals Brahman, dawns in him untaught. By repeating this Mantra, even persons who have not learnt the Vedas, owing to dullness of intellect or other causes, and therefore, are not competent for Brahma Yajna, can reap the fruits of Brahma Yajna.

अहं वृक्षस्य रेतिवा । कीर्तिः पृष्ठं गिरेतिव । ऊर्ध्वपवित्रो वाजिनीव  
स्वमृतमस्मि । द्रविण् सर्वर्चसम् । सुमेधा अमृतोक्षितः । इति  
त्रिशङ्कोर्वेदानुवचनम् ॥१॥

॥ इति दशमोऽनुवाकः ॥

1. I am the mover (cutter) of the tree (of Samsara). My fame is like the mountain's peak. Supremely pure am I. I am the very Immortal One, as He is in the Sun. I am the lustrous wealth. I am of great wisdom, immortal, undecaying. So runs Trisanku's teaching of wisdom.

### Notes and Commentary

The Sruti speaks of the realisation of Trisanku, a Rishi. The recitation of the hymn is intended for the acquisition of knowledge of the Self (Brahma Jnana).

*Vrikshasya*—(Samsara Vrikshasya) of the tree of Samsara. *Reriva*—mover, starter. *Prishtam*—top, peak. *Vajini* —in the sun. *Dravinam*—wealth. *Savarchasam*—resplendent, effulgent, luminous. *Sumedha Asmi*—I am endowed with great wisdom. *Amritokshitah*—immortal, undecaying. It may also mean 'he is sprinkled with nectar, or soaked with Amrita or the waters of immortality'. *Veda-anuvachana*—Veda repetition, the interpretation of the Vedas; the teaching of the supreme knowledge. The whole paragraph is a preparatory invocation for the study of the Vedas. It should be recited before the daily reading of the Veda for the object of obtaining knowledge.

This world is compared to a tree (vide Bhagavad Gita XV-1, Katha Up. VI-4). The tree referred to is Asvattha which means 'that which is not to last till tomorrow'.

The world which we live in, is impermanent and illusory. This world is compared to a tree, because it is perishable like a tree. It can be cut, from its very root, by the axe of knowledge of the Self. Trisanku, a sage who attained Self-realisation, says that he has destroyed the world by the knowledge of the Atman. It may mean also, 'I am the mover of the tree of Samsara, being the soul within.'

The glory of a sage is indescribable. It is of the highest kind. Even gods give offering to him and obey his commands. That is the reason Trisanku says: 'My fame is like the mountain's peak'.

"I am the very immortal one who is said to abide in the sun. I am as pure as the immortal abiding in the sun." This refers to the Savitri Purusha, the manifestation of Brahman in the sun.

The knowledge of Brahman dawns by itself in one who performs the obligatory duties, in accordance with the injunctions of the Srutis and Smritis, who is free from attachment, desire and egoism, and who is longing for the final emancipation. Knowledge arises in him, whose mind has been purified by Svadhyaya, recitation of the sacred texts.

Knowledge of Brahman is Savarchasam. It is luminous as it illumines Brahman. Just as a lamp reveals the existence of an object, so also the light of knowledge of the Self reveals Brahman. It is wealth because it is the cause of the bliss of

salvation, as wealth is the cause of worldly pleasures. Just as wealth removes the worldly wants and miseries to some extent, so also the knowledge of Brahman removes all miseries of life totally.

Knowledge of Brahman is inexhaustible, divine wealth. Divine wealth is lustrous, i.e., vigorous, because of its power to destroy Samsara or ignorance.

Brahman is the supreme purifier, because He frees the thirsting aspirant from Samsara, or the wheel of births and deaths. When the aspirant is purified, he becomes the pure Brahman.

The Rishi Trisanku had seen in his divine vision, this Mantra which describes his spiritual experiences. The recitation of this Mantra leads to purity and spiritual progress. He who yearns for the final emancipation, should daily repeat this Mantra with faith and devotion.

“May I possess the inexhaustible wealth of Brahma Jnana. May I be endowed with the vigorous and clear intellectual power of clearly comprehending the teachings of the scriptures which expound Brahma Jnana. May I then be soaked with the ambrosia of Brahmic bliss, the sacred waters of immortality.”

According to the Rishi Trisanku, the recitation of this Mantra constitutes the austerity of Vedic recitation, known as Brahma Yajna. The aspirant should recite this daily with faith and devotion.

Thus ends the Tenth Anuvaka

### ELEVENTH ANUVAKA

#### (THE EXHORTATION)

Now comes the final instruction, which the students in those days received when they completed their study under the preceptor. This corresponds to the convocational address of modern times, delivered at the Universities to students who are given their degrees at the end of their studies.

वेदमनूच्याचार्योऽन्तेवासिनमनुशास्ति । सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर ।  
स्वाध्यायान्मा प्रमदः । आचार्याय प्रियं धनमाहृत्य प्रजातन्तुं मा

व्यवच्छेत्सीः । सत्यान्न प्रमदितव्यम् । धर्मान्न प्रमदितव्यम् । कुशलान्न प्रमदितव्यम् । भूत्यै न प्रमदितव्यम् । स्वाध्यायप्रवचनाभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यम् ॥१॥

1. Having taught the Vedas, the preceptor exhorts the disciple: Speak the truth. Do your duty. Never swerve from the study of the Veda. Do not cut off the thread of the offspring, after giving the preceptor the fee he desires. Never swerve away from Truth. Never swerve from duty. Never neglect your welfare. Never neglect your prosperity. Never neglect the study and the teaching of the Vedas.

### Notes and Commentary

*Antevasinam*—the disciple. *Satyam vada*—speak the truth. Truthfulness consists in giving utterance to a thing as it is actually perceived, without hypocrisy, or a motive to do injury. One should never tell a lie, however small, even in forgetfulness. *Dharmam chara*—do your duty. Duty, i.e., the obligatory duties as enjoined in the Srutis and Smritis. It consists of the observance of Agnihotra and other works. Jaimini has defined Dharma thus: 'Dharma is the thing taught in the word of command (Veda)'. Dharma means Agnihotra and other sacrificial rites enjoined in the extant Srutis. All duties enjoined in the Srutis and the Smritis should be observed. *Priyam dhanam*—the desired wealth. Having given the Guru Dakshina, the tutor's fee in the shape of gifts, such as cows, gold, cloth, etc., which the preceptor desires at the close of the discipleship, in accordance with the law. *Prajatantum*—the thread of progeny. *Ma vyavacchetsih*—do not cut off the line or stop the continuation of progeny. Marry a worthy wife and do not fail to produce children. Marriage is not for sexual enjoyment. It is a sacred duty towards the forefathers and the society. The family-line is kept up by marriage. The departed souls (Pitris) get their offerings uninterruptedly. Further, the strength of the society is maintained. Even if children are not born, every effort must be made to produce children, by the performance of sacrifice for issue (Putrakameshti). That student who is endowed with spiritual Samskaras, and who is free from worldly Vasanas, can become a Sannyasin.

*Satyanna pramaditavyam*—never swerve away from truth. *Dharmanna pramaditavyam*—never swerve from duty. *Kusalanna pramaditavyam*—never neglect your welfare; swerve not from any act for the protection of yourself. Do not deviate from doing things with a good motive and intention. *Bhutyai na pramaditavyam*—never neglect your prosperity and physical means, such as Yajna, etc. It is not possible to perform works which are conducive to Moksha, without welfare and wealth.

The performance of duties enjoined by the Srutis and the Smritis is compulsory. Heart is purified by doing the obligatory duties. He who has a pure heart soon obtains knowledge of Brahman. The Smriti says: "One destroys sin by austerity and attains immortality by knowledge. Desire to know Brahman by austerity". Therefore, the duties that are enjoined in the Sastras ought to be performed for attaining purity of heart and knowledge. The performance of obligatory duties is, by itself, a step towards the final emancipation as it creates a taste for knowledge. Brahma Jnana dawns quite easily in one whose heart has been purified by the performance of prescribed duties.

The performance of the prescribed duties is conducive to the dawn of knowledge, by annihilating the past accumulated sins. They should be performed till the knowledge of the Atman is attained. After one attains wisdom, no purpose is served by duties or works.

The Srutis say: "He finds the Fearless as the mainstay. In him verily, in truth, burns not the thought, why have I not done righteousness? He obtains security and strength". There is this verse in Isavasya Upanishad to the same effect: "Crossing death by Avidya (Karma), he attains immortality by knowledge".

He who has studied the Vedas under a preceptor should ascertain from his Guru his duties before he returns to his home. The Smriti also says: "Knowing, begin to perform duties".

Never swerve away from truth. Never swerve from duty. One may think that after doing the works once, they may be abandoned. To prevent this supposition, the Sruti has repeated the instructions. The repetition is meant to emphasise on the

fact that these duties should be performed and practised throughout life (if one does not get knowledge), and not for a certain period only.

Speaking truth stands also for other virtues mentioned along with it, such as harmlessness (Ahimsa), abstaining from theft (Asteya), celibacy (Brahmacharya) and non-covetousness (Aparigraha). What has been learnt should be taught to others. This is also an important duty.

### (PERSONS WORTHY OF WORSHIP)

देवपितृकार्याभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यम् । मातृदेवो भव । पितृदेवो भव ।  
 आचार्यदेवो भव । अतिथिदेवो भव । यान्यनवद्यानि कर्माणि । तानि  
 सेवितव्यानि । नो इतराणि । यान्यस्माकं सुचरितानि । तानि  
 त्वयोपास्यानि । नो इतराणि ॥२॥

2. Never swerve from the duties to the gods and to the manes. May the mother be thy God. May the father be thy God. May the preceptor be thy God. May the guest be thy God. Let only those actions that are free from blemishes be done, and not others. Only those that are good acts to us should be performed by thee and not other acts.

### Notes and Commentary

Duty to the gods, such as Agnihotra, Vinayaka-vrata, Ananta Vrata, etc., and to the manes, such as Sraaddha (annual ceremony) and Tarpana, ought to be performed.

Worship your father, mother, teacher and guests as veritable gods, without regarding them as mere men. Pay them due reverence. Serve them with great respect.

You should do such acts as are uncensurable and sanctioned by Sishtachara, the conduct of the righteous, but not those actions which, though practised by the righteous, are open to blame.

Engage yourself in the performance of good actions, which the teachers we honour practise, and which are not contrary to the teaching of the Vedas, and not others which are contrary to

the teaching of the Vedas, though they are practised by the teachers.

ये के चास्मच्छ्रेयांसो ब्राह्मणाः । तेषां त्वयाऽसनेन प्रश्वसितव्यम् ॥३॥

3. You should remove the fatigue of Brahmanas, who are superior to us, by serving them with seats, etc.

#### Notes and Commentary

When split as *Tvayasane na prasvasitavyam*, the text means 'Whatever Brahmanas are better than ourselves, in their sitting, it will not do for thee to breathe'. This is another interpretation for this.

When learned Brahmanas, who are superior by age and qualities, who are your teachers, are seated in an assembly for discussion, do not breathe even a word. Do not say anything. Only listen to their valuable instructions. Only grasp the essence of their discourse. Do not oppose them. Do not enter into discussion with them in a tone of familiarity, thinking that you are also very learned. Do not talk before them.

श्रद्धया देयम् । अश्रद्धयाऽदेयम् । श्रिया देयम् । हिया देयम् । भिया देयम् । संविदा देयम् । अथ यदि ते कर्म विचिकित्सा वा वृत्तविचिकित्सा वा स्यात् ॥३॥

ये तत्र ब्राह्मणाः संमर्शिनः । युक्ता आयुक्ताः । अलूक्षा धर्मकामाः स्युः । यथा ते तत्र वर्तेन् । तथा तत्र वर्तेथाः । अथाभ्याख्यातेषु । ये तत्र ब्राह्मणाः संमर्शिनः । युक्ता आयुक्ताः । अलूक्षा धर्मकामाः स्युः । यथा ते तेषु वर्तेन् । तथा तेषु वर्तेथाः । एष आदेशः । एष उपदेशः । एषा वेदोपनिषत् । एतदनुशासनम् । एवमुपासितव्यम् । एवमुचैतदुपास्यम् ॥४, ५॥

॥ इत्येकादशोऽनुवाकः ॥

4 & 5. Gift should be given with faith, it should never be given without faith, it should be given in plenty, with modesty, with sympathy.

Now if there should arise in thee any doubt as regards any action or conduct, thou shouldst act in those matters as do those Brahmanas there, who are thoughtful, religious, not set on by others, not cruel, devoted to Dharma.

Now as regards persons accused of sin, do thou deal with them as do the Brahmanas there, who are thoughtful, religious, not set on by others, not cruel, devoted to Dharma.

This is the injunction. This is the teaching. This is the secret of the Vedas. This is the (God's word of) command. This should be observed. Thus is this to be meditated upon.

### Notes and Commentary

#### I

*Sriya deyam*—to be given in a cheerful mood, to be given in abundance. Different commentators have explained the word Sriya differently. Some have taken it to mean 'with discrimination', i.e., gifts should be given with proper discrimination. Suresvaracharya has explained it as 'gifts should be made according to one's means', because that is the Sattvic gift. A wealthy man should give large gifts. If he gives small gifts, it will bring great shame on him. *Hriya deyam*—(gift) to be given with modesty, that is unostentatiously. *Dharma kamah*—who work only for Dharma and not for any other gain, who are desirous to perform their duty; lovers of virtue. *Vedopanishad*—the secret of the Vedas, the essence of the injunctions of the Vedas. *Upasitavyam*—should be observed.

Whenever you come across a learned and wise Brahmana, serve him by offering seat, Padya, Arghya, good food, etc.

When you give any gift or wealth to a Brahmana, give it with reverence and faith. What is given with irreverence is of no use in either world. He does not reap the fruit of a gift, when it is offered with irreverence. If you have anything to give, give it with full heart, faith and reverence.

Any action performed with faith, purifies the heart quickly and strengthens the religious consciousness.

'This should be observed. This should be observed'. The repetition is to create special regard for them. No one should fail to observe them.

The instruction given is Adesa or Vedic injunction. Just as a king commands his servants to do a work, so also a Vedic injunction commands the devotee to observe the above instructions.

How to decide matters of doubt? Here is Suresvara-charya's comment.

"Deeds are of two classes, those which are enjoined in the Sruti, such as the Agnihotra, and those which are enjoined in the Smriti, such as the Sandhyavandana, or worship of the Divine Being at the main points of time in the day. To take an example from the works enjoined in the Sruti, in one place the Sruti says, 'The offering of oblation should be made when the sun has risen', and elsewhere it says, 'The offering of oblation should be made when the sun has not yet risen'. This may give room to a doubt. Again, to take an example of the works enjoined in the Smriti: A doubt may arise as to whether the Sandhya Devata—the form in which the Divine Being should be worshipped at the main points of time in the day—is of the male or female sex, the scriptures speaking of the Devata in either way. To take an example of a custom in worldly affairs handed down in the family: A doubt arises as to the propriety of marrying a maternal uncle's daughter, or of eating animal food, inasmuch as contradictory views prevail in these matters. In such matters of doubt as these, thou shalt act in the way in which those Brahmanas would act, who live in the same country, age, and tribe in which thou livest at the time, who, being free from attachment, aversion, anxiety and other evil tendencies of mind, are competent to decide as to the real meaning of the scriptures; who are themselves engaged in the observance of the constant and incidental duties, intent on their due performance; who are free from anger, free from bigotry; and who work only for virtue (Dharma), not for gain and honour".

## II

The relative merits of Vidya (knowledge) and Karma are now discussed. Does the highest good result purely from Karma, or from knowledge and Karma combined, or from knowledge aided by works, or from knowledge alone?

It may be argued that it results from Karma alone, because he alone is qualified for works, who possesses a knowledge of the Vedas. The Smritis say: 'The whole Veda with the secret should be learnt by the twice-born'. This knowledge includes a knowledge of the Atman, as taught in the Upanishads. The texts which say, 'Knowing thus, one sacrifices', show that only a man of knowledge is qualified for works of any kind. It is also stated, 'Knowledge first, then action'. Some think that the end of the whole Vedas is the performance of Karma. If the highest good cannot be attained by works, then the Veda is of no use. The highest good, therefore, accrues from works alone.

This position is untenable. It is indeed admitted that Moksha is eternal. The results of Karma are transient or temporary. Transitory bliss is not desirable as an end. If the highest good accrues from works, then it would be temporary. Therefore, works cannot produce liberation. They cannot give eternal bliss.

There is a difference between the knowledge which is a condition precedent to the performance of Karma, and the knowledge acquired by meditation. Knowledge through hearing is quite sufficient for the performance of Karma. The knowledge of the processes of meditation is not necessary. The Srutis say 'Hear' and subsequently add, 'reflect and meditate'. The end reached by reflection and meditation is distinct from that which is obtained through hearing.

It may be argued that Moksha, emancipation, may be the result of Karma, aided by Vidya (Jnana or Upasana). It is possible that works, when aided by Vidya, acquire a power to generate a new effect. They may be able to produce results which cannot be produced by Karma alone, just as poison, curd, etc., though in themselves liable to cause death and fever, acquire, in combination with a Mantra and sugar, the power to produce quite new effects, respectively. So, Moksha may be produced by works aided by knowledge.

This is not tenable. 'What is produced cannot be eternal', applies to this view also. Whatever has a beginning, must have an end. To this, it may be replied that the result produced by the texts may be permanent. No; the Sruti is a revelation. Sruti reveals a thing as it is. It declares an existing thing. It cannot

create anything that was not. Not even a hundred Srutis can produce anything which can last forever. What has a beginning, cannot be without an end. The eternal cannot be produced. What is produced is certainly perishable. Thus, the argument that the combination of Karma and knowledge can produce emancipation, is refuted.

It may be argued that knowledge and Karma do both remove the obstacles on the way to Moksha, the final emancipation. No, we see that works produce quite a different effect. The fruits of Karma are Utpatti (production of a new thing), Vikara (transformation), Samskara (consecration), and Apti (fulfilment of desire); but Moksha is different from any of these effects or results.

Moksha is not a thing to be reached. The goal, i.e., emancipation (Brahman) is everywhere. It does not exist separately from those who travel up to it. It is not a thing different from the pilgrim who treads on the spiritual path. Brahman is the cause of Akasa. He is the Creator or cause for everything. Therefore He is Omnipresent. All conscious souls are identical with Brahman. Therefore, Moksha is not a thing to be reached or attained.

A place or town to be reached must be something distinct from the traveller. One cannot be said to reach a place not distinct from himself. What is to be reached, must be a thing removed in space from the traveller. That there is nothing but Brahman, that the individual soul is not distinct from the goal, Brahman, is taught in hundreds of passages in the Srutis and Smritis, such as the following: 'Having created the universe, He entered it' (Taitt. Up. 2-vi), 'And do thou also know Me as Kshetrajna in all Kshetras (bodies)', or in other words, 'know the individual soul to be no other than Myself' (Gita XIII-2).

An objector may say: "This contention is opposed to the Sruti, which speaks of the path, and the glory of the liberated soul. It conflicts with the Srutis which speak of Brahman to be reached, and of the power of the liberated soul to assume more than one form, to go to the Pitriloka if he likes, to have women and carriages as he wishes."

These passages refer to Karya Brahman, Brahman manifested in the evolved universe. It is only in this manifested

Brahman, we may meet women, but not in the Karana Brahman, the unmanifested Brahman, which is one and indivisible. Srutis say: 'Existence alone, my dear, this at first was, one alone without a second' (Chh. Up. VI-2-i), 'Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is Infinite' (Ibid, VII-24-i), 'When the Self only is all this, how could he see another?' (Bri. Up. IV-5-xv).

Conjunction of knowledge and works is impossible. Knowledge and Karma cannot co-exist because of their mutual opposition. Knowledge, which is concerned with the Reality wherein object, subject or agent are altogether absent, must be opposed to Karma, which can only be brought by agent, object, etc. It is not possible to regard the same thing as being in truth, conditioned and unconditioned at the same time. One of the two views must necessarily be false. If one of them is false, it is the dualistic view set up by the innate ignorance, because the Srutis say: 'For when there is, as it were, duality, then one sees the other' (Bri. Up. II-4-xiv), 'He who sees any difference here, goes from death to death' (Katha Up. II-10), 'This eternal Being that can never be proved, is to be perceived as one only' (Bri. Up. IV-4-xx), 'One alone without a second' (Chh. Up. VI-2-i), 'Brahman alone is all this', 'This Self alone is all this' (Chh. Up. VII-25-ii).

No work is possible, where there is no distinction of object, subject, agent, etc. There are thousands of passages in the Srutis, which speak that the doctrine of duality is not consistent with knowledge of the Self, that there is no consciousness of distinction in right knowledge, and hence, the mutual opposition between knowledge and Karma, and the impossibility of their combination or co-existence. Therefore, the contention that emancipation is the result of knowledge and Karma combined, does not stand to reason.

The objector says that this conclusion certainly conflicts with the Srutis. Works are enjoined by the Srutis. The Vedic texts are all authoritative. To this, we reply that desire for external objects arises in him only, who has no knowledge of the Self. He alone who has desires does Karmas. To reap the fruits of those works, he will have to take a body. To one who has knowledge of Self, there can be no desire. As the Atman is not

different from one's own Self, the Atman cannot be an object of desire. To be established in one's own true Self is Moksha. Therefore, there is opposition or antagonism between knowledge and works, and because of their mutual opposition, knowledge does not stand in need of works, to bring about Moksha.

The obligatory works become a cause of knowledge, as they remove the accumulated sins of the past which lie as obstacles in the way. Therefore, the works are treated in this section. Hence, no contradiction of the Srutis enjoining works.

We, therefore, conclude that the highest good or emancipation accrues from knowledge only.

Thus ends the Eleventh Anuvaka

### TWELFTH ANUVAKA

शं नो मित्रः शं वरुणः । शं नो भवत्वर्यमा । शं न इन्द्रो बृहस्पतिः । शं नो विष्णुरुरुक्रमः । नमो ब्रह्मणे । नमस्ते वायो । त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि । त्वामेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मावादिष्म् । ऋतमवादिष्म् । सत्यमवादिष्म् । तन्मामावीत् । तद्वक्तारमावीत् । आवीन्माम् । आवीद्वक्तारम् ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

॥ इति द्वादशोऽनुवाकः ॥

May the Sun (Mitra) be good to us! May the Varuna be good to us! May Aryama be good to us! May Indra and Brihaspati be good to us! May the all-pervading Vishnu be good to us! Prostrations to the Brahman! Prostrations to Thee, O Vayu! Thou indeed art the visible Brahman! Thee indeed have I declared Brahman visible! Thee I have declared the Just! Thee I have declared the True! That has protected me. That has protected the teacher! Om Peace, Peace, Peace!

### Notes and Commentary

In the beginning of the first Anuvaka of the Siksha Valli, the peace-chant was chanted to invoke the blessings of the gods,

for the happy termination of the student-life, and for obviating the impediments to the acquisition of knowledge. Here again, the peace-chant is repeated to invoke the blessings of the gods for the attainment of Self-realisation.

In the eleventh lesson, the preceptor's exhortation to the pupil has been given. It has been taught also that the Upasana and works are auxiliaries or aids to the attainment of knowledge of Brahman. According to Sri Sankaracharya, this lesson or Anuvaka should go along with the Brahmananda Valli.

The peace-chant that is given in the first Anuvaka is repeated here, but there is slight difference. This is identical with the first Anuvaka, except for certain changes of tense, which are appropriate here in the conclusion. In the first Anuvaka, the words 'I shall proclaim or declare Brahman' are used, because Brahman has not been taught already. Also the words, 'May He protect me' are used. But here, the words 'I have declared Brahman', 'That has protected me', are used, because Brahman has already been spoken of, and all obstacles to the study and the acquisition of knowledge have been removed through the grace of the gods. The student expresses here his sense of gratitude to Indra, Varuna and other gods. Even when the works have been performed, one may not attain the fruits on account of the sin of ingratitude. The student remembers the good done by the gods, by way of having removed all obstacles that arise from within and without the body, and so expresses his sense of gratitude to the gods to obviate the sin of ingratitude.

Here ends the Twelfth Anuvaka

Thus ends the Siksha Valli of the Taittiriya Upanishad

ॐ

II

**BRAHMANANDA VALLI**

ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै । तेजस्वि  
नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om! May He protect us both (teacher and pupil). May He cause us both to enjoy the bliss of Mukti. May we both exert to find out the true meaning of the scriptures. May our studies be fruitful. May we never quarrel with each other.

Om Peace, Peace, Peace!

**Notes and Commentary**

This is a prayer for mutual good feeling between the preceptor and the disciple. The peace-chant is read here with a view to remove all ill-feeling which may have arisen from an unworthy act, or any fault committed from carelessness by the pupil or preceptor in the course of acquiring knowledge. The knowledge imparted by the preceptor cannot bear fruit unless his mind is pacified, for the preceptor is not different from Isvara. This peace-chant serves also to remove obstacles to the acquisition of knowledge.

*Sahaviryam karavavahai*—may we together acquire the capacity for knowledge. May we both acquire the strength which produces knowledge, etc. May we both attain efficiency for wisdom. May we both exert to find out the true meaning of the scriptures. May we both work together with great energy. May all the texts which we have been studying prove effective by throwing light on the teachings therein contained

*Tejasvinavadhitamastu*—may our study be brilliant. May our study prove vigorous and effective. Let our learning be splendid. May the study enable us to understand what is taught. May the study make us fit to understand the import of what we study.

May Brahman so protect us both at the time of instruction, that the preceptor may instruct me with full energy, and I may grasp his teaching fully, without any doubt, so that my Avidya will be completely dispelled, and my preceptor may be delighted to know that my ignorance has vanished. To achieve this end, may we both so work together harmoniously and vigorously, as to instil into the knowledge a power to cause the desired result. May we not entertain mutual hatred. The disciple may be annoyed that the master has not properly explained, and the master may be displeased with the disciple for lack of sincere faith and devotion. May there be no occasion for such kind of displeasure. This is the drift of this peace-chant.

### FIRST ANUVAKA

ॐ ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम् । तदेषाऽभ्युक्ता । सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म ।  
 यो वेद निहितं गुहायां परमे व्योमन् । सोऽश्नुते सर्वान् कामान् सह ।  
 ब्रह्मणा विपश्चित्तेति । तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः संभूतः ।  
 आकाशाद्वायुः । वायोरग्निः । अग्नेरापः । अद्व्यः पृथिवी । पृथिव्या  
 ओषधयः । ओषधीभ्योऽन्नम् । अन्नात्पुरुषः । स वा एष  
 पुरुषोऽन्नरसमयः । तस्येदमेव शिरः । अयं दक्षिणः पक्षः । अयमुत्तरः  
 पक्षः । अयमात्मा । इदं पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ।

॥ इति प्रथमोऽनुवाकः ॥

OM. The knower of Brahman attains the Supreme (the Highest). In reference to that is the following hymn recited: "Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and Infinity. He who knows It as existing, hidden in the heart, the transcendent Akasa (Parama Akasa), realises all these desires along with the Omniscient Brahman".

So, from this Atman is Akasa (ether) born; from Akasa, the air (Vayu); from the air, fire; from fire, water; from water, earth; from earth, the herbs (plants, vegetables); from herbs, food; from food, man. Thus man is made of the essence of food. This is his head. This is the right hand (wing). This is the left hand

(wing) This is his body (trunk). This is the tail and support. About this also is the following verse.

### Notes and Commentary

*Brahmavit*—the knower of Brahman; he who knows, or has realised intuitively, Brahman. *Satyam jnanam anantam brahma*—Brahman is Truth (Existence), Knowledge (consciousness) and Infinity. *Vyomam*—Akasa. *Annarasamaya*—full of the essence of food. *Paksha*—side, arm, wing. *Dakshina paksha*—right hand or right wing. *Uttara paksha*—left hand or left wing. *Puccham*—the tail.

Meditation, the subject of the Samhita, which is not incompatible with Karma, i.e., which is not in opposition to works, was first taught in the first Valli. Then was taught the contemplation or knowledge of the conditioned Atman, through the Vyahritis, which results in the attainment of independent sovereignty (Svarajya). But these alone cannot bring about a total annihilation, or destruction of ignorance, which is the seed of Samsara, worldly existence.

Brahma Vidya, the science of the Self, is the specific theme of this section. The knowledge of the unconditioned Brahman only can completely destroy ignorance, which is the seed of all miseries. Therefore, the knowledge of the unconditioned, or higher transcendental Brahman, which can destroy the root of worldly existence (Samsara), is begun now in this second Valli.

*Om brahmavit apnoti param*—the knower of Brahman attains the Supreme (the Highest). The knower of Brahman reaches the Highest. This is a brief statement of the meaning of the whole Valli. This Valli contains the essence of the whole Upanishad. Emancipation by knowledge of Brahman is the essential teaching of the whole Upanishad. The Sruti speaks of the bearing and the purpose of the Brahma Vidya to begin with, because one will listen to the teaching, grasp it, hold it in the mind and attempt, in right earnest, to attain Self-realisation only if he knows the bearing and purpose of the Brahma Vidya.

Just as a mother induces her child to drink a medicinal mixture by saying that thereby he will have a very good complexion, so also the Sruti induces one, who is yet a child in the spiritual line, to strive for Self-realisation by stating the fruits

of knowledge. We can induce anyone to do an action only by stating the end to be attained. The Sruti begins with the words: 'The knower of Brahman attains the Supreme', in order to allure man to the proper course of action. The aspirant is attracted by the fruits mentioned in the Sruti. He starts hearing of Srutis, reflection and meditation, which are the processes of attaining knowledge.

Self-realisation is not mere understanding of Brahman through study of books on Vedanta and the Upanishads. It is not mere intellectual grasp of Brahman. It is direct cognition (Atma Sakshatkara) through constant and intense meditation. The purpose of this knowledge of Brahman is the destruction of ignorance, and consequently, the total cessation of Samsara, worldly existence.

Brahman is your own very Self, Soul. It cannot be an object of knowledge. It is always the witnessing subject. To know Brahman is to become identical with the absolute consciousness, through meditation and Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

The result of knowledge begins with hearing the Srutis (Sravana). The Srutis say: 'Atman ought to be heard, thought over and meditated upon'. There is none greater than Brahman. So Brahman is known as *Parama*, the Highest.

It will be said later on, 'The knower of Brahman fears nothing', 'He is not affected by virtue or vice'. From this, it is quite clear that there is total cessation of Samsara, or worldly existence, if one attains the knowledge of Brahman.

It may be argued that Brahman is present in all, He is omniscient and omnipresent, He is the Atman of all. So He is not one to be reached. We generally speak of one thing being reached by another thing, one limited object by another limited object. As Brahman is limitless, as He is the Atman, the Self of all, it is not proper to speak of His attainment as if He were limited and distinct from one's own Self. Attainment is always associated with duality, with limitations of time, space, etc. How can then attainment be predicated of Brahman, who is beyond all sorts of limitations?

There is no fault. There is no inconsistency herein. How? Because the attainment or non-attainment of Brahman

depends on perception or non-perception (as Brahman). The Jiva, the individual soul, is really one with Brahman. He is in essence identical with Brahman. But he identifies himself, on account of ignorance, with the physical (Annamaya) and other bodies, which are finite and external to the Atman, and which are formed of material elements and becomes engrossed in them.

Ten people, after crossing a river, wanted to see whether all of them were alive. But each of them, counted all the nine others except himself and found that one was missing, and all began to weep bitterly for the loss of one of them. At last, they were disillusioned by someone telling each of them that the reckoner himself was the tenth.

Just as the man fails to see, though near, the existence of himself which completes the required number, when his mind is engrossed in counting the persons external to himself, so also the Jiva on account of his ignorance, is quite oblivious of his being, in reality, one with Brahman. Thus, though Brahman is the Atman Itself, He is not reached or attained on account of ignorance. Therefore, it is right when the Srutis say that Brahman should be reached by one, who did not reach Him on account of his ignorance, when he was taught by the Srutis and the preceptor, and beholds the Brahman, the Atman of all, to be his own Atman or the Self; just as a man who, owing to ignorance, misses himself making up the required number, and who, when reminded by someone else, finds himself again by knowledge.

One does not attain Brahman who is the Self, the Atman of all, like the missing of the tenth man, because he is enveloped by Avidya, ignorance, and so he identifies himself with the five sheaths as his own Self. By the knowledge that 'I am the tenth', the tenth man is attained, through the annihilation of ignorance. So also, Brahman is attained by the destruction of Ajnana, ignorance or nescience.

The word *Brahman* derived from the root *Brhm*—to grow—denotes a great thing. The etymology of the word *Brahman* points to what is eternally pure, conscious, free, infinite, unchanging, self-luminous, all-pervading and so on.

This is clear from the definition, '*Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma*—Truth, Knowledge, Infinity is Brahman'.

*Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma*: Now, one will be inclined to ask what Brahman is. The Sruti describes the nature of Brahman. Satyam (Truth), Jnanam (Knowledge), Anantam (Infinity) are the attributive adjuncts (Viseshanartha) of Brahman, the substance (Viseshya). This sentence exhausts the definition of Brahman. This sentence is intended to serve as a definition of Brahman. Brahman is what is to be known. So It is Viseshya. Brahman forms the subject of discourse. When qualified by these three epithets or adjuncts Satyam, etc., Brahman is distinguished from all other substances. It is only when it is distinguished from others that it can be known, as a lotus is known in the world as blue, big and sweet-smelling.

Just as the epithets, 'blue', 'big' and 'sweet-smelling' serve to define a lotus, so also the epithets Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam, serve to define Brahman. When Brahman is defined by these epithets, Brahman is distinguished from all other substances, which do not possess these attributes of Brahman and which are unreal, insentient and finite. An object is said to be known only when it is known as distinguished from all other objects. A red lotus is said to be known only when known as distinguished from the blue lotus, and the lotuses of other colours. Even so, Brahman can be said to be known only when known as distinguished from all objects which are unreal, insentient and finite. Otherwise, you certainly cannot have a definite conception of Brahman.

Besides the blue, big, sweet-smelling lotus there are other kinds of lotuses, namely a red lotus, a small lotus, a slightly fragrant lotus. Therefore the words 'blue,' etc., serve to distinguish the lotus meant here from other lotuses. But, there are no other kinds of Brahman. Just as the sun we see is only one, so Brahman also is one alone. There is no other Brahman from which it can be distinguished, as the blue lotus is distinguished from other lotuses. Therefore the adjuncts Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam are of no use. This argument is not sound and tenable. Because the adjuncts are intended to define and not to qualify. The qualifying adjuncts serve to distinguish the qualified object from all others of the same

genus or species only. The defining adjuncts on the other hand, aim to distinguish the thing defined from all else, from the whole world. This sentence is intended to serve as a definition, as the sentence, 'Akasa is that which gives space'.

The words Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam are unconnected. Every word is synonymous with the defined (Brahman). Each of these adjuncts is independent of others. Therefore, each adjunct is directly connected with the word Brahman, as Satyam Brahman, Jnanam Brahman and Anantam Brahman.

What is Satyam? That whose form by which it is cognised, does not change is Satyam. When a thing never puts on a form different from that form in which it has been once proved to be, that thing is real. That whose form, by which it is determined, changes, is Anritam, false. Therefore, all changing form (Vikara) is unreal. Changeability is falsehood. The Sruti definitely says:

"All changing form (Vikara) is a name, a creation of speech; what is called clay is alone real, thus Existence (Sat) alone is real." (Chh. Up. VI-1-iv.) Thus in the words, 'Brahman is Satyam', the Sruti distinguishes Brahman from all changing forms.

From this, it may follow that Brahman is the cause. As it is the cause, it is also the agent, because it is the real substance. It is also destitute of intelligence like clay. The Sruti, therefore, says that Brahman is knowledge or consciousness, Jnanam Brahman. The word 'Jnana' means knowledge, or absolute consciousness. It is knowledge itself or knowledge absolute, but not 'that which knows' or 'having knowledge' or 'the act of knowing' or 'the object known', as the word is used as an adjunct of Brahman, along with Satyam (Truth) and Anantam (Infinite).

Brahman cannot be real and infinite, if He were the agent of the act of knowing. How can Brahman be real and infinite, when He is liable to changes as being the knower? That is Infinite which is not limited by anything else, which cannot be divided from anything else. If Brahman was the knower, He would be marked off from what is known, and from the act of knowing, from the knowledge and the knowable, and cannot therefore be Infinite, as the Sruti says, 'Where one sees

nothing else, and knows nothing else (but the Self), that is the Infinite (Bhuma, Brahman), but where one sees anything else, knows anything else, that is the finite' (Chh. Up. VII-24-i).

In the passage, 'where one knows nothing else', it is only the knowing of the non-self that is denied. The Sruti may mean that one knows one's own Self. This objection is not sound. The passage cannot convey the idea that one can know one's own Self. There can be no knowing of one's own Self, on account of the absence of duality in one's own Self. The sentence serves mainly as a definition of Bhuma, the Infinite. One sees an object only when it exists distinctly from him. Bhuma, the Infinite, is that where no object exists. As one's Self is not distinct from himself, he cannot be the knower. If he is the knowable, there can be no knower, because he is enjoined as the knowable. If it is said that the Self can both be the knower and the knowable, we say it cannot be, as it is indivisible, because as devoid of parts, the one Self cannot be both the knower and the knowable (known) simultaneously. Moreover, if the Atman be knowable like a pot, all instruction through the scriptures to know it is useless. Indeed, an instruction to know a well-known thing like a pot, is meaningless. Therefore, if Brahman be the knower, He cannot be Real and Infinite. If Brahman be the knower, He cannot be the Existence Absolute. Absolute existence alone is real. The Sruti says: 'This is real' (Chh. Up. VI-8-vii). Therefore, as the word Jnanam is used as an adjunct of Brahman, along with the words Satyam and Anantam, it means knowledge. The expression Jnanam Brahman serves to dispel the idea that Brahman is an agent or a cause, and also the notion that He is, like clay, an insentient or non-intelligent object.

As Brahman is defined as knowledge or consciousness, it may be thought that He is finite, as we find that all worldly knowledge is finite. To meet this objection, the Sruti says, "Brahman is Anantam, Infinite (endless or limitless)".

*Guha*—cavity or cave. *Guha* from the root *Guh*—to hide, to cover. The Buddhi, intellect, is the cave because in it are hidden the three categories of knowledge, the knowable and the knower, or because both the ends of life, enjoyment and liberation are therein hidden.

*Akasa (Vyomam)* is here interpreted to mean the *Avyakrita* (the undifferentiated). The material *Akasa* is low when it is compared with the *Avyakrita*. Therefore, *Avyakrita* is the highest *Akasa*. In the *Buddhi* is the highest *Akasa* known as the *Avyakrita*. The *Avyakrita* is the highest *Akasa* because of its nearness to *Akshara*, the Indestructible, Supreme Brahman. This is expressed in the following passage. Sage Yajnavalkya says, 'There O Gargi, in this Indestructible *Akshara*, the *Akasa* (*Avyakrita*) is woven like warp and woof' (Bri. Up. III-8-xi).

Brahman is called *Akasa* in several places in the *Srutis*, because It is subtle, formless, all-pervading, supportless and infinite like *Akasa*. Just as objects are contained in *Akasa*, so also the whole world exists in Brahman.

The aspirant hears the teaching of the *Sruti*, withdraws his mind from the external objects, enters into what dwells within the cavity (the *Guha*, intellect) and realises the *Atman* which is the only Reality.

Or, we may take *Guha* in opposition with *Akasa*, and construe as the cavity of the *Avyakrita-Akasa*. Then the cave is the *Avyakrita-Akasa* itself. In this cavity, *Avyakrita*, are hidden all the substances in the three times (past, present and future), because it is the cause and it is extremely subtle. Within this cave of *Avyakrita*, Brahman lies hidden. It is proper to understand that the *Akasa* within the heart is the highest *Akasa*, because that *Akasa* is intended as an aid to the meditation and realisation or immediate knowledge of Brahman. That the *Akasa* of the heart is the highest is well-known from the text. 'The *Akasa* without the *Purusha*, and the *Akasa* within the *Purusha*, is the *Akasa* within the heart'. In that *Akasa* within the heart is the intelligence in which Brahman is lodged or hidden. Brahman is clearly realised through the *Vritti*, functioning of the *Buddhi*. Brahman, which is everywhere, which is devoid of all conditions, and which is not distinct from anything else, cannot be related to any limited space or time.

What does he, who thus realises Brahman, attain? He enjoys all desires, i.e., realises all his desires, all desirable pleasures, without any exception. Does he enjoy them alternatively one after another—sons, heaven and the like?

The Sruti answers 'No'. He enjoys at the same moment, all the enjoyments in one single consciousness, which, like the sun's light, is eternal, and which is not distinct from the true nature of Brahman, and which we have described above as being Existence, Knowledge and Infinity.

This is the meaning of the words, 'together with Brahman, or along with the omniscient Brahman'. The knower, or the enlightened sage, becoming Brahman, enjoys, as Brahman himself, all pleasures at the same time, not like the man of the world, who enjoys pleasures one after another in the changeful bodily form, which is a mere reflection like the sun's image in water, who becomes a Samsarin, who depends for his pleasures on virtue (Dharma), and the eye and the other sense-organs. How then does he enjoy the pleasures? He enjoys all pleasures simultaneously, as he is identical in his true essential nature with the omniscient, omnipresent Brahman, the Atman of all. His pleasures do not depend on performance of duty, and the activity of the senses, eye, etc. He enjoys with Brahman, who is wise, who knows all. Wisdom is Omniscience. The 'wise' means omniscient. The particle *Iti*, thus added to the Mantra at the end, is intended to show that the Mantra ends there.

In the beginning of the Mantra, it has been said that Brahman is Existence, Knowledge, Infinity. How Brahman is Existence, Knowledge, Infinity is now explained. Infinity is threefold, viz., Infinity in space, in time and in substance. Akasa, for example, is infinite in space, for there is no limit to it in space. But Akasa is not infinite, either in respect of time or in respect of substance. Why? Because it is an effect. But Brahman is not thus, like Akasa limited in time, because it is no effect, for what forms an effect is alone limited by time. Brahman is not an effect. It has no cause. Therefore, it is unlimited in time. So too, in respect of substance. How Brahman is Infinite in respect of substance? It is inseparable from all. It is not different from anything else. It is the existence of a thing, different from another, that limits this latter thing. That thing, which is separate from another, forms the limit of that other thing. The thing which causes the termination of the idea of another thing, forms the limit of that other thing. Where

there is the cognisance of a different thing, there the mind turns away from that thing. When the mind turns away from a thing, there is the end of that thing. As the cognisance of a cow turns away from a horse, the clan 'cow' is limited by the clan 'horse'. So it has an end. The idea of the 'cow' terminates at the 'horse', and because the idea of cow thus terminates at the horse, the cow is limited, finite. This end, or limit, is seen among objects which are separate from one another. But Brahman has no such distinction. Therefore, Brahman is Infinity even in substance.

Here, one may ask, 'How then is Brahman not different from anything else?' We answer: because He is the cause of all things. For, Brahman indeed is the cause of all things—time, space (Akasa), etc. But it cannot be said that because there is an effect, Brahman—the cause, is not infinite in substance; for, the thing spoken of as effect is unreal, because, really there is no effect distinct from the cause, so as to turn away the mind from the cause.

The Sruti says: "All change is mere word and is but a name. That it is clay is the only truth. 'Sat' is the only Truth". Therefore, as the cause of Akasa, Brahman is Infinite in space. All-pervading thing is never found to rise from that which is not all-pervading. Hence Brahman is unlimited in space. Similarly, Brahman is Infinite in time, because it is not the effect of a cause. Brahman is Infinite in substance also, because there is nothing separate or distinct from it. Hence, it is Absolute Reality.

By the word *Tasmat*, Brahman, which was concisely defined in the text, is referred to. The term 'from this' means 'from it' as defined by the Mantra. Brahman, who has been first referred to in the aphoristic passage, is next defined in the words, 'Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma'. Brahman is the Atman. The Sruti says, 'That is the Atman of all. That is Existence. That is Atman' (Chh. Up. VI-8-vii). From that Brahman, above explained, who is the Atman, was born Akasa.

Akasa is that thing which has sound as its attribute, and affords space for all objects which have a form. From that Akasa, comes into being Vayu, the air, with two properties, the property of touch which is its own, and the property of sound

belonging to Akasa, its cause. From Vayu, the air, was born fire, having three attributes, composed of the two preceding attributes, touch and sound, and the attribute 'colour or form', which is its own. From fire came water, with the four attributes of taste, which is its own, and the three preceding attributes, sound, touch and form. From water came earth, with the attribute of smell its own, and the preceding four attributes, sound, touch, form and taste. Herbs, plants, vegetables came from earth; food from herbs; and Purusha with limbs, head, trunk, etc., from food, which has assumed the form of semen. Purusha, or this human being, whom we perceive is a Vikara, product of the essence of food. The semen is the essence of all parts of the body. It is constituted of the energy of all limbs of the body, and so it has the human shape. It bears the procreator's thought-impress of human form. He, who is born from this seed or semen, has also the form of a Purusha (human being), for we find that all creatures that are born of whatever class of beings, are inevitably of the same form as the parents.

All creatures are, without exception, modifications of food and are descended from Brahman. Why then is man alone taken here? Because of his pre-eminence. Wherein does his pre-eminence lie? Man alone, indeed, is qualified or entitled to perform Karma and acquire knowledge. He alone is competent to follow the scriptural teachings. He alone seeks God. The Sruti says: "In man, the Self, or the Atman is more manifested. He is endowed with intelligence, reason, judgment and discrimination. He wishes to attain eternal bliss and immortality by proper means. He speaks what is known He knows". He thinks, reasons, reflects and meditates. He knows what is good, what is evil, what is right and what is wrong. Man only wishes to attain the innermost Brahman by knowledge. It is man whom the Sruti seeks to unite with Brahman, through knowledge. But the animals are not endowed with such qualities. They only know eating and drinking. They cannot think, reflect and meditate. The physical body has been described by the Sruti, only with a view to enable the aspirant to comprehend the real nature of Brahman, just as the end of the branch of a tree is first shown in order to point out the star hidden behind the branch of a tree. The Sruti tries to lead the

aspirant within, to one Self within another, till the real Atman is reached. By meditating upon the Kosas one after another, he realises their true nature. Ultimately, he becomes competent to meditate steadily on the Atman. The Sruti tries to lead the aspirant from the grossest aspect, i.e., the body, to the subtler and subtler aspects until he can grasp the subtlest—the innermost Atman.

The Sruti now proceeds to represent, for the sake of contemplation, the five parts of the Annamaya Kosa, in the form of a bird, in the case of a sacrificial fire. "The sacrificial fire arranged in the form of a hawk, a heron, or some other bird, has a head, two wings, a trunk and a tail. So also here, every Kosa is represented to be made up of five parts" (Suresvaracharya).

Of him there is the head. Of this Purusha, who is constituted of the essence of food, there is the head. In the case of the Pranamaya Kosa and the like, what is not actually the head, is represented as the head, and to guard against the idea that the same may be the case here, i.e., with the Annamaya, the Sruti emphasises, 'This alone is the head'. The same is true in respect of the word 'side.' This is the right hand—the southern side of the man facing east. This is the left hand, the northern side. This is the middle-portion or central part of the body, the trunk—the Atman of the limbs. The Sruti says, 'The central one or the middle of the limbs is Atman'.

This, the part of the body below the navel, the tail as it were, because, like the tail of a cow, it hangs down, is the support, i.e., that by which man stands. Pratishtha is that by which man is supported (the lower half).

Similarly, the Pranamaya Kosa, or the vital sheath, made of Prana, etc., ought to be figuratively understood. The Pranamaya and other three Kosas are not made up of a head, etc. It is better to imagine that these Kosas also are fashioned after the mould of the physical body, just as the molten metal poured into a mould takes the form of that mould. This will help the meditation and discrimination of the four Kosas.

Here ends the First Anuvaka of the Brahmananda Valli

## SECOND ANUVAKA

अन्नाद्वै प्रजाः प्रजायन्ते । याः काश्च पृथिवीं श्रिताः । अथो अन्नेनैव जीवन्ति । अथैनदपि यन्त्यन्ततः । अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम् । तस्मात्सर्वोषधमुच्यते । सर्वं वै तेऽन्नमाप्नुवन्ति । येऽन्नं ब्रह्मोपासते । अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम् । तस्मात्सर्वोषधमुच्यते । अन्नाद्दूतानि जायन्ते । जातान्यन्नेन वर्धन्ते । अद्यतेऽति च भूतानि । तस्मादन्नं तदुच्यत इति । तस्माद्वा एतस्मादन्नरसमयात् । अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा प्राणमयः । तेनैष पूर्णः । स वा एष पुरुषविध एव । तस्य पुरुषविधताम् । अन्वयं पुरुषविधः । तस्य प्राण एव शिरः । व्यानो दक्षिणः पक्षः । अपान उत्तरः पक्षः । आकाश आत्मा । पृथिवी पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ।

॥ इति द्वितीयोऽनुवाकः ॥

All beings, that exist on earth, are born of food; then they live by food, then again to the food, they go at the end. So verily food is the eldest of all creatures. Therefore, it is called the medicament of all. All those who worship food as Brahman, obtain all food. Food is indeed the eldest of all creatures. Therefore, it is called the medicine for all. From food, all beings are born, having been born, they grow by food. Food is eaten by the beings and it also eats them. Therefore, it is called food (Anna).

Other than that (soul) made of the essence of food, there is another self within, formed of Prana. By that this is filled. This (Pranamaya) is exactly of the form of man (Purusha). Its human form is according to the human form of the former. Of that, Prana is the head, Vyana its right wing (side), Apana is the left wing (side), the Akasa is the trunk (body), the earth is the tail, the support. About it also there is the following verse.

## Notes and Commentary

*Prajah*—creatures. *Prajayante*—are born. *Jivanti*—live. *Jyeshtam*—the eldest. *Sarvaushadham*—the medicine for all kinds of diseases, medicament for all. *Jayante*—are produced.

*Jatani*—being born. *Vardhante*—grow. *Adyate*—is eaten. *Atti*—eats. *Annarasamayat*—by its being full of food; one constituted of the essence of food. *Purusha vidhah*—of the form of man. *Purushavidhatam*—human form. *Dakshina paksha*—right wing (right hand). *Uttara paksha*—left wing (left hand). *Puccham*—the tail. *Pratishtita*—the seat (the feet, the basis). *Annat*—from food which has been converted into *Rasa* (chyle), an important fluid of the body, are born all creatures moving and unmoving (Sthavara and Jangama). Whatever creatures dwell on earth, all of them are born of food and food alone.

Here, the reference to the Annamaya Kosa, or the gross body, is continued. Annam literally means food. It signifies the gross manifestation of matter.

After they are born they live and grow by food alone. Then again at the end, when their life has come to an end, they go to food, i.e., they are dissolved or absorbed in food. Why? Because food is, of all living beings, the eldest, the first born. It is the cause or source of other beings made of food. It is the source for other Kosas. The Pranamaya and other Kosas are not made up of Anna, the physical food, but they grow by the food eaten by men.

Therefore, all beings are born of food, live by food and are absorbed in food, at the end. As this is the nature of food, it is therefore, called the medicament for all which can cool the body, and allay the scorching hunger of all beings. After death, after the Prana departs from the body (Annamaya Kosa), the physical sheath disintegrates into its constituent elements, the gross matter.

The gross elements were first created. The gross bodies of creatures are made out of these elements. Therefore Annam (food, matter) is the eldest of all creatures.

The Sruti, then, proceeds to declare the fruit that accrues to them who have realised the food as Brahman, who meditate on food as Brahman as prescribed. They obtain all kinds of food. They become one with the Virat and attain all food. How to meditate? Thus: "I am born from food. My soul is food, or I have my being in food. I am finally absorbed into food. Therefore, food is Brahman". It may be asked how the meditation of food

as the Soul, or the Self, can lead to the attainment of all food. The Sruti answers: "For, food is the eldest of all beings, for it was born before all other creatures, and it is therefore, said to be the medicine for all". Therefore, it is right that he who meditates on all food as the Atman, should obtain all food. "From food are beings born, when born, by food they grow". This repetition of what has been already said, is for summing up, or for indicating that the present subject is concluded.

Now, the Sruti gives the etymology of the word Anna. Food is eaten by all beings, and is itself, the eater of all beings. As it is eaten and eats, it is therefore called Anna. Food, in its limited aspect, is eaten by all beings. In its universal aspect, all beings are absorbed or dissolved in it. So it feeds upon all beings. The particle *Iti* in the text, which means 'thus', marks the close of the exposition of the first sheath (Kosa).

The Sruti proceeds to show, with the help of knowledge, that the individual soul is identical with Brahman who is within, and beyond the five sheaths from the Annamaya (food-sheath), down to the Anandamaya (the blissful sheath), and goes on to extract the kernel within, by divesting it of the five sheaths formed by ignorance, just as by threshing the many chaff-coverings of Kodrava, one brings to view the grain within.

In order to lead the mind, which has lost its longing and attraction for sensual objects, to the Inner Being which is behind the Annamaya Kosa, the food sheath, the Sruti now proceeds to explain the nature of Prana and the Pranamaya Kosa, the vital sheath. Distinct from the food-sheath, or the gross physical body, which has been described above, there is the inner self made of Prana, falsely imagined to be the Atman like the gross body. The Pranamaya Kosa is also falsely identified with the real Self, the Atman. This self, formed of Prana, fills the self which is formed of food-essence, just as air fills the bellows.

The Annamaya Kosa is permeated by four Kosas, the Pranamaya and the rest. The Pranamaya Kosa is permeated by the three Kosas, the Manomaya by two Kosas and the Vijnanamaya by one Kosa.

The Annamaya is filled by the Pranamaya, as the serpent is filled by the rope (where the latter is mistaken for the former).

The Annamaya is an effect of the Pranamaya and it is a mere imagination, as the Sruti says: "All effect is a mere name, a creation of speech".

The Pranamaya Kosa is more subtle than the gross physical sheath. The vital forces of the Pranamaya Kosa perform the different functions of the body, viz., digestion, circulation of blood, deglutition, excretion, etc., and manipulate the physical body from within. The whole physical body is pervaded by the Pranamaya Kosa. The Pranamaya Kosa contains the five Karma Indriyas, organs of actions, viz., organ of speech, hands, feet, organ of generation and anus. The different limbs of the physical body have their corresponding parts in the Pranamaya Kosa. Pranamaya Kosa, along with the mental and intellectual sheaths, forms the Linga Sarira, subtle body or astral body.

The Pranamaya self is of man's form with head, hands, etc. Is it, in itself, possessed of a head, etc.? The Sruti says: No. The self, made of the essence of food, is of the human form. This Pranamaya self is fashioned in human form not by himself, but only after the shape of that made of food, just as an idol is fashioned after the mould into which the melted metal is poured. It is not of the form by itself. The form of each inner one is the human form, after the form of the outer one. Each outer one is full of that which is within. Just as water assumes the shape of the vessel which holds it, so also the Pranamaya Kosa takes the shape of the Annamaya Kosa.

How, then, is he of human form? The Sruti answers: The Prana, expired through the mouth and nose, is itself the head of the Pranamaya self, on the authority of this hymn. The sides or the wings are also fancied on the authority of the scriptural teaching.

Vyana, the air which pervades the whole body, is the right side or the right wing. Apana is the left side or the left wing. Samana, which abides in Akasa, middle of the body, is the trunk or the central part. Samana is said to be the trunk because it occupies a central portion, with reference to the other Vayus. The trunk or the central part is the Atman. This is declared in the Srutis: "Indeed, the middle one of these members is the Atman". The earth is the tail, the support. The

Earth is the deity presiding over the earth, the supporter of the life of the body, because it is the cause of its existence. The Sruti elsewhere says: "This (earth) supports the Apana of the man. But for this support, the body will be carried up by the action of the Udana, or it will have to fall down by its weight". Therefore, the earth is the supporting tail of the Pranamaya self. The earth is the vital air which goes upwards. It is called earth because it is the prop of the vital airs.

As to the teaching concerning the Pranamaya self, there is the following verse.

Here ends the Second Anuvaka of the Brahmananda Valli

### THIRD ANUVAKA

प्राणं देवा अनु प्राणन्ति । मनुष्याः पशवश्च ये । प्राणो हि भूतानामायुः । तस्मात्सर्वायुषमुच्यते । सर्वमेव त आयुर्यन्ति । ये प्राणं ब्रह्मोपासते । प्राणो हि भूतानामायुः । तस्मात्सर्वायुषमुच्यत इति । तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा । यः पूर्वस्य । तस्माद्वा एतस्मात्प्राणमयात् । अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा मनोमयः । तेनैष पूर्णः । स वा एष पुरुषविध एव । तस्य पुरुषविधताम् । अन्वयं पुरुषविधः । तस्य यजुरेव शिरः । क्रगदक्षिणः पक्षः । सामोक्तरः पक्षः । आदेश आत्मा । अथर्वाङ्गिरसः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ।

इति तृतीयोऽनुवाकः ॥

Through Prana the gods live, and so also do men and beasts. Prana is verily the life of beings. Therefore, it is called the universal life, or the life of all. Those who worship Prana as Brahman, attain the whole life-duration or the full span of life. Prana verily is the life of beings. Therefore, it is called the universal life or the life of all.

Of that former (Annamayatma), this (Pranamayatma) produced in the body is the soul. Different from the Pranamaya self made of Prana, there is another self made of mind. With that self made of mind, this (the Pranamaya) is filled. This is also of the form of man. Its human form is according to that of the former. Of it, Yajus is the head. Rik is the right side (wing).

Saman is the left side (wing). Scriptural injunction (Adesa) is the trunk (body). Atharva-angirasa is the tail, the support. There is the following verse about it.

### Notes and Commentary

*Devah*—gods or the senses. *Pasavah*—beasts. *Purusha vidhah*—of the form of man. *Purushavidhatam*—human form. *Sarvam ayus*—full life. *Adesa*—injunction, command, here denotes Brahman, a division of the Vedas, because it commands all that should be commanded.

The gods live after Prana. The gods, Agni and other Devas live, i.e., they do the act of breathing, act by breathing after Prana which is of the nature of air. Through Prana alone the gods live. In the macrocosmic aspect, the gods are the deities who hold control over the various functions of nature. As the present section deals with microcosmic or individual soul, *Devas* here denotes senses (Indriyas). Through the vibration of Prana only, the senses perform their allotted functions. When the Prana functions, then only the senses also can function. The senses derive their very life from Prana only. So also do men and beasts function only when Prana, the life-principle, functions. The living creatures have their being, not in the Annamaya self alone, but in the Pranamaya self also, which lies within the Annamaya self, and permeates the whole physical body.

All living creatures are endowed with Manomaya, Vijnanamaya and Anandamaya selves, one abiding within the other. The internal permeates the external self which lies outside. All of them are formed of Akasa and other elements of matter. All of them exist only by ignorance. They are set up by Avidya, nescience. They are all possessed of Supreme Soul, Brahman, who is everywhere, who is all, who is the cause of Akasa and all the rest, who is eternal, changeless, self-existent, who is existence, knowledge and infinity and who is beyond the five sheaths. He is indeed the Self of all. He verily is the Atman.

It was said that the gods live through Prana. How so? Prana is the life of all beings. The Sruti says: 'As long as Prana is in this body, so long is life' (Kaushitaki Up. III-2). Therefore, Prana

is the life of all. Everybody knows well that death occurs when the Prana departs from the body. Everybody knows that Prana is the life of all.

Those who leave the external, particular Annamayatman and meditate on the internal, general Pranamayatman as Brahman, thus, 'I am Prana, I am the Atman of all, the Self of all beings, because I am the cause or source to attain the full span of life', do not die prematurely. They do not die an unnatural death, before the allotted period. According to the Vedas, the full span of life is hundred years. How so? The Sruti says: 'Prana is the life of beings, therefore it is said to be the life of all'. The repetition is intended to explain the utility of this Vidya (Upasana). Whoever meditates on Brahman, as endowed with certain attributes, himself becomes the possessor of those attributes.

Now, the Sruti shows the aim of all this teaching regarding the Pranamaya Kosa. The Pranamaya Kosa is the self that abides in the Annamaya Kosa. This physical body is mistaken for the pure Atman, by false identification on account of ignorance. The Sruti wants you now to give up the idea that the body is the self, and take up the idea that the Pranamaya Kosa is the self. The mind is taken from the gross body to the subtle Pranamaya sheath. When the idea, that the Pranamaya is the self, is deeply ingrained, the illusion that the Annamaya is one's own self, vanishes. Then you begin to feel that the Annamaya is the body, and the Pranamaya is one's own self that abides in that physical body.

Ananda Giri interprets that the same Chit-dhatu, the principle of Consciousness that is the real self of the former Annamaya, is the self of the Pranamaya.

The Sruti now proceeds to give a description of the Manomaya self. Manas, mind, is that inner sense, or internal organ, or instrument consisting of Sankalpa and Vikalpa (thought and doubt). It is the seat of volition. Just as the Annamaya Kosa is made of food-stuff, so also the Manomaya Kosa is formed of mind-stuff.

Manomaya self is the inner self of the Pranamaya. It permeates the Pranamaya Kosa. The Pranamaya Kosa is filled by the Manomaya Kosa. The Manomaya Kosa contains the

organs of knowledge, viz., ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose. The real senses are within. What you see outside, the physical eyes, etc., are mere instruments. The Manomaya Kosa is more subtle and expansive than the Pranamaya Kosa, which is more subtle and expansive than the Annamaya Kosa.

The Manomaya Kosa, the mental sheath, abides within the Pranamaya Kosa like the bladder of a foot-ball. Through the functioning of the Manomaya Kosa only, you say 'I think', 'I imagine'. For the sake of contemplation, it is said to be of human form made up of five members, viz., head, right wing, left wing, trunk and tail. Just as water assumes the shape of the vessel in which it is kept, just as the melted metal puts on the form of the mould into which it is poured, so also the human form of the Manomaya sheath follows from that of the Pranamaya.

Now the Sruti proceeds to explain the method of meditation on the Manomaya self. Of him, the Yajus is the head. Yajus is that class of hymns (Mantras) which are not subject to any definite rule as to the syllables, letters, or feet or end. The word Yajus denotes all compositions of this kind. It is here represented as the head because of its importance. The importance lies in its being of immediate help in sacrificial rites. For, it is with the Yajus, with the words Svaha, etc., that an oblation is offered. Or, what we call Yajus is only a Manovritti, a state, a mode, a function, an act of mind and consists in thinking and meditating on the organ of utterance, kind of effort, sound, intonation, letter, word and sentence. It is this thought that manifests itself through hearing and other organs, and is given the name of Yajus. The same thing applies to the Rik and to the Saman.

The hymns represent the knowledge of the Atman, denoted by the word 'Yajus', which depends upon the activity of the mind, and is limited by the Upadhi of the states of mind, which is the vitality of the Atman and which has neither beginning nor end. And so, we can explain how the Vedas are eternal. The Sruti speaks of the unity of the Vedas with the Eternal Self: 'He is the Atman abiding in Manas, in whom all Vedas become one'. This will have a meaning only if the Riks and others are eternal. The hymn also says: 'The Riks are seated in Akshara,

the indestructible, in the Supreme Heaven, wherein all Devas sit on high' (Taitt. Ara.).

The Atharva-angirasas, i.e., the Mantras seen by Atharvan and Angiras and their Brahmana, is the supporting tail, because they deal mainly with the performances of rites, which promote man's well-being by conduced to his peace and strength.

Here ends the Third Anuvaka of the Brahmananda Valli

#### FOURTH ANUVAKA

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह । आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् ।  
 न विभेति कदाचनेति । तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा । यः पूर्वस्य ।  
 तस्माद्वा एतस्मान्मनोमयात् । अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा विज्ञानमयः । तेनैष  
 पूर्णः । स वा एष पुरुषविध एव । तस्य पुरुषविधताम् । अन्वयं  
 पुरुषविधः । तस्य श्रद्धैव शिरः । क्रतं दक्षिणः पक्षः । सत्यमुत्तरः  
 पक्षः । योग आत्मा । महः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ।

॥ इति चतुर्थोऽनुवाकः ॥

Whence all speech turn back with the mind without reaching, he who knows the bliss of Brahman, fears not at any time. This mind is the embodied soul of the former. Of the Pranamaya, this one, namely, the Manomaya, is the self, having the Pranamaya for his body.

Different from that, made of mind, is another inner soul made of knowledge (Vijnana). By that, this is filled. It also has the shape of man. According to the human shape of that, is the human form of this. Faith is its head. Righteousness (Ritam) is the right side or wing. Truth (Satyam) is the left side or wing. Yoga (concentration-meditation) is the trunk (Self). Mahah is the tail, the support.

On this, there is also the following verse.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Vidvan*—he who knows. *Na bibheti*—does not fear. *Vijnanamayah*—formed of knowledge. *Ritam*—righteousness. *Satyam*—truth.

Brahman is beyond all speech and thought. But one can realise Brahman intuitively, through meditation and Nirvikalpa Samadhi. When one knows the eternal bliss of Brahman, he becomes absolutely fearless. Fear comes only when there is duality. How can there be fear for one who beholds oneness of the Self everywhere?

The Manomaya Kosa is made up of Vrittis or Sankalpas (thoughts). It is subtler than the Pranamaya Kosa. It controls the Pranamaya Kosa. So it is the inner self of the Pranamaya Kosa.

Other than that one formed of Manas, there is another self within, formed of Vijnana. By him this one is filled. The inner self of the Manomaya is the Vijnanamaya. It has been shown in the previous Anuvaka that the Manomaya is made up of the Vedas. Vijnana, knowledge, is the knowledge of what is taught in the Vedas.

The Sruti leads the aspirant, who has withdrawn himself from the Annamaya, Pranamaya and the Manomaya still farther within, beyond even the Manomaya Kosa.

Vijnanamaya is the determinative knowledge. This determinative knowledge is an attribute of the intellect. It is the determinative faculty which guides the mind and comes to right conclusion or determination. When the mind is in a doubting condition whether to do an action or not, Vijnanamaya renders help by coming to a determination, 'I must do this'. The sacrificial rites are performed by one, only after ascertaining their nature from right sources of knowledge. Vijnana is the source of all sacrificial rites.

The Manomaya is composed of Vrittis, states of mind. Vijnanamaya is the owner of these states of mind. It is an agent of all thoughts.

Now, the Sruti proceeds to explain the method of meditation on the Vijnanamaya self. He who has acquired through Vedas a well-ascertained knowledge, first entertains faith (Sraddha) as to the things he has to do. As faith is the primary element in all things to be done, it is the head, as it were, of the Vijnanamaya. Faith is the chief factor of knowledge.

Righteousness and truth are called the wings (sides), because without these there cannot arise firm conviction.

Yoga is concentration and meditation. It is the trunk as it were, because without meditation one cannot acquire the knowledge of the Reality. Mahah, the principle of Mahat, Hiranyagarbha (cosmic mind), is said to be the tail or support because it is the cause of its effect, the individual Buddhi, just as the earth is the support of the trees, shrubs, etc. Mahat is the great principle that was first born. The Sruti elsewhere says, 'The great adorable one, the first born' (Bri. Up. V-4). It is tail, because it is the cause to support. The principle of Mahat is the source of all knowledge. Therefore, it is the support of the Atman made up of knowledge, the self Vijnanamaya.

Here ends the Fourth Anuvaka of the Brahmananda Valli

### FIFTH ANUVAKA

विज्ञानं यज्ञं तनुते । कर्माणि तनुतेऽपि च । विज्ञानं देवाः सर्वे । ब्रह्म ज्येष्ठमुपासते । विज्ञानं ब्रह्म चेद्वेद । तस्माच्चेन्न प्रमाद्यति । शरीरे पाप्मनो हित्वा । सर्वान्कामान्समश्नुत इति । तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा । यः पूर्वस्य । तस्माद्वा एतस्माद्विज्ञानमयात् । अन्योऽन्तर आत्मानन्दमयः । तेनैष पूर्णः । स वा एष पुरुषविध एव । तस्य पुरुषविधताम् । अन्वयं पुरुषविधः । तस्य प्रियमेव शिरः । मोदो दक्षिणः पक्षः । प्रमोद उत्तरः पक्षः । आनन्द आत्मा । ब्रह्म पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ॥

॥ इति पञ्चमोऽनुवाकः ॥

Knowledge performs the sacrifice as well as Karma. All the gods worship knowledge as Brahman, the eldest. If a man knows knowledge as Brahman, and if he does not swerve from it, he attains all desires, having abandoned his sins in the body.

Of that, of the former, this one verily is the embodied self. Different from this self, made of knowledge (Vijnanamaya) is another self within, formed of bliss. By that this is filled. (The Anandamaya fills and permeates the Vijnanamaya). It also has the shape of man. According to the human shape of that is the

human form of this. Of it Love (Priya) is the head. Joy (Modah) is the right side (wing). Delight (Pramodah) is the left side (wing). Bliss (Anandam) is the trunk (self). Brahman is the tail, the support. About that, there is also the following verse.

### Notes and Commentary

*Anandamaya*—formed of bliss. *Priyam*—love. *Modah*—joy, satisfaction, joy that arises from gratified desire. *Pramoda*—delight, great satisfaction, the same joy intensified.

Vijnana, or knowledge, performs sacrifices, because a man who has knowledge performs sacrifices with faith, etc. Therefore, knowledge is said to be the doer. The Buddhi which determines gives sanction, and the mind and the senses work through the gross body. Therefore, Vijnana is the real agent.

It performs deeds as well. The word Karma denotes sacred rites only. But here it means, in a liberal sense, any kind of action. All actions are performed through the sanction of the intellect.

Because all are performed by knowledge (Vijnana), therefore, the Vijnanamaya self is Brahman. All gods, such as Indra, meditate on Hiranyagarbha, who is the eldest, because He is the first born, or the first manifestation, or because He is the source of all individual activities. All actions are done only with previous knowledge. All the gods put faith in this soul of knowledge and meditate upon it. Therefore, they attain knowledge and powers by worshipping that great Brahman. When they meditate on the Hiranyagarbha, they identify themselves with Him, and attain all the wonderful powers and knowledge (Aisvary and Jnana).

If a man constantly meditates on the Hiranyagarbha, he feels identified with Him and thus attains all the wonderful powers.

If a person meditates on the Hiranyagarbha and realises Him, and if, after realisation, he never swerves from that Brahman, and if he dwells constantly in the thought that the Vijnanamaya self is Brahman, he becomes free from all sins too. All sins arise from identification of the Self with the body. Body is the cause of all sins and miseries. But, when one identifies himself with the Hiranyagarbha, through constant

meditation and worship, the body-consciousness disappears and with it all sins, just as the shadow disappears when the umbrella disappears. He becomes identical with the Hiranyagarbha, or the Vijnanamaya Brahman, and enjoys all his desires.

The Sruti proceeds to explain the nature of the Anandamaya self. The Anandamaya self is also an effect. The Sruti teaches of the Self in His aspect as the enjoyer by Avidya, ignorance, as He identifies Himself with the Upadhi of Antahkarana, inner sense, which is of fourfold nature (mind, intellect, memory, egoism). The Anandamaya is made up of the latent impressions of love and other forms of happiness. The Anandamaya is the seed-body or causal-body (Karana Sarira). This body functions during deep sleep. The sum total of all causal bodies of all individual souls constitutes the Upadhi, or Maya of Isvara.

Love (Priya) which springs up at the sight of a beloved son and the like, is the head, as it were, of Anandamaya self, because of its pre-eminence or prominence. It is the Anandamaya self who feels 'I am happy', 'I am the enjoyer'.

Moda is the joy of exultation produced by the acquisition and possession of a beloved object. Pramoda is the same joy intensified or raised to high pitch. Love (Priya), joy (Moda) and delight (Pramoda) are reflections of bliss manifested in the Sattvic states of mind.

Ananda (bliss) is the trunk. It is the self, or the centre of love, joy and delight, because it runs through them all, because the limbs of joy, delight, are linked with it uninterruptedly. Ananda is the unconditioned, or the Supreme Brahman. This Bliss is manifested or reflected in that state of mind which is not covered by Tamas (darkness), and which is brought about, when sons, friends or such other beloved objects are placed before it, by virtue of good deeds. This is what is known among people as the sensual pleasure (Vishaya-sukha). This pleasure is momentary, because the Karma, which brings about such a state of mind, is impermanent.

The mind is purified by austerity, by knowledge which dispels ignorance, by chastity, faith and pious devotion, becomes more and more free from Tamas, and becomes more and more

serene. Then the joy manifests itself in a higher and higher degree in the mind, so purified and rendered clear. The Sruti says later on: 'Joy is He'. Having obtained it, he becomes blissful, because 'it is this which makes one joyful'. There is also another text. 'All other creatures live on a small portion of that bliss' (Bri. Up. IV-3-xxxii).

Bliss is of different degrees of intensity owing to the nature and variety of Karma. Bliss is a hundredfold greater than the satisfaction of a desire. The Sruti describes different degrees of bliss, rising in degree a hundredfold, higher and higher, according to the degree of desirelessness of the person.

Of the Anandamaya self, the Supreme Brahman Himself is the tail, the support, because He is the basis of all.

The Supreme Brahman, which has been described as Satyam Jnanam Anantam, forms the main subject of the discourse. A description of the five sheaths, beginning with Annamaya, has been given in order to realise the Supreme Brahman which is beyond the five sheaths. The Supreme Brahman, which lies within the five sheaths, is also the Self of them all. This non-dual Brahman forms the support, or the ultimate basic reality, that underlies all duality produced by Avidya, ignorance. As the Anandamaya leads ultimately to unity, there is the supporting Brahman, one without a second, who is the ultimate basis of duality caused by ignorance, who is the tail, the support of the Anandamaya.

The five Kosas of man are described in order to destroy the great evil of Samsara. Resolve each Kosa into that which immediately succeeds it. Starting from the Annamaya Kosa, each effect into its immediate cause, till the ultimate cause is reached. Eventually, you will be led on to the knowledge of Brahman, who is beyond cause and effect, who is neither the cause nor the effect. You will realise the oneness of individual soul and the Supreme Soul.

Maya is the illusory power of Brahman. This is the material cause of the universe. It is made up of three Gunas, viz., Sattva (purity), Rajas (passion) and Tamas (darkness). Tamas is the cause of the Annamaya Kosa. So, inertness predominates in this Kosa. Rajas is the cause of the Pranamaya Kosa. It is endowed with Kriya Sakti (power of action). The cause of the

Manomaya Kosa is Sattva mixed with Tamas. Therefore, the Tamasic qualities, hatred, etc., are present in the mind. The cause of the Vijnanamaya is Sattva mixed with Rajas. Therefore, we find in it the agency. Manas (mind) and intellect (Buddhi) are products of Jnana Sakti. The pure Guna of Sattva is the cause of the Anandamaya Kosa, and therefore, we find in it, love, joy, delight. There is Iccha Sakti also in the mind. A desire arises in the mind on account of the Iccha Sakti. Through Jnana Sakti, man gets knowledge as to how to possess the desired objects. Through Kriya Sakti, he exerts and possesses the objects.

Birth and death are the Dharmas (attributes) of the Annamaya Kosa. Hunger and thirst are the Dharmas of the Pranamaya Kosa. Moha (delusion) and Soka (grief) are attributes of the Manomaya Kosa. The Atman is ever-pure and unattached. He is absolutely free from the Shad Urmis, the six waves of the ocean of Samsara, viz., birth, death, hunger, thirst, delusion and grief.

The Annamaya Kosa constitutes the gross physical body (Sthula Sarira). The Pranamaya, the Manomaya and the Vijnanamaya Kosas constitute the subtle or astral body (Linga Sarira). The Anandamaya Kosa constitutes the causal body (Karana Sarira).

The physical body operates during the waking state, the subtle body functions during the dreaming state, and the causal body operates during deep sleep state. During deep sleep, it is the thin veil of Anandamaya Kosa that separates the individual soul from the Supreme Soul, Brahman.

Here ends the Fifth Anuvaka of the Brahmananda Valli

### SIXTH ANUVAKA

असन्नेव स भवति । असद्ब्रह्मेति वेद चेत् । अस्ति ब्रह्मेति चेद्वेद ।  
 सन्तमेनं ततो विदुरिति । तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा । यः पूर्वस्य ।  
 अथातोऽनुप्रश्नाः । उताविद्वानमुं लोकं प्रेत्य । कश्चन गच्छती ३ । आहो  
 विद्वानमुं लोकं प्रेत्य । कश्चित्समश्नुता ३ उ । सोऽकामयत । बहु स्यां  
 प्रजायेयेति । स तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा । इदं सर्वमसृजत ।

यदिदं किंच । तत्सृष्ट्वा । तदेवानुप्राविशत् । तदनुप्रविश्य । सच्च  
त्यच्चाभवत् । निरुक्तं चानिरुक्तं च । निलयं चानिलयं च । विज्ञानं  
चाविज्ञानं च । सत्यं चानृतं च सत्यमभवत् । यदिदं किंच ।  
तत्सत्यमित्याचक्षते । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ।

॥ इति षष्ठोऽनुवाकः ॥

If he knows Brahman as non-existent, he becomes himself non-existent. If he knows Brahman as existent, then (they) know him to be existent. Of him, of the former, this verily is the embodied soul.

Therefore, arise the (following) questions (of the pupil). Does he, who knows not, after having departed this world, go There? Or does he, who knows, after leaving the world, obtain That?

He desired, 'May I be many, may I be born'. He performed Tapas. Having performed Tapas, He brought forth all this—whatever there is. Having brought forth, He entered it. Having entered it, He became Sat (being, what is manifest) and Tyat (the beyond, what is not manifest), defined and undefined, the abode and the non-abode, knowledge and ignorance, truth and falsehood and all this, whatsoever is existing. Therefore, it is called Existence. On this, there is the following verse.

#### Notes and Commentary

Asat—non-existent. Avidvan—one who does not know. Vidvan—one who knows. Pretya—after he dies, having departed. Amum—that. Lokam—world. Gachhati—goes. Aho—Oh then, tell me. Akamayata—desired. Prajayeya—may I produce. Sa akamayata bahu syam prajayeyeti—may I be many, may I be born. Bahu—many. Syam—may I be, I shall be. Tapas—here, means knowledge, Brahman reflected regarding the design of the world to be created. Tat srishtva tadevanu pravisat—having brought forth, He entered it. Sat—being, what is manifest. Tyat—the beyond, what is not manifested. Niruktam—defined. Aniruktam—undefined. Nilayanam—the abode, support. Anilayanam—the non-abode, not supported, not a support. Vijnanam—knowledge. Avijnanam—ignorance. Satyam—truth. Anritam—falsehood. Achakshate—call.

He, who has no faith in the existence of Brahman, leads a sensuous life. He is vicious. He has no right conduct. He has no higher aspirations and ideals. This world is everything for him. He identifies himself with the physical body and the other Kosas, and mistakes them for the real Self. He becomes non-existent. He fails to attain immortality or the life eternal. He falls into the abyss of darkness of ignorance, and is caught up again and again in the round of births and deaths.

If, on the contrary, a man knows that there exists Brahman who is the basis or support for everything, who is the basis of all differentiation, who is the seed of all action, and in whom there is no distinction, he leads a virtuous life. He has ideals and higher aspirations. He does not lead a sensual life. He has right conduct in relation to caste, stages of life, etc. He develops dispassion, discrimination and renounces sensual objects. He engages himself in meditation, struggles hard to attain Brahman, the Absolute, and eventually becomes one with Him. Wise men regard him as existing, because he has become identical with Brahman who is Existence (Sat).

Why should there be any suspicion at all of the existence of Brahman? We reply: it arises from the fact that Brahman is beyond sensuous experience, beyond human speech. One has belief in the existence of that which falls within the range of speech. It is right, therefore, to believe that which is beyond the reach of speech is non-existent. People understand that a pot exists when it is within the range of speech, and that it does not exist, when it does not come within the range of speech. Similarly, here also one may believe that Brahman does not exist. Therefore, it is said, 'If he knows that Brahman exists', etc.

Anandamaya is the embodied self of the Vijnanamaya. Anandamaya is more subtle and expansive than the Vijnanamaya. Anandamaya permeates the Vijnanamaya. Anandamaya is the self that dwells in the Vijnanamaya body.

There can never arise a doubt that the Anandamaya does not exist. But as to Brahman, there is room for doubt, because He is devoid of all distinctions, and He is common to all alike.

These, then, are the disciples' questions following upon the teacher's exposition. Brahman, the cause of Akasa, etc., is

common to both the knower and the ignorant. Therefore, it may be supposed that the attainment of Brahman is possible even in the case of ignorant persons. If he who knows not, does not attain Brahman, who is the same everywhere, then even he who knows, does not attain Brahman. What evidence is there to show that the enlightened attain Brahman?

The succeeding portion of the text is begun in order to answer these questions.

It was said that Brahman is Satyam (Truth). It is Truth because It exists.

The Sruti now proceeds to establish the very existence of Brahman.

An objector says: 'Brahman is not altogether non-existent. Why? Because that which exists, such as pot, is seen in actual experience; that which does not exist, such as the horn of a hare, is not seen. Similarly Brahman also is not seen. Therefore, as Brahman is not seen in actual experience, He does not exist'. This argument is unsound and untenable, because Brahman is the cause of Akasa, etc. It cannot be said that Brahman does not exist, for ether, etc., of which the cause is Brahman, is seen by the senses. Sruti declares that Akasa and all else in the creation, have been born of Brahman. It is a fact of common experience in the world that, that thing exists from which something else is born, as for example, clay and the seed, which are the material cause of pot and a tree. Therefore, Brahman exists, because It is the cause of ether, etc.

We do not see in this world, by our senses, anything born out of nothing. If objects of this world be the product of nothing, they could not be perceived by the senses. But they are perceived as such. Therefore Brahman exists. The Sruti declares: 'How can existence be born of non-existence? How could something be produced out of nothing?' (Chh. Up. VI-2-ii). It also stands to reason that something could not be produced out of nothing. It, therefore, stands to reason to say that there is Brahman.

It could not be argued that if Brahman be the cause, like clay and the seed, etc., it could not be intelligent, because Brahman is one who has pure desires (Satya Kama). In our experience,

we have found out that an intelligent or sentient being only can have desires. We have stated that Brahman is omniscient. It is, therefore, proper to say that Brahman has pure desires.

An objector may say that if Brahman has desires, he has objects of desire which are not attained. This is not correct because Brahman is independent of desires. Because of His independence, Brahman is not affected by the desires. Brahman's desires are faultless. They cannot rouse Him to action in the same manner as the impure desires influence others and guide their action. How then, are they? They are true (Satya) and wise (Jnana). They are, in nature, like Brahman and therefore pure. Brahman is not guided by them.

On the other hand, it is Brahman who prompts these desires in accordance with the deeds done by sentient beings. Therefore, Brahman is independent as regards desires. He has no desires unattained. He has nothing to desire for; for he does not require any external factors, or extraneous means, for their realisation. The desires of sentient beings do not belong to the Self. They depend upon the operation of Dharma and other causes. They are in need of additional extraneous aids, such as body and sense-organs, in the accomplishment of objects distinct from the Self, whereas Brahman's desires are not dependent on external causes and the like, and are not prompted by any such motives. What then? They are one with Himself. They are not distinguishable from Him.

Brahman does not multiply Himself by giving birth to things which are quite distinct, just as the father multiplies himself by giving birth to son. How then? It is by the manifestation of the name and form which have remained unmanifested in Himself.

Brahman made Tapas, i.e., He thought about the arrangement of the world to be created. He, thus reflecting, created this universe, with space and time and names and forms, wherein all beings enjoy according to the nature of their Karmas.

According to Sri Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita philosophy, this world is a Parinama of Brahman. Just as milk changes itself into curd, so also Brahman has changed Himself into this world of subtle and gross objects. This is Parinama Vada.

There is serious defect in this doctrine. How can there arise change in the transcendental and perfect Brahman? Change is possible only in time and space. Brahman is beyond time, space and causation. Yet, the world of changing phenomena is present before you. How can this be explained or accounted for?

Sri Sankara propounds the theory of Vivarta Vada, the doctrine of superimposition. According to this doctrine, Brahman has not undergone any change to project this world, or to bring forth the creation. There is a mysterious inherent illusory power in Brahman. It is this power that has brought forth this creation. This inscrutable power is Maya.

Brahman entered the very universe He created, by the same Maya. Having brought forth all forms into existence, from Hiranyagarbha down to immovable objects, the Paramatman entered those very forms which He brought into being.

Now, we have to enquire how He entered the universe? Did He enter in the self-same form as the creator, or in a different form? Which of the two is correct and reasonable? The termination, *Ktva* (the participle form), 'having sent forth', indicates that the creator Himself entered the universe.

An objector says: This does not stand to reason if Brahman is the cause of the universe, like the clay, because the effect is one with the cause, because the creation is in the nature of Brahman. The cause itself is transformed into the effect. Therefore, it does not stand to reason to say that the cause should enter the effect after the effect is produced, as if it had not entered before. There is no entering of clay into the jar. The clay has transformed itself in the form of a jar. That is all. Just as clay may enter the jar in the form of dust, so also the Atman may enter in a different form into the universe of names and forms. The Sruti also says, 'Having entered in this form, in the form of this Jivatman' (Chh. Up. VI-3-ii).

This is wrong. This does not at all stand to reason, because Brahman is one. No doubt, a cause like clay may, in the form of dust, enter the pot, for clay is many and is made up of parts, and there is a place not already filled in by the dust or powder. But Atman is one, and is, moreover, partless. There is no place

not already filled in by Him. Therefore, it is not proper to speak of His entrance.

The objector says: "How then can He have entrance! The entering is not opposed to reason. The Sruti says, 'Into that very thing He then entered'. Let us suppose that Brahman is made up of parts. It is quite possible that He entered into the names and forms, in the form of Jiva, like the hand entering the mouth".

This explanation is not correct. It cannot be said that Brahman has parts, and that just as the hand may enter the mouth, Brahman has entrance into the name and form as Jivatman, because there is no place where He is not.

*The objector:* He enters the cause itself.

*Answer:* Then He would no longer be the Jivatman, just as a pot ceases to be a pot when it enters into clay, i.e., when it becomes clay.

*The objector:* There may be entrance, as in the reflection of the sun in water.

*Answer:* This cannot be, because Brahman is infinite and formless. There can only be a reflection of a finite and corporeal object into another clear surface like water.

But there can be no reflection of Atman, because He is formless, infinite and all-pervading, being the cause of Akasa. Entrance, in the form of reflection, is not possible at all, as there is nothing else which can serve as the reflecting medium, nor any space other than that which He occupies.

*The objector:* If so, then there is no entering at all. As it conveys no meaning, we have to ignore, altogether, the passage.

*Answer:* No, it has some other meaning. The Sruti started with the following words: 'The knower of Brahman reaches the Supreme. Truth, Knowledge, Infinity is Brahman. He who knoweth the one hidden in the cave...' Knowledge is intended here. It is the subject with which the Sruti is concerned. In order to impart knowledge of Brahman, the Sruti dealt with the effects of Brahman, beginning with Akasa and ending with food. Then the nature of the five Kosas was dealt with. There, within the Atman made of food and different from it, is that made of Prana;

within it is that made of mind; within it is that made of knowledge and within the cavity of knowledge is the Atman of joy, Anandamaya self. Within this very cavity has to be obtained that Brahman, the tail, the support, who is the basis of all differentiated manifestation, who is devoid of all differentiation. He is represented in the passage under consideration to have entered it. The entrance is, therefore, an imaginary representation. It is not an actual fact. The entrance is merely figurative.

He is cognised within the cave of intellect (Buddhi), in such specific forms of manifestation as seer, hearer, thinker, knower and so on. This constitutes His entrance. Therefore, Brahman, the cause, exists. So we should know or realise Him as Existence only.

What did He become after entering the effect? He became the corporeal and the incorporeal, form and formless (Murta and Amurta). These forms and the formless remained in the Atman, prior to creation, in an unmanifested or undifferentiated state. At the beginning of creation, they become differentiated by the Atman dwelling within them. Though they are differentiated, they still remain one with the Atman both in time and space.

Moreover, it became Nirukta (defined) and Anirukta (the undefined). The defined is that object which is distinguished from other classes of objects and from other objects of the same class. It is known to exist at a particular time and at a particular place. It can be specially pointed out as 'this it is'. What is opposed to the defined is the undefined. The terms Nirukta and Anirukta are adjectives qualifying the Murta and the Amurta. They are descriptive attributes of form and formless respectively. Form and the formless are respectively the defined and the undefined, the visible and the invisible. So also, they are the abode or support and the non-abode or non-support. Abode or support is an attribute of form. Non-abode or non-support is an attribute of the formless.

Though 'invisible', 'undefined' and 'non-abode' are the attributes of the formless, still they pertain to the manifested world, inasmuch as they are said to have come into being after creation. 'Tyat' denotes Prana, etc. It is Anirukta and is

Anilayana. These are the attributes of the formless. Vital force and ether are undefined or indefinite. They constitute the non-abode. These attributes of the formless pertain only to the category of the differentiated being, but not to the unmanifested Brahman, the cause, who is also formless.

Vijnana is animate or the conscious or the sentient beings. Avijnana is inanimate, the unconscious or the insentient objects, such as stone.

Satyam here means relative truth. It does not mean the Absolute Reality, for Brahman, the Absolute Reality, is one alone. Water is said to be real when compared with the mirage, which is illusory. Anrita is its opposite. A serpent in the rope, a thief in a post and silver in the mother-of-pearl, are false.

What is it that has become all this? The Absolute Truth. What again, is that Reality? It is Brahman, the subject of discussion here, with which this Upanishad began in the words, 'Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and Infinity'. Brahman, the one, who is called the Existence, became modified into everything, without exception, as the form and the formless. Because there is no modification of name or form, apart from Brahman, or outside Brahman, therefore, the knowers of Brahman say that Brahman is Truth, that all this is Brahman.

The section began with the question: 'Does Brahman exist or not?' By way of answer to this question, it has been said that 'the Atman desired, may I become many'. In accordance with this desire, He created the Akasa and other things in the universe, what is manifest and what is unmanifest, entered the names and forms and became many as the seer, as the hearer, as the thinker, as the knower.

We should understand that this Brahman, who is the cause of Akasa, etc., who dwells in all creatures, who is located in that excellent cavity of the heart, who is realised by faith, meditation and intuition, who reveals Himself in all the cognitions of the mind, in all His specific manifestations as the seer, the hearer, and so on, does exist.

To the same effect is said this hymn of the Brahmana. Just as in the case of the five sheaths described above, there are Mantras explaining the Atman made of food, etc., here also is a

hymn or verse which speaks of the existence of this, the innermost Atman, by speaking of the universe.

Thus ends the Sixth Anuvaka of the  
Brahmananda Valli

### SEVENTH ANUVAKA

असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत् । ततो वै सदजायत । तदात्मान्<sup>१</sup>  
स्वयमकुरुत । तस्मात्तसुकृतमुच्यत इति । यद्वै तत्सुकृतम् । रसो वै  
सः । रस्<sup>२</sup> ह्येवायं लब्ध्वानन्दी भवति । को ह्येवान्यात्कः प्राण्यात् ।  
यदेष आकाश आनन्दो न स्यात् । एष ह्येवानन्दयाति । यदा ह्येवैष  
एतस्मिन्नदृश्येऽनात्म्येऽनिरुक्तेऽनिलयनेऽभयं प्रतिष्ठां विन्दते । अथ  
सोऽभयं गतो भवति । यदा ह्येवैष एतस्मिन्नुदरमन्तरं कुरुते । अथ तस्य  
भयं भवति । तत्त्वेव भयं विदुषोऽमन्वानस्य । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ।

॥ इति सप्तमोऽनुवाकः ॥

In the beginning was verily this non-existent. From that the existent was born. That created Itself by Itself. Therefore, It is called self-made. This which was self-made—that is the source of joy. Having obtained this source of joy, man becomes blessed. Who would have lived and breathed, had not the bliss in the cavity of heart existed! This Brahman Himself bestows bliss. When this Atman attains fearless oneness with the Brahman, who is invisible, incorporeal, undefined, abodeless, then he becomes free from fear. When, however, this Atman makes even the slightest distinction in Brahman, then there is fear for him. That Brahman Himself becomes the source of fear for him, who makes a difference and does not reflect. There is the following verse (hymn) about it.

### Notes and Commentary

Asat—non-existent. *Idam*—this. *Agre*—in the beginning, formerly, before. *Sat*—Existence. *Ajayata*—was born. *Rasah*—joy, bliss, (lit.) taste. *Abhayam*—fearlessness. *Yadahyeva*—because. *Eshah*—this, the worshipper. *Etasmin*—in this. *Adrisye*—invisible. *Anatmye*—incorporeal, unembodied. *Anirukte*—undefined, unpredicated. *Anilayane*—abodeless,

unsupported, propless. *Pratishtam*—existence, residence. *Vindate*—Attains.

Abode: This is Avyaktam, wherein the universe is merged during Pralaya. It may mean Antahkarana, which is the abode of all tendencies or Vasanas.

Non-abode means Brahman which is beyond the cause. Brahman is not supported by anything and so He is non-abode (houseless, propless, supportless). He is established in His own greatness.

By non-existent is meant the unmanifested Brahman, as opposed to this manifested in name and form, as distinguished from the universe with specific names and forms manifested. It does not mean absolute non-existence, because from absolute non-existence, no existence can come.

Non-existent is the undifferentiated and unmanifested state of existence. It is not defined by any name and form. Hence it is called non-existent.

*Idam*—this. This refers to the universe of specific names and forms.

The existent—the manifested, or the created world, which is differentiated by specific names and forms. This world of differentiated names and forms was non-existent. Prior to creation, this universe was Brahman Himself, here spoken of as 'non-existent' or 'non-being'. From that 'non-existent' was born the 'existent' or 'being', with specific names and forms.

Is the creation quite distinct from Brahman, just as the son is distinct from the father? The Sruti says: 'Brahman, spoken of as non-existence or non-being, created Itself'. Therefore, it is said to be self-made. Brahman transmuted Itself into the visible or manifested universe by Its own inherent power, without any extraneous help. He made Itself as the universe without being impelled by any one else. There is neither a material cause of the universe similar to clay, nor an efficient cause like the potter, over and above Brahman. Brahman is both the material and efficient cause of the universe. Therefore, Brahman is called Sukrita, the cause *par excellence*, the self-cause. Brahman is self-created. This is well known to the world because It is the cause or the source of all.

Brahman is an agent by Himself, but the Jiva is not an agent by himself. He is impelled to act by the Antaryamin, the Inner-ruler.

Or, the passage can be interpreted in another way. Brahman, the cause is called Sukrita, the meritorious act, the good, on account of its virtue. Brahman created all out of Himself, remaining one with the entire world. Therefore, He is called Sukrita, as an embodiment of such a meritorious act.

Sukrita literally means that which is well done, a good act. It refers to the act of the Lord, not to the Lord Himself who is the agent. Even in worldly parlance, people say that whatever is done by the master himself is done well, but not that which is done by the servants. Sukrita may mean self-made, or self-created, or the cause *par excellence*, the self-cause, the independent cause.

That, which is well-known in the world as the cause of the connection between actions and their fruits, etc., and as denoted by the word Sukrita, be it the good deed itself or something else, can be explained only on the supposition that an intelligent eternal cause exists. Therefore, we conclude that Brahman exists, because Sukrita is well known. To prove in other ways that Brahman exists, the Sruti teaches that Brahman is bliss. Brahman also exists, because of this. Of what? Because it is Rasa (joy).

Rasa, in common parlance, is that which gives pleasure, satisfaction and joy, i.e., an object which is sweet, sour, etc. One gets Rasa and becomes joyous. Brahman is the supreme Rasa. By the Rasa of Brahman, this universe, which in itself is without Rasa, appears to be full of Rasa.

Love for Brahman cannot arise if He were not of the nature of bliss. Therefore, the word 'Rasa' denotes that Brahman is bliss itself. All sensual pleasures are only reflection of that one supreme bliss of Brahman. The wise, who are devotees of Brahman, who have no external help to joy, who have no desires, who have attained knowledge, are found full of happiness, as if they had obtained external objects of pleasure. To them, Brahman and Brahman alone is Rasa (joy), the cause or source of that joy. They enjoy the eternal bliss of Brahman in

self-contemplations only. Therefore, Brahman, full of Rasa, and the cause of joy, exists.

In order to point out that Brahman exists, even as the source of our physical activity like breathing, etc., and sensual pleasure, the Sruti proceeds to show that Brahman is the cause of both.

Brahman also exists on account of this. For what reason? Because of the breathing and other kinds of activity we see. There is breathing in and out in this body by the help of Prana and Apana. The functions of the vital airs and the senses are carried on by the body and the senses combined. The conjunction, in mutual dependence, for the benefit of one single entity, is not possible without an independent intelligent being, for we have not seen it otherwise. For instance, sand, lime, bricks, do not combine together without an intelligent being, who is outside them all, who is to occupy the house as its lord.

The Sruti declares that Brahman, who is an embodiment of bliss and joy (Rasa), who is the very core of our being, is the source of our life and the activities of our senses. Without Brahman, the eyes cannot see, the ears cannot hear and the Pranas cannot perform their respective functions. The end and aim of existence, or the goal of life is to attain eternal bliss of Brahman. Man wants lasting happiness. On account of ignorance, he seeks it in external objects. He fails in this direction. Then he obtains discrimination, searches within, turns his mind inwards and finds the undying bliss in his own Self, the Atman, through meditation. The path on which a sensualist treads, is only a zigzag route towards the abode of supreme bliss. Every movement of life is towards Sat-chit-ananda Brahman only.

If this Ananda (bliss) does not exist in the supreme ether in the cave of the heart, who indeed in the world can breathe? Therefore, Brahman exists.

Brahman gives joy to the world. He makes all beings in the world happy, according to their merit or virtue. Brahman is the bliss, which is revealed only in its limited forms to living beings, on account of their Avidya, ignorance.

When the object of desire is attained, the mind withdraws its attention from the object, and turns inwards before the desire for another object arises, and enjoys the bliss of the Inner Self. This is what is usually called sensual pleasure. This truth is known only to those who possess the faculty of discrimination. Thus, we should admit that Brahman exists as the source of this sensual pleasure.

Even as the cause of the fear in the ignorant man and of fearlessness in the wise man, Brahman exists. One can become fearless by attaching himself to something which exists. It is not reasonable that freedom from fear can be attained by something which does not exist. Cessation of fear cannot certainly arise from resort to a non-existent being. The Sruti now proceeds to answer how Brahman is the cause of fearlessness.

Fear comes on account of ignorance. Man is attached to the body and so he develops fear. He feels that life will become extinct if the body perishes. When one attains the knowledge of Brahman, he feels that he is eternal and deathless. He feels that he is identical with Brahman, and so he becomes absolutely fearless. He attains Brahman at the very moment he knows Him.

But, when one identifies himself with the body, the mind, the senses and the Prana, he separates himself from the universal life and the transcendental reality. He feels his separate individual existence, and so he is always in want and feels miserable. Through his own ignorance and separateness, he limits himself and becomes a victim of fear, pain and sorrow.

Whatever is visible is a modification or phenomenon. It is capable of perception. Brahman is not a phenomenon. He is not an object of perception. He is invisible. He cannot be reached by the senses. Invisible means not subject to modification, i.e., changeless. Brahman is changeless, because He is the cause of all modifications or phenomena, and therefore, He is not subject to modifications. An invisible, bodiless thing cannot be described. Because Brahman is invisible, He is formless. In a thing which is free from modification, there is no distinction or distinguishing mark. So, Brahman is indescribable. He is destitute of all attributes.

Fear arises when there is a second object. The Sruti also declares: 'From the second, verily, fear arises' (Bri. Up. I-4-ii). Distinction, difference, duality are the causes of fear. They are born of ignorance. They are generated by Avidya, nescience. The knower of the Self, who feels oneness or unity with the Brahman, who does not behold distinction, difference or duality when he finds that Brahman is his own Self, when he finds nothing else but the Brahman and makes no difference, becomes fearless. There is no fear of birth and death for him. When he is centred in his own Self, when he rests in his own Sat-chit-ananda Svarupa, he sees, hears and tastes nothing else. You can be afraid of another but you cannot be afraid of your own self. How can there be fear for one who beholds his own self everywhere? Therefore, Brahman alone is the cause of the fearlessness of the knower. When there are various causes of fear in the world, the knowers, Jivanmuktas, are fearless. This itself clearly indicates that Brahman, who frees the knower from all sorts of fear, does exist. If Brahman does not exist, the wise cannot attain fearlessness. Therefore, Brahman, the cause of their fearlessness, does exist.

The ignorant man, who beholds duality and difference, however small it may be, in this one undivided Brahman, who sees the smallest difference, between himself and Brahman, who feels that Brahman is distinct from himself, who perceives another placed before him, on account of ignorance, just as a man sees a second moon owing to a disease in the eye, who thinks that he is subject to Samsara, becomes afraid. He thinks that God is different from him, that He will punish him for his sins, and that the Brahman who is subtle, invisible and formless, who is beyond the reach of the senses and the mind, must be an object of perception and knowledge, through intellect. On account of ignorance, he separates himself from the Brahman and regards himself as doer and enjoyer. Therefore, the Atman alone, in the case of the ignorant, is the cause of the fear of the Atman. The self is the cause of the self's fear. He who has no knowledge of this one indivisible Brahman, is really ignorant. Brahman cannot be realised through mere intellectual reasoning. He is beyond the reach of intellect. There is no triad (knower, knowledge and knowable)

in Brahman. He is distinct from the knower, knowable and unknowable.

Here ends the Seventh Anuvaka of Brahmananda Valli

**EIGHTH ANUVAKA**  
**(THE GRADATION OF BLISS)**

भीषाऽस्माद्वातः पवते । भीषोदेति सूर्यः । भीषाऽस्माद्गिश्वेन्द्रश्च ।  
मृत्युर्धावति पश्चम इति । सैषाऽनन्दस्य मीमा॑सा भवति । युवा  
स्यात्साधु युवाध्यायकः । आशिष्ठो द्रुढिष्ठो बलिष्ठः । तस्येयं पृथिवी  
सर्वा वित्तस्य पूर्णा स्यात् । स एको मानुष आनन्दः । ते ये शतं मानुषा  
आनन्दाः ॥१॥

स एको मनुष्यगन्धर्वाणामानन्दः । श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य । ते ये  
शतं मनुष्यगन्धर्वाणामानन्दाः । स एको देवगन्धर्वाणामानन्दः ।  
श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य । ते ये शतं देवगन्धर्वाणामानन्दाः । स एकः  
पितणां चिरलोकलोकानामानन्दः । श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य । ते ये  
शतं पितणां चिरलोकलोकानामानन्दाः । स एक आजानजानां  
देवानामानन्दः ॥२॥

श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य । ते ये शतमाजानजानां देवानामानन्दाः ।  
स एकः कर्मदेवानां देवानामानन्दः । ये कर्मणा देवानपियन्ति ।  
श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य । ते ये शतं कर्मदेवानां देवानामानन्दाः । स  
एको देवानामानन्दः । श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य । ते ये शतं  
देवानामानन्दाः । स एक इन्द्रस्यानन्दः ॥३॥

श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य । ते ये शतमिन्द्रस्यानन्दाः । स एको  
बृहस्पतेरानन्दः । श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य । ते ये शतं  
बृहस्पतेरानन्दाः । स एकः प्रजापतेरानन्दः । श्रोत्रियस्य  
चाकामहतस्य । ते ये शतं प्रजापतेरानन्दाः । स एको ब्रह्मण आनन्दः ।  
श्रोत्रियस्य चाकामहतस्य ॥४॥

स यश्चायं पुरुषे । यश्चासावादित्ये । स एकः । स य एवंवित् ।  
 अस्माल्लोकात्प्रेय । एतमन्नमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति । एतं  
 प्राणमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति । एतं मनोमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति । एतं  
 विज्ञानमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति । एतमानन्दमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रामति ।  
 तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ।

॥ इत्यष्टमोऽनुवाकः ॥

Through fear of Him, blows the wind. Through fear of Him rises the sun. Through fear of Him, again, Indra, fire and the fifth, Death, proceed (to their respective duties).

The following is the enquiry concerning bliss (Ananda Brahman). Suppose there be a youth, a good youth, well-versed in the scriptures, well-disciplined, resolute and very strong. Suppose, his is all this earth, full of wealth. This is one human bliss. (This is the unit measure of human bliss).

A hundredfold of the human bliss is the unit measure of the bliss of human Gandharvas, and also is the bliss of one versed in the Vedas, who is free from desires.

A hundredfold of the bliss of human Gandharvas is the unit measure of the bliss of celestial Gandharvas, and also is the bliss of one versed in the Vedas, who is free from desires.

A hundredfold of the bliss of celestial Gandharvas is the unit measure of the bliss of the manes, who dwell in the long-enduring world, and also is the bliss of one versed in the Vedas, who is free from desires.

A hundredfold of the bliss of the manes who dwell in the long-enduring world, is the unit measure of the bliss of the Devas born in heaven, and also is the bliss of one versed in the Vedas, who is free from desires.

A hundredfold of the bliss of the Devas born in heaven is the unit measure of the bliss of gods known as Karma Devas, those who have become Devas by their sacrificial deeds, and also is the bliss of one versed in the Vedas, who is free from desires.

A hundredfold of the bliss of the gods, known as Karma Devas, is the unit measure of the bliss of Indra, and also is the bliss of one versed in the Vedas, who is free from desires.

A hundredfold of the bliss of Indra is the unit measure of the bliss of Brihaspati, and also is the bliss of one versed in the Vedas, who is free from desires.

A hundredfold of the bliss of Brihaspati is the unit measure of the bliss of Prajapati, and also is the bliss of one versed in the Vedas, who is free from desires.

A hundredfold of the bliss of Prajapati is the unit measure of the bliss of Brahma, and also is the bliss of one versed in the Vedas, who is free from desires.

He, who is in man, and He, who is in the Sun, are one. He who knows this, having departed from this world, (first) attains this Atman made of food, (next) attains this Atman made of Prana, (next) attains this Atman made of Manas and then Buddhi, and (lastly) attains the Atman made of bliss.

There is the following verse on this.

### Notes and Commentary

*Adhyayah*—one who had studied the Vedas. *Asishtah*—well-disciplined. *Dradhishtah*—resolute, very firm. *Balishtah*—very strong. *Srotiyasya*—of one versed in the Vedas. *Akamahatasya*—of one who is not affected by the desires. *Chiralokalokanam*—of those (manes) whose abode is the eternal heaven. *Karmadevah*—those who become gods, owing to their good actions. *Ajana*—the world of the gods (Devaloka).

Wind, Sun, Fire, Indra and Yama are lords in themselves, who preside over the different functions of the universe, and who do their respective duties for its continuance. They regularly perform their functions of blowing and the like, according to a certain law, which involves much trouble. The regular discharge of their respective functions is possible only if there is a controller. Therefore, Brahman, their cause of fear and their controller, exists. They perform their functions, like the servants of a king, from fear of this Brahman. Their existence is entirely dependent upon Brahman.

Death, or Yama, is the fifth god. He always runs here and there, towards those living beings whose life-period has been over, in order to kill them.

That cause of fear i.e., Brahman, is bliss. Of this Brahman, the following is an investigation. What is that investigation or enquiry? Is Brahman's bliss inherent, i.e., natural, or generated by the relation of objects and enjoyer, or the contact of the subject and the object, like the worldly pleasure? In other words, is it produced by the contact of the senses and sense-objects, like the sensual pleasure? Or, is it independent of all external means?

It is through the sensual pleasure, which is familiar to us, that it will be possible for us to conceive the supreme bliss of Brahman, realisable by the intellect which is withdrawn from all the sensual objects. Even worldly pleasure is a particle of the bliss of Brahman.

When the distinction of the subject and the object, created by Avidya, is destroyed by knowledge, the natural, all-pervading, non-dual bliss is realised. The more the Avidya and desire are thinned out, the more the bliss increases. There is no higher or lower degree in the supreme bliss of Brahman. It is only in the sensual pleasures, generated by Karma, that there is higher and lower degrees. A drop of the bliss of Brahman is enjoyed by men according to their meritorious deeds.

When knowledge is screened by Avidya, and when ignorance is increasing, the bliss of Brahman becomes the worldly pleasure, admitting of various degrees as experienced by Brahma and other beings, according to their intelligence, Karma and external means at their command. The same bliss of Brahman, which is experienced by the knower and a Srotriya who is not affected by desire, is the bliss which is experienced a hundredfold more and more, in the ascending orders of beings, rising from man, Gandharvas and upwards, according to Avidya or ignorance, as desire and Karma decrease, till the bliss of Hiranyagarbha, the culminating point, is reached.

*Manushya-gandharvas* are those, who being men, have become Gandharvas, on account of meritorious actions, and knowledge of a superior sort. They have the power of making themselves invisible at pleasure and the like. They can assume

whatever form they like. Sweet fragrance emanates from their bodies. They have subtle bodies and senses. Obstacles to enjoyment are few. They are endowed with power to resist the pairs of opposites. All materials of pleasure are at their disposal. So they enjoy superior bliss which is a hundred times superior to the human pleasure.

On account of greater peace of mind and clearness of mind, realisation of bliss in the higher world, a hundredfold superior to that in the lower world, is possible.

A Srotriya, a man well-versed in the scriptures, who is free from desire, who has no craving for sensual pleasures, can enjoy a bliss, which is a hundred times superior to the human pleasure, and which is equal to the bliss of men who have become Gandharvas. Freedom from desire is the means for the attainment of supreme bliss.

The means of attaining the highest bliss are, the study of sacred scriptures, righteousness and freedom from desire. The first two are common to all stages from the human stage up to Brahma. The third rises higher with the ascending order of beings. Consequently, it is superior to the other two.

*Deva-gandharvas* are so from birth. They have been born as such, even at the beginning of the creation. They are singers of the celestial regions (Devaloka). They are endowed with more powers and capacities than the human Gandharvas. Their nature is also more subtle.

*Ajanajah*—the Devas born in heaven. The gods born in the world of gods, as such, by the virtue of their performance of the sacrificial deeds, as enjoined in the Smritis.

*Karmadevas* are those who reach the abode of the gods by the performance of mere Agnihotra, etc., as enjoined in the Vedas.

The Devas are thirty-three in number. They are the receivers of the oblations offered in the sacrificial rites. They have been created, as such, ever from the beginning of creation. The thirty-three gods are: the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, the twelve Adityas, Indra and Prajapati.

Indra is the lord of the Devas.

Brihaspati is Indra's preceptor. Therefore, he is superior even to Indra on account of his knowledge.

Prajapati is the Lord of creatures, the Virat, whose body is the three worlds. All beings exist in him only. He is the sum total of all individual lives. He is the one who has become many, who pervades the whole world.

Brahma or Hiranyagarbha, is the cosmic mind or the universal life. In him all the different degrees of bliss, described above, unite into one. He possesses the Dharma which generates the bliss, the knowledge that pertains to Dharma and its results and also, perfect freedom from desire. He is the Sutratman.

Even the bliss of the Hiranyagarbha is only a particle of the supreme bliss. This supreme bliss, from which its parts are separated, as drops of water from the sea, and wherein those parts become one, is inherent or natural in Brahman, for He is non-dual. There is no distinction in that state between the bliss and the enjoyer of bliss, because they are one.

The result of the foregoing enquiry is summed up as follows: 'He, who is in the man and He, who is in the sun, are one'. The Being, which is the Innermost Self, the Atman of man, is the same as the one which gives energy and light to the sun.

Becoming one with Brahman, the Supreme Self, is the goal or aim of life. Knowledge of Brahman alone is the means for attaining this end. The effect of knowledge is the eradication of ignorance (Avidya). He who knows Brahman only can become absolutely fearless. Moksha is eternal. It cannot be attained by ritual.

It is only when the knower sees nothing else but his own Self, that he can be fearless and permanent, because in that case there is none other than himself that could produce fear. All beings, other than Brahman, must be creatures of ignorance, because that knowledge of Brahman alone makes you consider the external universe as unreal. The idea of duality is the creation of ignorance. This is proved to be unreal by dawn of knowledge.

Here ends the Eighth Anuvaka of the Brahmananda Valli

## NINTH ANUVAKA

यतो वाचो निर्वर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह । आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् ।  
 न बिभेति कुतश्चनेति । एत् ह वाव न तपति । किमहं साधु नाकरवम् ।  
 किमहं पापमकरवमिति । स य एवं विद्वानेते आत्मान् स्पृणुते । उभे  
 ह्येवैष एते आत्मान् स्पृणुते । य एवं वेद । इत्युपनिषत् ।

॥ इति नवमोऽनुवाकः ॥

He who knows the bliss of Brahman, from which all words return without reaching it, together with the mind, is not afraid of anything.

Such thoughts certainly never distress him: "Why have I not done what is good? Why have I committed sin?"

He, who knows thus, regards both these as the Atman. Verily both these he regards as the Atman, who knows thus.

Thus ends the Upanishad.

## Notes and Commentary

*Vidvan*—the knower. *Kutaschana*—from any one. *Na*—not. *Bibheti*—fears. *Tapati*—grieves or afflicts. *Etam*—this. *Ha*—surely. *Sadhu*—good action. *Ete*—these. *Esha*—this.

This verse gives a brief summary of the whole teaching of this second section—the Brahmananda Valli.

Brahman, the unconditioned, non-dual bliss, is beyond the scope of speech and thought. The speech has the power of describing all objects of this world, only that are conditioned by name and form. The mind has the power of knowing all objects which have name and form. But, Brahman is without name and form, and so, He is indescribable and incomprehensible. Where there is knowledge of objects, there speech goes. Speech and mind, name and perception, always go together.

He who knows the invisible, unqualified, unnameable, Brahman, which is sinless, which is free from all desires, which is free from the relation of enjoyer and enjoyment, which is natural, which is eternal, is not afraid of anything. He realises the unity or oneness of Self. All distinctions, differences, dualities and separateness have vanished from him. The

cause of fear, created by ignorance, has disappeared. He beholds his own Self everywhere. He feels that everything that exists is nothing but his own Self. Therefore, he feels no fear from anything.

The knower of Brahman is not affected by such thoughts as, "Why have I not done what is good? Why have I done evil actions?", because he regards that good and bad are but different manifestations of the same Atman. Virtue and vice do not afflict him. They cannot generate subsequent births.

He knows that the Atman is actionless, and the mind only is the doer of all actions. He has neither wants, nor egoism, nor desires. He does not expect fruits for his actions. He never repents over his past actions. He always abides in his own Self and is ever blissful. All troubles come only when man identifies himself with the little body and mind, on account of ignorance and regards himself as the doer and enjoyer. The Knower realises that he is the non-doer and non-enjoyer.

He who, thus, realises that both virtue and vice (Dharma and Adharma) are only different aspects of the same Atman, strengthens his knowledge of the Atman, by realising oneness or unity of Self everywhere. The highest consummation lies here. Thus has been explained in this chapter, the knowledge of Brahman, wherein lies the Highest Good.

ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।  
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

॥ इति द्वितीया ब्रह्मानन्दवल्ली ॥

Om! May He protect us both (teacher and pupil)! May He cause us both to enjoy the bliss of Mukti! May we both exert to find out the true meaning of the scriptures! May our studies be fruitful! May we never quarrel with each other!

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

Here ends the Ninth Anuvaka of the Brahmananda Valli

Thus ends the Brahmananda Valli.

ॐ

III

## BHRIGU VALLI (INVESTIGATION OF BRAHMAN)

## FIRST ANUVAKA

ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।  
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om! May He protect us both (teacher and pupil)! May He cause us both to enjoy the bliss of Mukti! May we both exert to find out the true meaning of the scriptures! May our studies be fruitful! May we never quarrel with each other!

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

भृगुर्वै वारुणिः । वरुणं पितरमुपससार । अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति ।  
तस्मा एतत्प्रोवाच । अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचमिति ।  
तँहोवाच । यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन जातानि जीवन्ति ।  
यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति । तद्विजिज्ञासस्व । तद्ब्रह्मेति । स  
तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा ।

॥ इति प्रथमोऽनुवाकः ॥

Bhrigu, the son of Varuna, approached his father Varuna and said: 'O Revered Sir, teach me Brahman'. He (Varuna) said this to him (Bhrigu): 'Food, Prana, the eyes, the ears, the mind and the speech (are Brahman).'

To him he further said: 'That from which these beings are born, that by which being born these beings live, that which, when departing, they enter into—that, seek thou, to know, that is Brahman'.

He (Bhrigu) performed penance, and having performed the penance,

### Notes and Commentary

*Pitaram*—father. *Upasasara*—approached. *Adhihi*—teach. *Tasmai*—to him. *Etah*—this. *Provacha*—said. *Tam*—to him. *Uvacha*—said. *Yatha*—from which. *Imani*—these. *Bhutani*—beings. *Jayante*—are born. *Yena*—by which. *Jatani*—being born. *Jivanti*—live. *Prayanti*—having departed. *Samvisanti*—enter. *Tat*—that. *Vijinasasva*—seek, to know.

In order to extol Knowledge, Brahma Vidya, the Sruti starts with a story. In Siksha Valli and Brahmananda Valli, works and contemplation, the remote and indirect means (Bahiranga Sadhana) to Brahma Vidya were dealt with. The present Valli treats of Vichara, enquiry, which is the proximate means to Brahma Vidya.

Varuni is the son of Varuna.

Food is body. Prana is the eater or consumer. It is the life within the body. Eye, ear, mind, speech, are the helps to perception. These are the gates to the perception of Brahman. These are the gates, as it were, of the magnificent city of Brahman (Brahmapuri). You will have to enter into the city of Brahman by passing through these gates. These are the aids to the knowledge of Brahman.

Varuna mentioned first to his son Bhrigu, these, food, etc., which are the gateway to Brahman. Then he gives a description of Brahman. What is that description or definition? It is this: Brahman is that from whom are born all the living beings, from Brahma down to a worm, by whom, when born, they live, i.e., they maintain vital functions and grow, in whom they enter at the time of dissolution (Mahapralaya), and with whom they become one, from whom these beings do not swerve either at their birth, or during their stay, or at dissolution.

Know Brahman, who is thus defined through food, etc., who is the first Cause, from which all objects of this world have come out.

Bhrigu heard from his father, the gateways or helps to the knowledge of Brahman, and the description of Brahman, and began to perform penance, which is the means to the attainment of knowledge of Brahman.

The teaching given by Varuna to his son is incomplete. Bhrigu thought that his father had, in view, another means to the knowledge of Brahman. Bhrigu thought that penance was an important aid, though his father did not say anything about penance. Of all aids to the attainment of Brahman, penance is indeed the most excellent or pre-eminent aid. Therefore, Bhrigu performed penance, as he understood that penance was the most effective means to the attainment of knowledge of Brahman.

The particular mode of Tapas, meant here, is the composure (tranquillity) or concentration (Samadhana) of the external and the internal senses, because that is the path or the doorway to the realisation of Brahman. The greatest penance is the concentration of the mind and the senses. The Smriti says: "One-pointedness of the mind and the sense-organs is indeed the highest penance. It is superior to all Dharmas and it is the supreme Dharma. That is a greater virtue than all other virtues".

Here ends the First Anuvaka of the Bhrigu Valli

#### SECOND ANUVAKA

अन्नं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । अन्नाद्ध्वयेव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।  
 अन्नेन जातानि जीवन्ति । अन्नं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति । तद्विज्ञाय ।  
 पुनरेव वरुणं पितरमुपससार । अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति । तँहोवाच ।  
 तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व । तपो ब्रह्मेति । स तपोऽतप्यत । स  
 तपस्तप्त्वा ।

॥ इति द्वितीयोऽनुवाकः ॥

He (Bhrigu) learnt that food is Brahman, because it is from food, that all these beings are born; by food, when born, do they live; and having departed, into food again they enter.

Having known that, he again approached his father Varuna and said, 'O Revered Sir, teach me Brahman'.

He (Varuna) told him: 'By penance (Tapas), seek thou to know Brahman. Penance is Brahman'.

He performed penance and having performed penance,

### Notes and Commentary

*Annam*—food. *Brahma*—Brahman. *Iti*—this. *Vyajanat*—understood. *Imani*—these. *Bhutani*—beings. *Jayante*—are born. *Jivanti*—live. *Punareva*—again. *Tapasa Brahma Vijijnasasva*—know Brahman by penance (concentration and meditation). *Sa*—he. *Tapah*—penance. *Taptva*—having performed.

Bhrigu came to know that food is Brahman, because all these creatures are born from food, they live by food, and they enter into food again, having departed. Food is the material cause of the food-sheath (*Annamaya Kosa*), i.e., physical body. Bhrigu concluded that, food was Brahman because food had the distinctive marks of Brahman, i.e., all beings had their birth, etc., in food. Food is the real cause of physical life. It sustains life also. This finding through investigation, did not give him full satisfaction, because he thought: 'Food has a beginning, and is an effect and Brahman is beyond cause and is beginningless'. He was beset with doubt and wanted to know more. He again approached his father for further enlightenment.

Much stress has been laid in this *Valli* on penance (*Tapas*), because it is the best means to attain knowledge of Brahman. That is the reason Varuna said to Bhrigu: 'Try to know Brahman by penance alone. Penance is Brahman'. Varuna thought that his son would be able to comprehend the extremely subtle Brahman by purifying his mind through *Tapas*. He thought that his son possessed a gross intellect, so he took the food or gross body as Brahman, and was not able to have a clear grasp or understanding of Brahman, which is beyond the five sheaths. Therefore, he prescribed the practice of penance for Bhrigu.

The reiteration of *Tapas* is to impress firmly on the mind of Bhrigu, that it is the best means, or the only means, and that realisation of the Self is possible through penance alone.

Varuna means to say: So long as you do not find the thing to which the description of Brahman is fully applicable, so long as the desire to know Brahman, or to have further enlightenment does not cease, so long as you take recourse to *Tapas*

(concentration), which is the only means, try to know Brahman by penance alone.

Varuna said, 'Penance is Brahman.' This is by way of courtesy, in order to impress the truth that penance was the proximate means to attain knowledge of Brahman.

Here ends the Second Anuvaka of the Bhrigu Valli

### THIRD ANUVAKA

प्राणो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । प्राणाद्वयेव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।  
 प्राणेन जातानि जीवन्ति । प्राणं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति । तद्विज्ञाय ।  
 पुनरेव वरुणं पितरमुपससार। अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति । तह्नोवाच ।  
 तपसा ब्रह्म विज्ञासस्व । तपो ब्रह्मेति । स तपोऽतप्यत । स  
 तपस्तप्त्वा ॥

॥ इति तृतीयोऽनुवाकः ॥

He (Bhrigu) understood that the Prana is Brahman, because it is from Prana that all these living beings are born; having been born, they live by the Prana; and having departed, into the Prana again they enter.

Having known that, he again approached his father Varuna to know further and said: 'O Revered Sir, teach me Brahman'.

He (Varuna) told him: 'By penance (Tapas), seek thou to know Brahman. Penance is Brahman'.

He performed penance and having performed penance,

### Notes and Commentary

*Iti*—thus. *Vyajanat*—understood. *Hi eva*—verily.

Bhrigu reflected over the matter for a second time, with a concentrated mind, and came to the conclusion that Prana, or life, is Brahman. He thought: 'Life is the cause of the birth of the physical body. It is the cause for its sustenance also. As long as life remains in this body, so long the body lives. When the Prana or life departs from this body, death takes place. Prana only energises this body. Through Prana only, the mind and the senses function. As this Prana is the efficient cause of the birth,

sustenance and death of the body, life is Brahman'. But he was not at all satisfied with this conclusion. He thought: 'This Prana cannot be Brahman, because it is non-intelligent (Jada), it is an effect, it has a cause, it has a beginning and an end'. So, he again approached his father to get further light.

Here ends the Third Anuvaka of the Bhrigu Valli

#### FOURTH ANUVAKA

मनो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । मनसो ह्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।  
 मनसा जातानि जीवन्ति । मनः प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति । तद्विज्ञाय ।  
 पुनरेव वरुणं पितरमुपससार । अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति । त् होवाच ।  
 तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व । तपो ब्रह्मेति । स तपोऽतप्यत । स  
 तपस्तप्त्वा ।

॥ इति चतुर्थोऽनुवाकः ॥

He (Bhrigu) understood that the mind is Brahman, because it is from mind that all these living beings are born, having been born, they live by the mind, and having departed, into the mind again they enter.

Having known that, he again approached his father Varuna to know further and said: 'O Revered Sir, teach me Brahman'.

He (Varuna) told him: 'By penance, seek thou to know Brahman. Penance is Brahman'.

He performed penance and having performed penance,

#### Notes and Commentary

*Manah*—mind. *Brahma*—Brahman. *Iti*—thus. *Vyajanat*—understood. *Manasa*—from mind. *Hi eva khalu*—verily. *Imani*—these. *Bhutani*—creatures.

Bhrigu reflected over the matter for a third time. He thought: 'The mind is more subtle than the physical body and the Prana. It is also intelligent. Thought only leads to action and sustains life. Through thought only, man reincarnates and takes bodies. The entrance of Prana into the womb is itself dependent on mind only'. The Prasna Upanishad says, 'By an act of mind only, man comes into this body'. 'His senses still inhering in his

mind, whatever his thought, with that he goes into the Prana; Prana united with the fire, and the Atman, leads him into his world as he has built up'. Death takes place when man gives up, by thought, all attachment to the body. So mind is the cause of the dissolution also. So mind is the cause of the birth, sustenance and death of the body. Therefore he came to the conclusion that mind is Brahman. But this result did not give him perfect satisfaction. He thought that mind is only an organ or instrument of cognition, that it is dependent on the agent, it is an effect, has a cause, has no self-luminosity, has a beginning and an end, and therefore, it could not be Brahman, the uncaused. So he approached again his father, for further enlightenment.

Here ends the Fourth Anuvaka of the Bhrigu Valli

#### FIFTH ANUVAKA

विज्ञानं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । विज्ञानाद्वयेव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । विज्ञानेन जातानि जीवन्ति । विज्ञानं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति । तद्विज्ञाय । पुनरेव वरुणं पितरमुपससार । अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति । तद्वेवाच । तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञासस्व । तपो ब्रह्मेति । स तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा ।

॥ इति पञ्चमोऽनुवाकः ॥

He understood that knowledge is Brahman, because it is by knowledge that all these living beings are born, having been born, by knowledge they live, and having departed, into knowledge again they enter.

Having known that, he approached his father Varuna to know it further and said: 'O Revered Sir, teach me Brahman'.

He (Varuna) told him: 'By penance, seek thou to know Brahman. Penance is Brahman'.

He performed penance, and having performed penance,

#### Notes and Commentary

Bhrigu reflected over the matter for a fourth time. He thought: "Vijnana or knowledge is subtler than mind. It is the agent. Sruti

teaches that knowledge is the agent, knowledge accomplishes sacrifice, and that knowledge is Brahman. Agent is the cause of the birth of the body, through his acts. Knowledge only controls and directs the mind, the senses and the body, and propels them to action. It is the cause of the sustenance of the body. Knowledge causes dissolution by engaging in battle and other such acts which bring about death. Knowledge only takes the subtle body after death to heaven or hell, and brings it back again to this earth. Therefore knowledge, which answers to the definition of Brahman, must be Brahman".

But, he found out that this finding could not give him entire satisfaction. He thought: "Knowledge is the agent of all actions of the Jiva and also the enjoyer of the fruits of actions. Agency is associated with pain. An agent is not perfectly pure. He is not free from the sorrows, miseries, troubles, tribulations and conditions of life. Further, these four principles, food, life, mind and intelligence, cannot be the cause of the birth of all beings. Akasa and other primary elements of matter, cannot be produced from knowledge. Therefore, knowledge could not be Brahman". So, he again went to his father for getting further light.

Here ends the Fifth Anuvaka of the Bhrigu Valli

#### SIXTH ANUVAKA

आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । आनन्दाद्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति । आनन्दं प्रयन्त्यभि-संविशन्तीति । सैषा भार्गवी वारुणी विद्या । परमे व्योमन्तरिष्ठिता । स य एवं वेद प्रतितिष्ठति । अन्नवानन्नादो भवति । महान्भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन । महान्कीर्त्या ।

॥ इति षष्ठोऽनुवाकः ॥

He understood that bliss is Brahman, because from bliss all these beings are born, having been born, by bliss they live, and having departed, into bliss again they enter.

This is the knowledge learnt by Bhrigu and taught by Varuna. This is established in the supreme space (excellent cavity of the heart). He who knows thus, becomes one with Brahman.

He becomes the possessor of food and the eater of food. He becomes great in progeny, in cattle and in spiritual lustre. He becomes great in fame.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sat*—that. *Esha*—this. *Vidya*—knowledge. *Parame*—supreme. *Vyoman*—space. *Akasa*—sky. *Pratishthita*—is fixed or established. *Annavan*—possessing food, he becomes possessed of food. *Annadah*—eater of food. *Bhavati*—becomes. *Mahan*—great. *Brahmavarchasena*—by spiritual lustre. *Kirtya*—by fame.

Bliss is devoid of pain. It is the highest end of man. It is the cause for the primary elements of matter. Therefore, bliss is Brahman.

Varuna took his son step by step, from the gross to the subtle and subtler aspects of existence, from the gross physical sheath to the innermost bliss. Bhrigu purified himself through penance, slowly penetrated deeper and deeper, through concentration and meditation and understood, that the innermost bliss is Brahman, with the help of penance alone. He came to know, at last, the ultimate truth or basic reality.

Anandamaya Kosa (bliss sheath) is the causal body (*Karana Sarira*) of Jiva, the individual soul. This is subtler than the Vijnanamaya Kosa. Bhrigu dived deep, or penetrated within, and wanted to know what exists even beyond the intellect or Vijnanamaya Kosa, and found out the Anandamaya Kosa. Having reached the Anandamaya Kosa, he ultimately reached the Pratyagatman, or Brahman, which is the innermost Self, which is the basis and support of life and existence, which is realised in the form of bliss.

This chapter of the Upanishad clearly inculcates that he who wishes to know Brahman, should practise that penance which consists in the subjugation of the external and internal organs.

Now, the Sruti here, turning from the story, explains in its own words, the purport inculcated by the story.

This wisdom learnt by Bhrigu and taught by Varuna, which first started with the Annamaya self culminates in the supreme space, i.e., in the supreme non-dual bliss, hid in the cave of the Akasa of the heart.

This Brahma Vidya, knowledge of Brahman, is realised by one's own direct intuitive experience, acquired through penance or one-pointedness of mind.

The fruit of this knowledge is also mentioned here. Anyone else, who gradually penetrates within by the aid of penance, and understands and realises bliss to be Brahman, becomes Brahman himself. He gets himself established in the All-blissful Brahman—one without a second—as he is firm in this knowledge. He who practises this Vidya step by step, with the aid of penance, who dives within step by step, eventually realises the supreme Self. He abandons the five sheaths and attains a firm abode in that supreme support, which is described in the Ananda Valli as 'Brahman, the tail, the support', which is beyond cause and effect.

There are three Akasas in Vedanta, viz., Bhutakasa, Chittakasa and Chidakasa. Bhutakasa is the elemental space which contains all gross objects. Chittakasa is the mental space which contains the world of thought. Chidakasa is the knowledge-space. This is the supreme space, or the Highest Akasa, the principle of Brahman, the Indestructible, the basic reality, which is the support for all relative existences—gross and subtle. Supreme space also means the cavity of the heart, where Brahman is meditated upon.

He is in possession of plenty of food. Mere possession will not suffice. He becomes the eater of food also, i.e., he possesses very good appetite. The digestive fire is kindled. He becomes great in progeny, in cattle, i.e., cows, horses, etc., in spiritual lustre, which is the result of tranquillity of mind, wisdom, etc. He also becomes great in fame which is the result of righteous conduct.

Here ends the Sixth Anuvaka of the Bhrigu Valli

#### SEVENTH ANUVAKA

Knowledge of Brahman can be easily attained by an aspirant, of the first class type, who is endowed with purity and one-pointed mind. The Sruti prescribes certain contemplations in the following chapters, which help to attain one-pointedness of mind for those who have a wavering mind on account of mundane desires.

As food is the first gateway to the attainment of knowledge of Brahman, the Sruti enjoins the contemplation of Brahman through the symbol of food. He who meditates on food as Brahman, attains steadiness of mind. Further, he will possess plenty of food. He will be able to eat it with a good appetite, without any disease. He will be blessed with offspring, cattle, horses, spiritual lustre and fame. The aspirant should never despise food, but regard it as if it were his Guru, as he attains knowledge of Brahman through the gateway of food, by contemplating on it as Brahman.

अन्नं न निन्द्यात् । तद्व्रतम् । प्राणो वा अन्नम् । शरीरमन्नादम् । प्राणे  
शरीरं प्रतिष्ठितम् । शरीरे प्राणः प्रतिष्ठितः । तदेतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितम् । स  
य एतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितं वेद प्रतितिष्ठति । अन्नवानन्नादो भवति ।  
महान्भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन । महान्कीर्त्या ।

॥ इति सप्तमोऽनुवाकः ॥

Do not speak ill of food. That shall be your vow.

Prana (life) is food. The body is the eater of food. The body is fixed in Prana. Prana is fixed in the body. So thus food is fixed in food. He who knows that food is fixed in food, becomes one with Brahman. He becomes the possessor of food and the eater of food. He becomes great in progeny, in cattle and in spiritual lustre. He becomes great in fame.

### Notes and Commentary

*Annam*—food. *Na nindyat*—one should not censure food. *Vrata*—vow. *Veda*—knows.

The aspirant should not condemn or speak ill of any kind of food, because Brahman is obtained through the gateway of food.

The Annamaya Kosa, food-sheath, which is formed of food, is the first gateway, as it were, of the realisation of Brahman. This body, which is formed of food, is the most important instrument with which he has to realise Brahman. Therefore, the aspirant should not censure food.

This is your vow. This is intended to extol food. Why is the food extolled? Because it serves as the means of knowing or realising Brahman.

Prana is food, because Prana is within the body and that which is within another is said to be the food of that other. Food is Prana only. Food is an expression of Prana. Food gives strength and energy to the body. So food is called Prana.

The Prana is fixed in the body. Therefore, Prana is food and the body is the eater of food. Similarly, the body is food and Prana is the eater of food. Why is the body fixed in Prana? Because the body depends upon Prana for its existence. If the Prana departs from the body, the body decomposes and disintegrates. Just as a pillar within the house supports the house, so also Prana, life, dwelling within the body, supports the body. Therefore, the body is fixed in Prana. Body and Prana are mutually dependent upon each other. They sustain each other also. They are different aspects of the same food. Without the aid of body and Prana, realisation of Brahman is not possible. Food sustains the body and Prana. Therefore, the aspirant should always extol food. He should not condemn food even if it is not cooked properly. The aspirant should never say: 'This is bad or useless food'. Glory to food—the sustainer of this body and Prana,—which helps the aspirant to attain the highest end of life, viz., Self-realisation, Moksha, through knowledge of Brahman.

He who knows that this food is established in food, stands for ever as food eater, and becomes possessed of food, and becomes the eater of food. He attains spiritual lustre and great fame.

Here ends the Seventh Anuvaka of the Bhrigu Valli

#### EIGHTH ANUVAKA

अन्नं न परिचक्षीत । तद्व्रतम् । आपो वा अन्नम् । ज्योतिरन्नादम् ।  
अप्सु ज्योतिः प्रतिष्ठितम् । ज्योतिष्यापः प्रतिष्ठिताः । तदेतदन्नमन्ने

प्रतिष्ठितम् । स य एतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितं वेद प्रतितिष्ठति । अन्नवानन्नादो भवति । महान् भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन । महान्कीर्त्या ॥

इति अष्टमोऽनुवाकः ॥

Do not reject food. That is the vow. Water is food. Fire is the food-eater. Fire is fixed in water. Water is fixed in fire. So food is fixed in food. He who knows that food is fixed in food, is established. He becomes rich in food and becomes eater of food. He becomes great in progeny, in cattle and in the spiritual lustre. He becomes great in fame.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Parichakshita*—one should not abandon food. *Jyoti*—fire (heat, light). *Annadam*—consumer of food. *Apsu jyoti pratishthitam*—the fire rests in water.

This is said to extol food. The food which comes to hand at dinner should not be rejected, because it is not good. When one does not reject food, by making any such distinction as good food and bad food, he is glorified or respected.

Water, that is drunk, is digested by the digestive fire in the stomach. Therefore, water is regarded as food, and fire as the food-eater.

Paddy, wheat, fruits and vegetables grow with the help of water. So, water may be regarded as food itself. *Jyoti*, i.e., heat or fire, helps digestion, absorption and assimilation of food. So, *Jyoti* becomes the eater of food.

Lightning is present in the rain water. Perspiration takes place when the body is heated. Therefore, water and fire are considered as each other's support. For the same reason, they are each other's food.

Here ends the Eighth Anuvaka of the Bhrigu Valli

#### NINTH ANUVAKA

अन्नं बहु कुर्वीत । तद्वत्तम् । पृथिवी वा अन्नम् । आकाशोऽन्नादः । पृथिव्यामाकाशः प्रतिष्ठितः । आकाशे पृथिवी प्रतिष्ठिता । तदेतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितम् । स य एतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितं वेद प्रतितिष्ठति ।

अन्नवानन्नादो भवति । महान्भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्व्यवर्चसेन ।  
महान्कीर्त्या ।

॥ इति नवमोऽनुवाकः ॥

Accumulate plenty of food. That is the vow. The earth is the food. Akasa (ether) is the eater of food. In the earth is fixed Akasa. In Akasa is fixed the earth. So food is fixed in food. He who knows that food, thus, rests in food, is established. He becomes rich in food and becomes eater of food. He becomes great in progeny, in cattle and in the spiritual lustre. He becomes great in fame.

**Notes and Commentary**

*Annam bahu kurvita*—let him acquire plenty of food. *Kurvita*—make. *Tadvratam*—that is the rule for the seeker of Brahman. *Pritivyam akasa pratishtitah*—Akasa rests in earth.

In this section, the Sruti enjoins that one should accumulate plenty of food for distribution to travellers.

The earth abides in the ether, which is above and below it. The earth is enveloped by ether on all sides. So the earth is food and the ether is the food-eater. The ether is the basis or container. The ether and the earth are related as the container and the contained. They may be contemplated as resting upon each other by their close contact. The devotee, or the aspirant, should contemplate upon both as each other's food.

In the last three chapters, food is glorified. Minor contemplations viz., contemplation of food as Brahman, contemplation of life and body, contemplation of water and fire, contemplation of earth and ether, are enjoined for the aspirants to attain one-pointedness of mind. Without food, no meditation or spiritual Sadhana or thinking is possible. Food should be meditated upon as God or Brahman. It should be adored and glorified. Worship of food as Brahman will take you eventually to the realisation of the Supreme Self, which is the highest good of man. Whenever you sit before food daily, say, 'Annam (food) is Brahman'. Adore food as Brahman. You will attain Self-realisation through this remembrance of Brahman.

Here ends the Ninth Anuvaka of the Bhrigu Valli

### TENTH ANUVAKA

न कंचन वसतौ प्रत्याचक्षीत । तद्व्रतम् । तस्माद्यया कया च  
विधया बहून्नं प्राप्नुयात् । अराध्यस्मा अन्नमित्याचक्षते । एतद्वै  
मुखतोऽन्नं राद्धम् । मुखतोऽस्मा अन्नं राध्यते । एतद्वै मध्यतोऽन्नं  
राद्धम् । मध्यतोऽस्मा अन्नं राध्यते । एतद्वा अन्ततोऽन्नं राद्धम् ।  
अन्ततोऽस्मा अन्नं राध्यते । य एवं वेद ॥१॥

1. Do not turn away anybody who seeks shelter (lodging). This is the vow. Therefore, let one acquire much food by any means whatsoever. They say, 'food is ready'. If food is prepared in the best manner, food is given to him (the host) also in the best manner. If the food is prepared in the medium manner, food is given to him also in the medium manner. If the food is prepared in the lowest manner, food is also given to him in the lowest manner.

He who knows thus, obtains also similar results.

### Notes and Commentary

*Na Kanchana*—none whatsoever. *Vasatau*—from the house. *Pratyachakshita*—should not be turned away. *Tasmat*—therefore. *Yaya kaya cha vidhaya*—by whatever means. *Prapnuyat*—should get.

He, who meditates on the earth and Akasa, in the aforesaid manner, should not turn out any guest who seeks shelter in his house. This should be the vow of the devotee. If shelter is given, food also ought to, necessarily, be given. Therefore, a householder should store up much food. This is the Dharma of a householder. If shelter and food are not given to a guest, sin will accrue to the householder.

*By whatever means*: Wealth should be earned by honest means, only in accordance with the injunctions of Srutis and Smritis.

Whenever a wise man receives a guest, he never turns him out. He says with courtesy, 'food is ready'. In whatever manner,

and at whatever period of time, a man gives food, in the same manner and at the same period of time, he gets back food.

If the best food is given to the guest amply, and with much faith and devotion, courtesy and humility, at the prime of life, the giver gets ample food, in the next life, at the prime of life. This is a Sattvic gift.

If the food is not given in abundance, and if it is given with vanity in the middle age, the giver gets food in the medium manner, in the next life, in the middle age. This is only a Rajasic gift of medium kind.

If food is prepared in the lowest manner, and if it is offered to the guest without faith, but with insult and disregard late in life, the giver gets food in the lowest manner, in the future birth, late in life. This is the Tamasic gift of the lowest kind.

The fruit of a gift will be in accordance with the nature of the gift.

क्षेम इति वाचि । योगक्षेम इति प्राणापानयोः । कर्मेति हस्तयोः ।  
गतिरिति पादयोः । विमुक्तिरिति पायौ । इति मानुषीः समाज्ञाः ॥२॥

2. Brahman resides in speech as preserver, as acquirer and preserver in Prana and Apana, as action in the hands, as motion in the feet, as discharge in the anus. Thus is the meditation (of Brahman) in respect of man.

### Notes and Commentary

*Kshema*—preservation. *Vachi*—speech. *Yogakshema*—gain and safety. *Gatih*—motion. *Padayoh*—in the two feet. *Vimuktiriti payau*—as evacuation in the anus. *Iti*—so far. *Manushih*—pertaining to men. *Samajnah*—meditation.

*Kshema* means preservation of what has been acquired, and also the well-being of man. The devotee or aspirant should contemplate that Brahman abides in speech, as safety or well-being. When you meet your friend, you generally enquire about his well-being: "How is your health? How do you do? Are you all right? Do you keep good health?" You wish for the well-being of another by speech. As speech is conducive to well-being, well-being lies in speech.

Yoga means acquisition of what has not already been acquired.

Without Prana and Apana life is not possible. Gain and safety, acquisition of objects and their preservation occur, when Prana and Apana are strong. But still they are not altogether due to them. On the contrary, they are due to Brahman only. The power of acquisition and preservation of Prana and Apana is derived from Brahman. Therefore, it should be contemplated that Brahman dwells in Prana and Apana, in gain and safety, as the power of acquisition and preservation of objects.

Similarly, the power of action which is possessed by the hands, of motion by the legs and of excretion by the anus, are also due to Brahman.

Brahman dwells in the hands in the form of action, in the feet as motion, in the anus as discharge. Such are the contemplations of Brahman, with respect to man or human personality, or the physical life of man.

अथ दैवीः । तृप्तिरिति वृष्टौ । बलमिति विद्युति । यश इति पशुषु ।  
 ज्योतिरिति नक्षत्रेषु । प्रजातिरमृतमानन्द इत्युपस्थे । सर्वमित्याकाशे ।  
 तत्प्रतिष्ठेत्युपासीत । प्रतिष्ठावान् भवति । तन्मह इत्युपासीत ।  
 महान्भवति । तन्मन इत्युपासीत । मानवान्भवति । तन्मम इत्युपासीत ।  
 नम्यन्तेऽस्मै कामाः । तद्ब्रह्मेत्युपासीत । ब्रह्मावान् भवति । तद्ब्रह्मणः  
 परिमर इत्युपासीत । पर्येणं प्रियन्ते द्विष्णतः सपत्नाः । परि येऽप्रिया  
 भ्रातृव्याः ।

3. Now follows the contemplation in reference to gods as satisfaction in the rain, as power in the lightning, as fame in cattle, as light in the stars, as offspring, immortality and joy in the generative organ, as all in the Akasa.

Let him meditate upon that as the support. He becomes well-supported. (He will possess all means of living, such as food and clothing.) Let him meditate upon that as the great; he becomes great. Let him meditate upon that as mind; he becomes thoughtful. Let him meditate upon that as obeisance; to him all desires pay homage. Let him meditate upon that as

the Supreme; he becomes possessed of supremacy. Let him contemplate upon that as the destructive aspect of Brahman; all those enemies who hate him, and those rivals whom he does not like, die around him.

### Notes and Commentary

*Atha*—next. *Daivih*—in reference to the celestial. *Triptiriti vrishtau*—satisfaction in rain. *Balam iti vidyuti*—power in the lightning. *Yasah iti pasushu*—fame in cattle. *Jyoti iti nakshatreshu*—light in the stars. *Prajapathiramritamananda ityupasthe*—offspring, immortality and joy in the generative organ. *Sarvam iti akase*—everything in Akasa. *Pratishtha iti*—as a support. *Upasita*—meditate, one should worship.

As rain is the source of satisfaction, pleasure and cheerfulness, through food, etc., Brahman should be meditated upon as being satisfaction in rain. Similarly, in other cases too, Brahman should be meditated upon as power in the lightning, as fame in the cattle, as offspring, immortality and joy in the generative organ. Cattle is a source of great wealth to agriculturists. They bring fame to them.

Immortality is obtained by the discharge of debts by the son. Procreation produces relative immortality, by perpetuating the race and multiplying the species. Brahman should be worshipped, as being fixed in the generative organ, in this form.

Everything is fixed in Akasa. Therefore, all things that exist in Akasa should be contemplated as Brahman. The ether pervades all objects. The all-pervasiveness of ether should be meditated upon as Brahman. He who meditates on Brahman as the all in Akasa, becomes one with all. Akasa is Brahman itself and so it ought to be worshipped as the support of all. In whichever form one meditates upon Brahman, that form he becomes.

Man becomes strong by meditating on the quality of strength. Meditate on Brahman with the attribute of greatness, you become great by wealth and so on. If you meditate on Brahman as mind or thought, you become thoughtful. If you meditate on Brahman with the attribute of homage, all objects of desire become submissive.

Parimara is that in which are destroyed the five Devatas, viz., rain, lightning, the moon, the sun and the fire. It is said in the Chhandogya Upanishad, that in Vayu, the Devas, rain, etc., meet their final dissolution. Vayu is the destructive agent, or aspect of Brahman. Vayu is one with Akasa. It is not different from Akasa. Akasa is, therefore, Brahman's destructive agent or aspect or place of destruction, i.e., in which all objects merge in final dissolution.

If a man meditates on Akasa which is one with the wind, as Brahman's destructive aspect, all those enemies who hate him, and those rivals whom he does not like, die around him.

स यश्चायं पुरुषे । यश्चासावादित्ये । स एकः । स य एवंवित् ।  
 अस्माल्लोकात्प्रेत्य । एतमन्नमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य । एतं  
 प्राणमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य । एतं मनोमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य । एतं  
 विज्ञानमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य । एतमानन्दमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य ।  
 इमाँल्लोकान्कामान्नीकामरूप्यनुसंचरन् । एतत्साम गायत्रास्ते ।

4. He who is in man and he who is in the sun, both are the same. He who knows thus, departing from this world, and attaining this Annamaya self, then attaining this Pranamaya self, then attaining this Manomaya self, then attaining this Vijnanamaya self, then attaining this Anandamaya self and eating what he likes, and assuming forms according to his wishes, travels through these worlds, and sits singing the following Sama song.

#### Notes and Commentary

Sa—he. Ya—who. Ayam—this. Purushe—in man. Aditye—in the sun. Sa ya evam vit—he who knows this. Asmat—from this. Etam annamayam atmanam upasamkramya—after reaching the Annamaya self. Kamanni—enjoying food according to his desires. Kamarupi—assuming forms according to his wishes. Anusancharan—wanderings, travelling.

He eventually enters the soul of bliss or Anandamaya self, step by step through the soul of food or Annamaya self, etc. He now sits singing the Sama song, or the song of unity.

He becomes the Atman of all. He attains the knowledge of the identity of the Atman in the Purusha, and the Atman in the sun. All distinctions, differences and dualities melt. He becomes Brahman, who is Truth, knowledge and infinity, who is immortal, fearless, invisible, unborn, self-created, who is the one without a second.

The knower of Brahman enjoys all objects of pleasure at once, because he has become one with Brahman. Objects have no independent existence. They exist in and through Brahman only, which is the only real Existence. The knower of Brahman feels that the whole world is his body. He eats any food he likes, and assumes any form he likes and wanders through the worlds, the earth and the other worlds, i.e., as one with the all. He beholds all these worlds as the Self. By becoming one with Brahman, he realises that all forms belong to him.

He sits singing Saman. Sama is a set of Vedic Mantras of Sama Veda, which are particularly suitable for singing (Sama Gana). But here it means Brahman or sameness. Saman is Brahman, who is 'Sama' or one with all, i.e., equal, he pervades equally through all. To sing Saman is to proclaim loudly for the benefit of the world, the unity of his Being with the whole world and Brahman, the unity of the Atman, and also the perfection and supreme satisfaction, which is the fruit or result of his knowledge of Self. This is a Mantra which teaches oneness (Samatva). By singing this song, he proclaims to the world and his disciples that he has become one with all.

The knower of Self realises the unity of all the worlds with his own self. He knows his identity with the supreme Self. Therefore, he feels that he also, like Brahman, pervades all the worlds, and so he feels as if he traverses, or travels or wanders through these worlds, although he rests peacefully in his own Satchidananda Svarupa, or the Impersonal Absolute.

हा॒ऽवु॒ हा॒ऽवु॒ हा॒ऽवु॒ । अहमन्नमहमन्नमहमन्नम् ।  
 अहमन्नादोऽहमन्नादोऽहमन्नादः । अहूँ श्लोककृदहूँ श्लोककृदहूँ  
 श्लोककृत् । अहमस्मि प्रथमजा क्रताऽस्य । पूर्वं देवेभ्योऽमृतस्य  
 नाऽभायि । यो मा ददाति स इदेव माऽवाः । अहमन्नमन्नमदन्तमाऽद्यि ।

अहं विश्वं भुवनमभ्यभवाऽम् । सुवर्णं ज्योतीः । य एवं वेद ।  
इत्युपनिषत् ॥

5. Oh, Oh! I am the food, I am the food, I am the food! I am the eater of food, I am the eater of food. I am the eater of food, I am the author of the Sloka, I am the author of the Sloka, I am the author of the Sloka. I am the first born of the true. Prior to gods, I am the centre of all immortality. Whoever gives me, he surely does save thus. I, the food, eat him who eats food. I have conquered all this world. I am luminous like the sun. He who knows thus (attains the aforesaid results). This is the Upanishad.

### Notes and Commentary

*Aham annam*—I am food. *Aham annada*—I am the eater of food. *Ahamslokakrit*—I am the composer of the verses. *Prathamajah*—the first born. *Ritasya*—among the real objects. *Devebhya purva*—prior to gods. *Amritasya nabih*—the centre or basis, or support of immortality. *Ya*—who. *Ma*—me. *Dadati*—gives. *Ava*—saves. *Suvarna jyoti*—the golden light. *Ya evam vedā*—who knows thus. *Iti upanishad*—this is the Upanishad.

This is the Jivanmukta's song of unity with all. The threefold repetition is to indicate wonder. Oh, Oh! is an expression of extreme wonder. The sage is struck with wonder. When he loses his little personality, and realises the oneness with Brahman and the whole universe, the sage says: "I, who am the non-dual, taintless, Brahman, am myself the food, and the food-eater, the enjoyer and the object of enjoyment, the subject and the object. I, who was one with the body, have become Brahman, who is the all, through the grace of the Guru and the scriptures". In the words, 'I am food', etc., the sage expresses his experiences of oneness. He feels: "Whatever food is prepared, all that is myself. The name and form are unreal. They are false appearances. The basic reality that underlies them, which is Satchidananda, is only myself".

"I am the connection, or union, between the food and food-eater. I am the connection as perceiver and objects of perception. I am the consciousness, which causes union

between the enjoyer and the objects of enjoyment. I am the maker of that union. I am, myself, the one who brings the various elements together".

The threefold repetition is also meant to induce confidence, as in the case of swearing. The threefold repetition of 'I am food', is to indicate extreme regard for the knowledge, which is thus expressed, in order to create confidence in those who have no faith. It expresses extreme wonder. The sage experiences: "Previously, I was feeling that I am the doer and the enjoyer. I was identifying with the body, mind, Prana and the senses. Now, I feel I am identical with Brahman. I am struck with wonder. The dual aspect of food and the food-eater, the enjoyer and the enjoyed is false appearance".

*Prathamajah*—the first born, Hiranyagarbha.

Even prior to Devas I was. I existed even before the manifestation of Jivas, or separated intelligent beings. I am the centre of immortality of the Devas, because I am the Self, the basis of their immortality. The final emancipation of individual intelligences consists in their realisation of oneness with me, with Brahman. I am the prop of liberation, like the nave of a wheel.

Whoever gives food to those who seek food, i.e., whoever teaches that I, myself, am in the form of food, he preserves it without losing. Whoever gives this food, i.e., the wonderful knowledge of Brahman, to the real seekers of Truth or thirsting aspirants, certainly saves them from the miseries and sorrows of mundane existence.

I, in the form of Devata presiding over food, eat up, i.e., punish the greedy miser, who eats all food himself without giving it to others. There is no chance for him for attaining knowledge of the Self. The Sruti says: "A perfect sinner is he who eats alone". Gita says: "Sin do those sinners eat, who cook food for their own sake".

As Rudra, I destroy the whole world at the time of Pralaya, or dissolution, which is the home of all beings from Brahman downwards (Bhuvanam), and in which all living beings take their birth.

Just as the sun shines without the aid of other lights, so also I am self-luminous. I shine without the help of any other light. Just as the sun dispels the darkness, so also I dispel the darkness of ignorance, set up by Avidya.

To him who realises, through Annamaya and other selves, the non-dual, partless Atman, spoken of as 'Brahman, the tail' with perfect endurance and balance of mind, being free from desire, content and self-composed, who attains the knowledge of the Self as imparted in these two Vallis, by intense devotion and Tapas like Bhrigu, by developing the four means of salvation—to him accrue all the fruits described above.

Though it has already been said that the illumined sage attains this fruit, still it is reiterated here in order to point out that the illumined sage alone attains the fruit.

ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।  
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

॥ इति भृगुवल्ली समाप्ता ॥

ॐ शं नो मित्रः शं वरुणः । शं नो भवत्वर्यमा । शं न इन्द्रो  
बृहस्पतिः । शं नो विष्णुरुक्रमः । नमो ब्रह्मणे । नमस्ते वायो । त्वमेव  
प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि । त्वामेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मा वादिषम् । ऋतमवादिषम् ।  
सत्यमवादिषम् । तन्मामावीत् । तद्वक्तारमावीत् । आवीन्माम् ।  
आवीद्वक्तारम् ।

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

॥ इति तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत्संपूर्णा ॥

Thus ends the Bhrigu Valli

Here ends the Taittiriya Upanishad

# AITAREYA UPANISHAD

## INTRODUCTION

### I

Hari Om! The philosophy taught by the Upanishads has been the source of solace to thousands of people, and even to men in the West like Schopenhaur. It is extremely difficult to translate the Upanishads into English. The charm, force and beauty will disappear in translation.

To desire to know Brahman is to have all desires fulfilled. Those who know Brahman have attained the highest to be attained.

The final emancipation consists in being centred in Brahman, which is bliss and joy, after eradicating ignorance, which is the cause of desire and Karma. Ignorance is dispelled by knowledge of Brahman.

The Aitareya Upanishad forms part of the Aitareya Aranyaka of the Rig-veda. It is divided into five sections (Khandas). If the Peace-Chant be counted as a section, the sections become six, and by such counting, this Upanishad is sometimes called 'Atmashatka', i.e., six-sectioned dissertation on the Atman. It is divided into three chapters. The first contains three sections, the second and the last, one section each.

The Upanishad derives its name from its author Mahidasa Aitareya, the son of Itara.

It describes, in symbolical language, the creation of the universe. It deals with the Atman as the only Reality. It treats of evolution through hunger and thirst, of food, of the entrance of the Self into the body. It deals with the conception and the three births of man.

It teaches that one is freed from birth and death and attains immortality through knowledge of Brahman. It contains the saying of Rishi Vamadeva who attained immortality through knowledge of the Self. It teaches that the Atman, and not

Prana, is the last and only cause of everything. It teaches that the whole universe is manifestation of Brahman, that the individual soul is identical with the Supreme Soul, and that the goal of life lies in the realisation of the unity of the individual self with the Supreme Self. The sole teaching of the Upanishad is to inculcate the knowledge that the Atman and Para-Brahman are identical.

It is well established in all the Upanishads, that the end attained by the realisation of the unity of Self, is immortality.

Becoming one with the Devas, cannot give one the final emancipation. The Devas, such as Agni, etc., are subject to Samsara, because they are subject to the faults, such as hunger. All that is subject to hunger, etc., are only in Samsara. The Srutis declare that the highest Brahman is above hunger, etc. Realisation of this supreme Brahman alone will lead to freedom from Samsara, birth and death.

The central teaching of this Upanishad is the unity of the Atman with Paramatman. This must be realised through knowledge of the Self and not by rituals. Atma-Jnana alone can burn the seeds of Samsara and bestow Moksha.

## II

The knowledge of Brahman should be taught to those who have purified their hearts, by performing the Karmas enjoined in the scriptures, who are therefore fit to receive instructions, who are well versed in Sastras, who possess faith, who are centred in Brahman, and who have duly practised the vow of Sirovratam. Sirovratam is the well-known Vedic vow mentioned in the Atharvana Veda. This obviously means the head-vow, Sannyasa, renunciation. This is the ceremony in which the head is shaven.

One should enter the fourth order of life, as it is difficult to practise Brahma-vidya without absolute renunciation. Sri Sankara agrees that a householder is not disqualified for study and practice of Vedanta. But, according to him Sannyasa is necessary for attaining Self-realisation. A Sannyasin only is a wholifetime aspirant. He can devote the whole time in study and meditation. He can find adequate leisure and freedom from the distractions only in Sannyasa. Hence, renunciation is

desirable even to those who have not attained Jnana. "Avidusha-mapi                   mumukshuna                   parivrajyam  
 kartavyameva—even one who is not a knower, but who is desirous of attaining liberation, should enter the order of a Sannyasin."

He further adds, with emphasis, that the practice of meditation on the Self cannot be pursued with intense vigour and devotion without relinquishing the concern of life. He says: "The control of the external and the internal activities of the senses, and other aids to the realisation of the Atman are incompatible with other orders of life".

In the Kaivalya Upanishad, we find, 'Not by Karma, not by offspring, not by wealth, but by renunciation alone can men attain immortality'. Smritis also say, 'Let one live in that order of life which is a means to the knowledge of Brahman'. In this Ashrama only, Brahmacharya and other helps to knowledge can all co-exist, and these are impossible in a householder's life.

The Srutis say: "Let one leave home for the forest and turn as a Sannyasin, or otherwise even from the order of a bachelor, either from home or from the forest let him turn as a Sannyasin". The order of Sannyasin is enjoined even on one in the householder's order, as an indirect aid to the realisation of the Atman. This voluntary renunciation while yet a neophyte, will qualify the aspirant for Vedantic study. The Sruti also says: "Yadahareva virajet tadahareva pravrajet—one should leave the house the very day dispassion dawns in him".

The Sannyasin is free from all sorts of worldly distractions, ties and attachments. The garb puts a check on the aspirant from going astray or doing evil actions. When there is internal change, when one is ready for entering the fourth Ashrama of life, why should he be afraid of putting on the orange-coloured robe? Why should he say, I have given colouring to my heart? It is a sort of timidity and hypocrisy. Vasanas (subtle desires) still lurk in his heart. Why did Yajnavalkya, Sri Sankara, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa take Sannyasa?

Sannyasa has got its own glory and advantages. The freedom of a Sannyasin can hardly be described. A Sannyasin only can entirely cut off all connections and ties. Though you

have coloured your heart, still all members of your family will cling to you like a leech till the end of life. They cannot understand your changed mental state. You cannot entirely eradicate Moha (infatuated love) and attachment for your family. When you fall sick, you will be tempted to go for their help and vice versa. The old Samskaras will get new life, and Moha will bind you with stronger chains once again. It is only when you take Sannyasa that they will leave you free. They will leave all hopes on you. Then only you become dead for them. They will not approach you again.

If you like seclusion, if you are free from Raga or passion, worldly ambition, Karmic tendencies and attractions of this world, if you are reticent and serene, if you have disciplined yourself while remaining in the world, if you can live on simple food, if you can lead a hard life, if you have a strong constitution, if you are not talkative, if you can remain alone without company and talk, if you have a meditative temperament or reflective nature, if you can bear all the difficulties in the spiritual path, if you can lead the life of an ascetic till the end of your life, you can take to the path of renunciation. Then only you will be benefited by embracing Sannyasa. You should actually lead the life of a Sannyasin for one or two years in the world itself. You should prepare yourself first in the world itself. Otherwise, you will find it extremely difficult to tread the path. For a man of dispassion, discrimination and strong will, this path is all joy and bliss.

May you develop real thirst for release from the bonds of Samsara! May your hearts be filled with the love of the Atman alone! May you develop real Vairagya and enter the illimitable kingdom of Eternal bliss!

May you all realise the ancient wisdom of the Upanishads! May you all recognise the oneness of the Self! May you all live, immersed in the ocean of Bliss, in an illumined state!

ॐ वाऽ मे मनसि प्रतिष्ठिता । मनो मे वाचि प्रतिष्ठितम् ।  
आविरावीर्म एधि । वेदस्य म आणीस्थः । श्रुतं मे मा  
प्रहासीरनेनाधीतेनाहोरात्रान्संदधाम्यृतं वदिष्यामि । सत्यं वदिष्यामि ।

तन्मामवतु । तद्वक्तारमवतु । अवतु माम् । अवतु वक्तारम् । अवतु वक्तारम् ।

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om! My speech is rooted in my mind. My mind is rooted in my speech; Brahman, reveal Thyself to me. Ye, mind and speech, enable me to grasp the Truth that the scriptures teach. Let what I have heard slip not from me. I join day with night in study. I think the truth, I speak the truth. May That protect me, may That protect the teacher, protect me, protect the teacher, protect the teacher!

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

## SECTION I

आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीन्नान्यत्किंचन मिष्ट । स ईक्षत लोकान्नु सृजा इति ॥१॥

1. In the beginning, (all) this was verily the Atman alone. There was nothing else active. (Nothing else whatsoever living existed. There was no other thing that winked at all.) He thought: '(Now) verily I shall create the worlds.'

### Notes and Commentary

*Atma*—the Atman. *Vai*—verily. *Idam*—this. *Eka*—one. *Eva*—alone. *Agre*—in the beginning. *Asit*—existed. *Na*—not. *Anyat*—other. *Kinchana*—anything. *Mishat*—winking. *Sa*—he. *Ikshata*—thought. *Lokan*—the worlds. *Nu*—surely. *Srujai*—shall create. *Iti*—thus.

Atman is the first principle or the first cause. It is the only reality. It is from the root which means 'to obtain', 'to eat', 'to enjoy' or 'to pervade all'. The Atman is the highest, all wise, all powerful, free from all characteristics of Samsara, such as hunger, delusion, sorrow, etc. He is eternal, pure, intelligent and free. He is birthless, undecaying, ageless, immortal, fearless and secondless.

*Idam*: the universe, which has been described in Purva Khanda, as being differentiated by name, form and Karma, was the one Atman, alone at first, i.e., before creation.

Agree—before the creation of the universe. In the beginning, before the creation started, there was nothing save the Atman. In reality, there is no such thing as creation. It is only a projection of what lies in a potential state in the Avyakta, or the unmanifested, at the beginning of a new cycle. Is He not now the same, the one entity? Is there something else beside Him? No. Why then is it said 'He was'? How is it that the past tense 'existed' is used? Though even now, He alone exists, there is a difference.

Before creation, the universe was one with the Atman. It had no manifested difference of name and form. It was denoted by the word 'Atman' alone, but now it is denoted by many words, and also by the one word 'Atman', on account of the manifestation of the difference of name and form. When foam, bubble, wave, etc., become manifested, by their difference of names and forms from that of water, the same substance water is denoted by more than one word, i.e., foam, bubble or wave. The idea of foam, bubble, etc., remain merged in that of water, before they are differentiated from water and given a name and a form. The idea of 'foam' is understood by the single word 'water'.

*Nanyatkinchana*—nothing else. *Mishat*—active, winking, living. No other operating entity save the Atman, existed like the Pradhana of the Sankhyas, independent and material, or like the atoms, apart from Isvara, of the followers of the school of Kanada. In the Vedanta, no entity independent of the Atman is admitted to exist. There was the Atman alone. This is the import of the text. Maya cannot function by itself. It has no independent existence. Therefore, the Atman is secondless, and the world has a mere relative existence, as it existed only as the Atman before its creation.

The Atman, being Omniscient by nature, thought: 'I shall create worlds'. How could He have perceived or thought before the creation, being destitute of the organs and body? There is no fault, because of His being Omniscient by nature. The Sruti says: 'He runs without feet and grasps without hands'.

What was His object or purpose in creating the worlds? The answer is: 'I shall create the worlds, named Ambhah, etc., the regions, for the enjoyment of the results of Karma, by living beings.'

स इमाँल्लोकानसृजत । अभ्मो मरीचीर्मरमापोऽदोऽभ्मः परेण दिवं  
द्यौः प्रतिष्ठाऽन्तरिक्षं मरीचयः । पृथिवी मरो या अधस्तात्ता  
आपः ॥२॥

2. He created these worlds, viz., Ambhas, Marichi, Maram and Apah. The Ambhas is above the heavens, its support. The Marichayah (rays) from the sky. The Maram (region of the world) is the earth, and what are below the earth are the Apah (waters).

#### Notes and Commentary

Sa—He (the Atman). Iman—these. Lokan—worlds. Asrujata—created. Ambhas—watery region. Marichayah—the regions of rays. Maram—the region of world of mortals. Apah—water. Ada—that. Paren—a higher. Dyau—heaven. Pratishtha—support. Antariksha—the intervening space. Prithivi—earth. Ya—which. Adhasta—below.

Having reflected thus, the Atman created these worlds. An intelligent mason thinks first within himself: 'I shall build the palace in such and such a manner'. He makes a plan first. Then he builds it. Even so, Isvara created the worlds.

The mason builds a palace with the help of proper materials. How can the Atman, who is without such materials, create the worlds? This is no objection. He is omniscient and omnipotent.

Just as foam is spoken of separately, though it is a modification of water, and is denoted by a single name before the change occurs, so also the one and the same Atman may become the cause of the manifested universe, which corresponds to the differentiated foam.

Brahman is both the material and efficient cause. The omniscient Atman is the substratum of the universe, He became the material cause and created the universe. There is, thus, no inconsistency. Brahman is only the Vivartopadana.

Or, just as a juggler creates himself in another form, as moving in the air without any other material cause, so the all-powerful and the all-knowing Lord, the mighty magician, creates Himself as other than Himself, in the form of the universe. This is a better explanation of the creation. Hence, the position of those who hold that either the effect is unreal or the cause or both, becomes untenable and their views are easily refuted.

What worlds He created is next stated. Having created the world, in due order, beginning with the ether, He created the worlds, *Ambhas*, etc. The *Sruti* itself explains what these worlds are. The world denoted by the word *Ambhas* is above the heavenly world. It is called *Ambhas* because it contains water that supports life. The heaven sustains the watery world known as *Ambhas*. The sky, or the interspace, below the *Dyauloka* is known as *Marichayah*. Though one, the plural '*Marichayah*' is used because of its permeating various regions, or because the myriad rays of the sun pervade it. The earth is called *Maram*, because all creatures die here (*Mriyante*). The worlds below the earth are called *Apah*, from the root 'Ap' meaning 'to obtain'. The people who dwell there are filled with joy. Though the worlds are composed of the five elements, still on account of the preponderance of water, they are called by names meaning water, such as *Ambhas*, etc.

*Ambha*, *Maha*, *Jana*, *Tapa* and *Satya Lokas* are above the heavens, where, at the commencement of the creation, the waters were placed.

स ईक्षतेमे नु लोका लोकपालान् सृजा इति । सोऽद्भ्य एव पुरुषं  
समुद्धृत्यामूर्छयत् ॥३॥

3. He reflected: 'These indeed are the worlds (I have created). I shall create the protectors or rulers of the worlds'. Then He raised the Purusha from water and gave him form.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sa*—He. *Ikshata*—reflected, pondered, cogitated. *Ime*—these. *Lokapalan*—rulers of the worlds. *Srijai*—shall create. *Iti*—thus. *Sah*—He. *Adbhya*—from water. *Eva*—only.

*Purusham*—the Purusha. *Samudhritya*—having raised. *Amurchayat*—gave form.

From water—from the manifested causal matter, from the five elements of which water is the most important.

*Purusha*—the Virat Purusha.

Having created the four worlds, in which the fruit of Karmas is enjoyed by all the living beings, He, the Lord, thought again: "These worlds, Ambhas, etc., which have been created by Me, would perish without rulers. Therefore, I shall create for the protection of these worlds their rulers". Thus thinking, He lifted up the Purusha from the water, i.e., from the five elements the most important of which was water, and from which He created the worlds, Ambhas, etc., and gave him a shape by joining the appropriate limbs, just as the potter takes out a lump of clay from the earth and gives it shape.

तमभ्यतपत्तस्याभितपत्तस्य मुखं निरभिद्यत यथाण्डं मुखाद्वाग्वाचो-  
उग्निर्नासिके निरभिद्येतां नासिकाभ्यां प्राणः प्राणाद्वायुरक्षिणी  
निरभिद्येतामक्षिभ्यां चक्षुश्चक्षुष आदित्यः कर्णो निरभिद्येतां कर्णाभ्यां  
श्रोत्रं श्रोत्राद्विशस्त्वङ् निरभिद्यत त्वचो लोमानि लोमभ्य  
ओषधिवनस्पतयो हृदयं निरभिद्यत हृदयान्मनो मनसश्चन्द्रमा  
नाभिर्निरभिद्यत नाभ्या अपानोऽपानान्मृत्युः शिश्नं निरभिद्यत  
शिश्नाद्रेतो रेतस आपः ॥४॥

॥ इति प्रथमः खण्डः ॥

4. Then the Atman brooded over that, i.e., the lump. He wished to give it the shape of a man. A hole in the shape of a mouth, manifested itself in that mass which was brooded over by Him, just as a bird's egg bursts when hatched. From the mouth came out speech, and from speech fire. Then his nostrils came forth, from the nostrils the smell (Prana), from the smell (Prana) the air.

His eyes came forth, from his eyes sight, from sight the sun. His ears came forth, from his ears hearing and from hearing the quarters. His skin came forth, from the skin the hair, from the hairs the herbs and big trees. His heart came forth, from the

heart the mind, and from the mind, the moon. The navel came forth, from the navel the Apana and from Apana, death. His generative organ came forth, from the generative organ semen, and from semen, water.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tamabhyatapat-tasya-abhitaptasya*—He, having brooded over. *Mukham*—from the face. *Nirabhidyata*—issued forth. *Yathandam*—like in an egg. *Mukhat*—from mouth. *Vacha*—word or speech. *Agni*—fire (from speech). *Nasike*—nostrils. *Nirabhidyatam*—came forth. *Nasikabhyam*—from nostrils. *Prana*—smell (Prana). *Pranat*—from Prana. *Vayu*—air. *Akshini*—eyes. *Nirabhidyetam*—came out. *Akshibhyam*—from eyes. *Chakshu*—sight. *Chakshusha*—from sight. *Aditya*—sun. *Karnau nirabhidyetam*—ears came out. *Karnabhyam*—from ears. *Srotram*—hearing. *Srotrat*—from hearing. *Disah*—quarters. *Tvanga-nirabhidyata*—skin came out. *Tvacha*—from skin. *Lomani*—the hairs. *Lomabhyam*—from hairs. *Oshadhi-vanaspataya*—herbs and medicinal plants. *Hridayam nirabhidyata*—heart came forth. *Hridayat*—from heart. *Mana*—mind. *Manasa*—from mind. *Chandrama*—moon. *Nabhirnirabhidyata*—navel issued forth. *Nabhyam*—from navel. *Apana*—Apana. *Apanatmrityuh*—from Apana, death. *Sisnam nirabhidyata*—the generative organ came forth. *Sisnat*—from the organ. *Reta*—semen. *Retasa*—from semen. *Apah*—water.

*Tapa* does not mean here performance of austerities, such as Chandrayana Vrata and Kricchra Vrata. It means here 'to reflect', 'to cogitate', 'to will', 'to create by mere will'.

In all cases, the seat of each sense, the organ and the presiding deity, manifested themselves in order. From the nostrils, Prana proceeded. The word 'Prana' denotes here the sense of smell. The organ of evacuation is called Apana, on account of its connection with the downward wind.

*Loma*: denotes the organ of touch, connected with the skin on which Loma or the hair grows.

*Hridayanmanah*—from the heart sprang forth the mind. Feelings have their seat in the heart.

The hands burst forth, from them came out Indra. Then came out the feet, and from them proceeded Upendra or Vishnu. The anus burst forth, and from it proceeded Niriti and Yama. Similarly, the tongue came out, and from it proceeded taste and from taste, Varuna.

Here ends the First Section

## SECTION II

ता एता देवताः सृष्टा अस्मिन्महत्यर्णवे प्रापतंस्तमशनाया-  
पिपासाभ्यामन्ववार्जत् । ता एनमब्रुवन्नायतनं नः प्रजानीहि  
यस्मिन्प्रतिष्ठिता अन्नमदामेति ॥१॥

1. Those gods, thus created, fell into this great ocean of Samsara (world). Then He subjected them to hunger and thirst. They said to Him (the Creator): "Ordain for us a place in which, being established, we may eat food."

### Notes and Commentary

*Tah*—those. *Eta*—these. *Srishtah*—created. *Devatah*—Devas. *Asmin mahati arnave*—in this great ocean. *Prapatan*—fell. *Tam*—them. *Asanayapipasabhyam*—with hunger and thirst. *Anvavarjat*—joined. *Ta*—they. *Enam*—Him. *Abruvan*—said. *Ayatanam*—a body or abode. *Nah*—to us. *Prajanihi*—ordain. *Yasmin*—in which. *Pratishthithah*—being established. *Annam*—food. *Adama*—shall eat. *Iti*—thus.

Those gods—Agni and the rest—created by the Lord, as protectors of the worlds, fell into this great ocean of Samsara, filled with the waters of the miseries, resulting from ignorance, desire and Karma. The sorrows and miseries are caused by the actions of men prompted by desires. Desires and actions are born of primal ignorance, Avidya. The ocean of Samsara is infested by crocodiles, in the form of chronic diseases, old age and death. It is beginningless, endless and shoreless. It gives no place for support. It is refugeless. It gives a little relief in the trivial pleasures, produced by the contact of the senses and their objects. It is agitated by the mighty waves of the thousand and one evils, caused by the agitation of the wind of desire, for satisfying the cravings of the five senses, roaring with the noise

and cries of Ha, Ha, etc., proceeding from the numerous hells, such as Maharaurava, etc. It is provided with the raft of knowledge, and well-stored with the provision of the good qualities of the heart, such as truth, righteousness, simplicity, liberality, charity, non-attachment, courage, determination, etc. It has association with the sages, and renunciation for its route, and liberation for its other shore. Into such a vast ocean, the gods fell.

The path of knowledge and works combined, which enables a man to become identical with the gods, is not sufficient to put an end to all the miseries of Samsara. This is what has to be understood here.

One can free himself from the miseries of births and deaths, only by knowing Brahman, who is the originator, preserver and destroyer of the universe and who is the inner Self of all beings. Srutis declare: "This is the path, this is the thing to be done, this is Brahman, this is Truth. This is the knowledge of the unity of Paramatman and Jivatman. There is no other path for liberation".

Knowledge of the unity of Jivatman and Parabrahman, is the proper means for the attainment of the final beatitude. Works and meditation are preliminary disciplines. They are not the direct path to Moksha.

That Purusha, the first born, the source from which the seat of each sense, the organ and the presiding deity sprang forth, was subjected to the faults of hunger and thirst. Because the Virat Purusha, who is the cause, was subjected to hunger and thirst, those who are produced by Him, viz., the gods, were subject to hunger and thirst.

The Devas were tormented by hunger and thirst. They said to their father, the Creator: 'Give us an abode, residing in which, we may be able to enjoy our food'. They prayed to Isvara to create individual bodies for their residence, as they could not enjoy to their entire satisfaction in the body of the Virat Purusha. 'To eat food' means to perceive the objects which correspond to the senses.

Hunger and thirst are the limitations of life. The Atman has neither hunger nor thirst. The world (Samsara) is always

compared with the ocean, owing to the difficulty in crossing over it. Samsara constitutes the round of births and deaths

ताभ्यो गामानयत्ता अब्रुवन्न वै नोऽयमलमिति । ताभ्यो-  
अश्वानयत्ता अब्रुवन्न वै नोऽयमलमिति ॥२॥

2. He brought a cow to them. They said: 'It is indeed not sufficient for us'. He brought a horse to them. They said: 'This is not enough for us'.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tabhyah*—to them. *Gam*—cow. *Anayat*—brought. *Tah*—they. *Abhruvan*—told. *Ayam*—this. *Nah*—not. *Alam*—sufficient. *Asvam*—horse. *Anayat*—brought. *Nah*—for us. *Navai*—not verily. *Alam*—sufficient.

The Lord lifted up from the waters a lump of earth and fashioned it into the form of a cow's body, and showed it to the gods. The gods said: 'This body is not enough for our abode and eating food. This is quite unfit for us to eat'. Creation does not reach perfection in animals.

ताभ्यः पुरुषमानयत्ता अब्रुवन्सुकृतं बतेति पुरुषो वाव सुकृतम् । ता  
अब्रवीद्यथाऽऽयतनं प्रविशतेति ॥३॥

3. He brought a man to them. They said: 'Well done, indeed! Hurrah! Man alone is the masterpiece. Man indeed is the abode of all good actions'. He said to them: 'Enter into your respective abodes'.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tabhyah*—to them. *Purusham*—man. *Anayat*—brought. *Tat*—they. *Abhruvan*—said. *Sukritam*—well done. *Bata*—in joy. *Purusha*—man. *Vava*—verily. *Sukrita*—well created. *Tah*—to them. *Abravit*—said. *Yathayatanam*—the proper abode. *Pravisetah*—enter.

The gods were immensely delighted when they saw the form of man. They said: 'This is verily a beautiful abode for us'. Man alone is the best of creation, because all virtuous actions proceed from him alone. As man was created directly by Isvara

by His mysterious powers, he is said to be Sukritam, i.e., is said to be well accomplished. Man alone is endowed with higher intelligence, and powers of discrimination and reasoning. That is the reason the gods were very delighted to have their abode in him. Animals are destitute of discrimination and higher intelligence. Therefore, they could not dwell in them to their entire satisfaction. The human body alone is called Karmyatana, because Karmas can be done by this body alone. All other bodies are called Bhogayatanas, i.e., bodies intended for sensual enjoyments only.

The Lord knew that the man was the proper abode for the gods. He thought that this abode was liked by them, as all like to dwell in their native home, as all like the causes from which they proceed. He said to them: 'Therefore enter each of you into the abode suitable for your activity or proper functioning, such as the mouth, etc'.

अग्निवाग्भूत्वा मुखं प्राविशद्वायुः प्राणो भूत्वा नासिके  
प्राविशदादित्यश्चक्षुर्भूत्वाऽक्षिणी प्राविशद्विशः श्रोत्रं भूत्वा कर्णं  
प्राविशन्नोषधिवनस्पतयो लोमानि भूत्वा त्वचं प्राविशंश्चन्द्रमा मनो  
भूत्वा हृदयं प्राविशन्मृत्युरपानो भूत्वा नाभिं प्राविशदापो रेतो भूत्वा  
शिशं प्राविशन् ॥४॥

4. Fire becoming speech, entered the mouth, air becoming Prana (smell), entered the nostrils, the sun becoming sight, entered the eyes, the deity of the quarters, becoming sound, entered the ear, the herbs and trees becoming hair, entered the skin, the moon becoming mind, entered the heart, death becoming Apana, entered the navel, water becoming semen, entered the generative organ.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Agni*—fire. *Vagbhutva*—becoming speech. *Mukham*—tongue. *Pravisa*—entered. *Vayu*—air. *Pranobhutva*—becoming Prana. *Nasike pravisa*—entered the nose. *Aditya chakshur-bhutva*—Sun becoming sight. *Akshini*—eyes. *Disa*—quarters. *Srotaram bhutva*—becoming ears. *Karnau pravisa*—entered the ears. *Oshadhi-vanaspatayah*—herbs

and medicinal plants. *Lomani bhutva*—becoming hairs. *Tvacham pravisat*—entered the skin. *Chandrama mano bhutva*—moon becoming mind. *Hridayam pravisat*—entered the heart. *Mrityu*—Death. *Apanobhutva*—becoming Apana. *Nabhim pravisat*—entered the navel. *Apah*—water. *Retro-bhutva*—becoming semen. *Sisnam pravisat*—entered the generative organ.

Just as the generals of armies enter a town at the command of their sovereign, so also, having obtained the permission of the Lord, and saying: 'Be it as Thou commandest', Agni, the presiding deity of speech, becoming speech itself, entered the mouth, its source or own place of birth. Similarly, the rest is explained.

The organs or senses cannot do their respective function, without any impulse from a conscious being, who is their presiding deity. Each organ has its own presiding deity or intelligent being.

तमशनायापिपासे अब्रूतामावाभ्यामभिप्रजानीहीति । ते अब्रवी-  
देतास्वेव वां देवतास्वाभजाम्येतासु भागिन्यौ करोमीति । तस्माद्यस्यै  
कस्यै च देवतायै हविर्गृह्यते भागिन्यावेवास्यामशनायापिपासे  
भवतः ॥५॥

## ॥ इति द्वितीयः खण्डः ॥

5. Hunger and thirst said to him: 'Assign a place for us'. He told them: 'I assign you a place in these gods, and make you sharers with them'. Therefore, when oblations are offered to any god, hunger and thirst become sharers therein.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tam*—to Him. *Asanapipase*—hunger and thirst. *Abrutam*—said. *Avabhyam*—for us. *Abhiprajanihi*—allot. *Te*—to them. *Abravit*—said. *Etasu*—in these. *Devatasu*—in Devas. *Eva*—verily. *Abhajami*—assign. *Bhaginiyu*—sharers. *Karomi*—make. *Tasmat*—therefore. *Yasyai kasyai*—for whatsoever. *Devatayai*—gods. *Havi*—offerings. *Grihyate*—is taken.

*Bhaginiyau*—sharers. *Eva*—verily. *Asyam*—of that. *Asanapipase*—hunger and thirst. *Bhavatah*—become.

Thus, when the gods secured their abode, hunger and thirst remained without any resting place. They said to the Lord: 'Assign to us a place'. The Lord replied: 'You are only sensations. It is not possible for you to enjoy food without your depending upon some intelligent being. Therefore, I shall give you a place in these very gods, Agni and the rest, both within and outside the human body, and shall make you partners with them in the shares allotted to them, such as oblations of clarified butter, etc'.

As the Lord decreed in the beginning of the creation, in order to make them partners in the oblations offered to the gods, even now, hunger and thirst are sharers in the oblations of cooked rice and ground rice, offered to propitiate any god.

The gods enjoy the offerings of rice-cakes, etc., through hunger and thirst, and desire food and drink. That is the reason hunger and thirst become their partners.

Here ends the Second Section

### SECTION III

स इक्षतेमे नु लोकाश्च लोकपालाश्चान्नमेभ्यः सृजा इति ॥१॥

1. He (the Lord) thought again: 'The worlds, and the protectors of the worlds, have been created. Now let Me create food for them'.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He. *Ikshata*—thought, pondered. *Ime*—these. *Lokah*—the worlds. *Cha*—and. *Lokapalah*—protectors of worlds. *Cha*—also. *Annam*—food. *Ebhya*—for these. *Srijai*—shall create. *Iti*—thus.

He thought thus: "Well, these worlds and their rulers have been created by Me, and subjected to hunger and thirst. They cannot live without food. Therefore, I shall create food for the protectors of the worlds".

In this world, men in power exercise their power in favouring and chastising men. Even so, the Lord has perfect freedom in

bestowing rewards or inflicting punishment on all, as He is the supreme Ruler. Lord can do and undo things. He is omnipotent. His Vibhutis are boundless.

सोऽपोऽभ्यतपत्ताभ्योऽभितप्ताभ्यो मूर्तिरजायत । या वै सा  
मूर्तिरजायताऽन्नं वै तत् ॥२॥

2. Then He (the Lord) brooded over the water, and from the waters so brooded over, issued a form. The form, thus created, is verily food.

#### Notes and Commentary

Sa—He. *Apah*—over the waters. *Abhyatapat*—brooded, looked at them. *Tabhyah*—from those. *Abhitaptabhyah*—so brooded over. *Murtih*—form. *Ajayata*—was born. *Ya*—which. *Vai*—verily. *Sa*—that. *Murtih*—form. *Ajayata*—created. *Annam*—food. *Vai*—verily. *Tat*—That.

The Lord, desirous of creating food, brooded over the waters already mentioned. From the waters, thus brooded over, serving as the material cause, something having a form, solid, sentient and non-sentient, and able to support both immovable and movable, was born. The form which was so produced, is verily food.

The Lord brooded over the waters. Here, water stands for all the five elements.

*Murtirajayata*—organic matter issued, both vegetable and animal. The gross objects have been called food, because they are enjoyed by the organs and their presiding deities.

तदेनदभिसृष्टं पराऽन्त्यजिधांसत्तद्वाचाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोद्वाचा  
ग्रहीतुम् । स यद्दैनद्वाचाऽग्रहैष्यदभिव्याहृत्य हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥३॥

तत्प्राणेनाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोत्प्राणेन ग्रहीतुम् । स यद्दैनत्प्राणेना-  
ग्रहैष्यदभिप्राण्य हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥४॥

तच्क्षुषाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोच्क्षुषा ग्रहीतुम् । स यद्दैनच्क्षुषाऽ-  
ग्रहैष्यददृश्वा हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥५॥

तच्छोत्रेणाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोच्छोत्रेण ग्रहीतुम् । स यद्वैनच्छोत्रेण-  
ग्रहैष्यच्छुत्वा हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥६ ॥

तत्त्वचाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोत्त्वचा ग्रहीतुम् । स यद्वैनत्त्वचाऽ-  
ग्रहैष्यत्स्पृष्ट्वा हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥७ ॥

तन्मनसाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोन्मनसा ग्रहीतुम् । स यद्वैनन्मनसाऽ-  
ग्रहैष्यद्व्यात्वा हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥८ ॥

तच्छिश्नेनाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोच्छिश्नेन ग्रहीतुम् । स यद्वैन-  
च्छिश्नेनाग्रहैष्यद्विसृज्य हैवान्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥९ ॥

तदपानेनाजिघृक्षत्तदावयत् । सैषोऽन्नस्य ग्रहो यद्वायुरन्नायुर्वा एष  
यद्वायुः ॥१० ॥

3. Then this food so created, wished to run away. He tried to catch it by speech, but He could not catch it by speech. If He had caught it by speech, then one would be satisfied by merely talking of food.

4. He wished to catch it by breath or Prana. He could not catch it by Prana. If He had caught it by Prana, then one would be satisfied by merely smelling food.

5. He wished to catch it by the eye. He could not catch it by the eye. If He had caught it by the eye, then one would be satisfied by merely seeing food.

6. He wished to catch it by the ears. He could not catch it by the ear. If He had caught it by the ear, then one would be satisfied by merely hearing of food.

7. He wished to catch it by touch. He could not catch it by touch. If He had caught it by touch, then one would be satisfied by merely touching food.

8. He wished to catch it by mind. He could not catch it by mind. If He had caught it by mind, then one would be satisfied by merely thinking of food.

9. He wished to catch it by the generative organ. He could not catch it by the generative organ. If He had caught it by the generative organ, then one would be satisfied by emission.

10. Then he tried to catch it by Apana, and He caught it. It is this Apana which catches food. This Apana is giver of life by food.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tat*—That. *Etat*—this. *Srishtam*—having been created. *Parang*—being turned away. *Atyajighamsat*—wished to run away. *Tat*—that. *Vacha*—by speech. *Ajighrikshat*—wished to seize. *Tat*—that. *Na*—not. *Asaknot*—could. *Grahitum*—to seize. *Sa*—He. *Yat*—if. *Enat*—this. *Vacha*—by speech. *Agrahaisyat*—could seize. *Abhivyahritya*—having uttered by name. *Haiva*—verily. *Annam*—food. *Atrapsyat*—would have been satisfied.

*Tat*—that. *Pranena*—by Prana. *Ajighrikshat*—tried to seize. *Tat*—that. *Na saknot*—was unable. *Grahitum*—to hold. *Yat*—if. *Pranena*—by Prana. *Agrahaisyat*—could hold. *Abhipranya*—having smelt or breathed. *Annam*—food. *Atrapsyat*—having been satisfied.

*Chakshusha*—by sight. *Drishtva*—having seen.

*Srutva*—having heard. *Srotrena*—by the ear.

*Tvacha*—with the skin. *Sprishtva*—having touched only.

*Manasa*—by mind. *Dhyatva*—having thought of.

*Sisnena*—with the generative organ. *Visrijya*—emitting.

*Tat*—that. *Apanena*—by Apana. *Ajighrikshat*—attempted to grasp. *Tat*—that. *Avayat*—seized, could eat. *Sah*—He. *Vah*—verily. *Annasya*—of food. *Graha*—seizer, retainer. *Yat* *Vayuh*—which air. *Annavayuh*—food air, or air by which man lives by food. *Esha*—this. *Yadvayuh*—which air.

Just as rats run away at the sight of cats, so also the food began to run away, thinking that it would be devoured by the eater. The Lord failed to catch it by speech, by Prana, by the eye, by the ears, by touch, by mind and by the generative organ. He caught it at last by Apana, through the cavity of the mouth, and thus ate the food. Therefore, this Apana is the catcher of food (Annagrahaka). It has its life in the food.

स ईक्षत कथं न्विदं मदृते स्यादिति स ईक्षत कतरेण प्रपद्या इति । स ईक्षत यदि वाचाऽभिव्याहृतं यदि प्राणेनाभिप्राणितं यदि चक्षुषा दृष्टं यदि श्रोत्रेण श्रुतं यदि त्वचा स्पृष्टं यदि मनसा ध्यातं यद्यपानेनाभ्यपानितं यदि शिश्नेन विसृष्टमथ कोऽहमिति ॥११॥

11. He (the Lord) thought: 'How can all these live without Me?' So He pondered: 'By which way shall I enter it?' He again thought: 'If speaking be done by speech, smelling by nose, seeing by the eyes, hearing by the ear, touching by skin, thinking by mind, eating by Apana, and discharge by the generative organ, then who am I?'

### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He. *Ikshata*—pondered. *Katham*—how. *Nah*—verily. *Idam*—this. *Madrite*—without Me. *Syat*—exist. *Katharena*—how. *Prapadya*—shall enter. *Vacha*—by speech. *Abhivyahritam*—is spoken. *Pranena abhipranitam*—by smell it is smelt. *Chakshusha*—by sight. *Drishtam*—seen. *Yadi*—if. *Srotrena srutam*—heard by ears. *Tvacha sprishtam*—touched by skin. *Manasa dhyatam*—thought by mind. *Apanena apanitam*—digested by Apana. *Sisnena visrishtam*—emitted by generative organ. *Koham iti*—then who am I?

Having created the worlds, the rulers of the worlds, and the individual beings who depend upon food, like the existence of a city, its inhabitants and protectors, He reflected as a king would reflect. How can this aggregate, the combination of causes and effects to be described presently, be without Me, existing as it does, for the benefit of some one other than itself? If speech and the rest could do their functions by themselves, their activities would be useless, just as feast and praises offered by the subjects would be in vain, if there is no king to accept them. Therefore, like the king of a city, I, who am different from the world of creation, but yet its substratum and witness, must become the enjoyer of the fruits of actions accomplished, and to be accomplished by men.

If this combination of effects can exist for another, if the functions of the aggregate meant for another, could go on

without Me, it will be like the activities done by the people without their ruler.

Then who am I? What is My nature? Whose ruler am I? If I do not enter the human body and enjoy the fruit of speech, etc., if I am not the witness of the bodily and mental activities, like the king who enters the city, and witnesses the acts of commission and omission on the part of his subjects and officers, no one will know or care to know of My existence or My nature. Otherwise, I shall be known as one who knows the nature of speech, and for whom the functions of speech, etc., combined, exist, just as the pillars, the walls etc., combined to form a mansion, exist, for the benefit of one who is not connected with their parts.

He thought: "How shall I enter it? The two ways of entrance into this body, the aggregate of several parts are the forepart of the feet at one end, and the crown of the head at the other. By which of these two ways shall I enter this city, this bundle of causes and effects, this corporal aggregate?"

The existence of this body, implies an owner for whose sake it exists. The senses perform their different functions, with the help of the intelligent soul who dwells within this body. It is the soul who guides this body. It is the soul who guides and directs the mind and the senses. Just as a house, which is built by various materials, is intended for the residence of man who is quite different from the materials, so also this body, which is composed of various materials, must be intended for the residence of one intelligent being (Atman), who is quite different from the elements of which this body is composed.

The Atman is like a king dwelling in the palace of this body, or nine-gated city. The various organs are doing their respective duties in order to serve and please the king, the Atman.

स एतमेव सीमानं विदायैतया द्वारा प्रापद्यत । सैषा विदृतिर्नाम  
द्वास्तदेतन्नान्दनम् । तस्य त्रय आवस्थास्त्रयः स्वप्ना अयमाव-  
स्थथोऽयमावस्थोऽयमावस्थ इति ॥१२॥

12. Then He opened the suture of the skull and entered by that door. That door is called the Vidriti, the 'cleft'. It is verily the Nandana, the place of bliss. He has three dwelling places (in

the body) and three dream states. This is His dwelling place, this is His dwelling place, this is His dwelling place.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He. *Etameva*—this. *Simanam*—suture of the skull. *Vidarya*—having opened. *Etaya dvara*—by that door. *Prapadyata*—entered. *Sa esha*—this. *Vidriti*—that which is torn open. *Nama*—is named. *Dvah*—door. *Tat*—therefore. *Etat*—it. *Nandanam*—the place of bliss. *Tasya*—his. *Traya*—three. *Avasatha*—abode. *Traya*—three. *Svapna*—dream. *Ayamavasatha*—this abode.

He, the Lord, thought thus: 'I shall not enter by the forepart of the feet. My servant, who carries out my orders, can enter through this path. I shall enter through the suture of the skull, through the Sushumna'. The Lord cut open the head, along the line where the two skulls unite, and entered the body. This entrance is well known to all, because one experiences the cooling sensation when the crown of the head is anointed with oil. As the passage is made by cutting open the head, it is called *Vidriti*, the cleft.

The other openings, like the ear, etc., are ordinary ways meant for Agni, etc., who are the servants of the Lord. Therefore, they are not perfect and cannot produce full pleasure. This door is intended for the Lord alone. Therefore, this is called *Nandana* or the door of bliss. This is called *Nandana* because the soul, departing by this door (Brahma-randhram), rejoices in Parabrahman.

To Him, Isvara, who having created thus, entered the body as Jivatman, there are three abodes, just as a king may have three cities for his residence—the right eye during the waking state, the mind or the throat in the dreaming state, and the heart in the deep sleep state. Or, the following may be the three abodes—the body of the father, the womb of the mother and one's own body.

The three states of dream are the waking, the dreaming and the deep sleep states. It may be objected that the waking state being a normal conscious state, cannot be described as dream. That is not so. It is certainly a dream. How? There is no realisation of one's true Atman, and the objects and

experiences of the world, when compared with the experiences of Self-realisation, are as unreal as the objects and experiences of the dream-world. Self-realisation alone is absolute consciousness, which is real, unchanging and permanent. All other states of consciousness are relative and unreal. They are but dreams caused by Maya.

The right eye is the first abode. The mind is the second. The cavity of the heart, or the heart-ether, is the third.

'This is the dwelling place' is only a repetition of what has already been said. This is repeated by way of emphatic assertion. Isvara, mistaking Himself as Jiva, lives in these abodes alternatively. He sleeps for a long time with His self-born consort, ignorance, and does not awake, though subjected to the intense hammerings of sorrow, caused by many hundreds of thousands of calamities.

स जातो भूतान्यभिव्यैख्यत्किमिहान्यं वावदिषदिति । स एतमेव  
पुरुषं ब्रह्म ततमपश्यदिदमदर्शमितीऽ ॥१३॥

13. When born (in the form of Jiva when the highest Self had entered the body), he reflected with reference to the elements. He gazed round upon the creatures. How should he speak of any other? What else, besides the Atman, is there for me to name? There is none. How could he desire to declare any other thing different from him? (He found nothing else but the reality of the soul). He saw, verily, this Purusha, the Brahman, all-pervading. He said to himself: 'Oh, I have seen this'.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He. *Jatah*—born (in the form of Jiva). *Bhutani*—all beings. *Abhivyakhyat*—looked round with a special watchful eye, comprehended. *Iha*—here. *Anyam*—other. *Vavadishat*—could proclaim or declare. *Sah*—He. *Etam*—this. *Eva*—verily. *Purusham*—the Purusha. *Brahma*—Brahman. *Tatamam*—all-pervading. *Apasyat*—saw. *Idam*—this. *Adarsam*—have seen. *Iti*—thus.

He being born, i.e., having entered the body in the form of Jiva, or the individual soul, knew and talked of the Bhutas. He assigned names to all objects. He recognised that all objects, all elements are identical with himself. In this Mantra, the

existence of anything save the Atman is denied. What else except the Atman is there for me to name? There is none. The Jivatma sits at the feet of the preceptor, gets spiritual instructions, disciplines himself, hears the Srutis, reflects and meditates. He, thus, attains the right knowledge of the Self. He realises that everything is Brahman only, and that this world and body are mere superimpositions.

When the preceptor, who is endowed with great compassion, beats in the ears of the aspirant, the sounding of the great Vedantic text, Mahavakya, like 'Tat-tvam-asi', whose sound wakes up the knowledge of Brahman, he (the individual soul) realised his self as Brahman, the Creator, dwelling in the body, yet all-pervading like the ether. He cried: 'I have seen this Brahman, the real essence of my Atman. I have realised that this Brahman is of the nature of my own Self. Brahman and my Atman are identical'.

*Iti:* The elongation in 'Iti' of the vowel, is to indicate deep deliberation or prolonged thought on the part of the individual, who, at last, realises that his self is identical with the infinite or the Supreme Self. It also indicates the joy of success which he experiences after deep reflection.

The substratum for this world is Brahman. This world is superimposed on Brahman, on account of ignorance. When the superimposition (Adhyasa) is sublated through knowledge of Brahman, the aspirant realises: "All indeed is Brahman. There is nothing except Brahman. Brahman is the only reality. Brahman is the all-pervading pure consciousness".

The Jiva desired to see what other Principle, besides his own intelligent Self, could there be behind this world of phenomena. He saw the all-pervading Brahman and expressed great wonder: 'I have seen it!'

तस्मादिदन्द्रो नामेदन्द्रो ह वै नाम तमिदन्दं सन्तमिन्द्रं इत्याचक्षते  
परोक्षेण । परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः ॥१४॥

॥ इति तृतीयः खण्डः ॥

14. Therefore, he is called Idandra. Idandram is verily His name. Though he is Idandra, he is indirectly called Indra. The gods are fond of being called by indirect names, as it were.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tasmat*—therefore. *Idandra nama*—of the name Idandra. *Idandro havai nama*—he who is called Idandra. *Idandram santam*—being Idandra. *Tam*—Him. *Parokshena*—indirectly. *Indra*—Indra. *Iti*—thus. *Achakshate*—they call. *Hi*—because. *Paroksha priya iva hi devah*—the Devas are fond of, as it were, being called by indirect names.

*Idandra*: literally means It-seeing. As he saw the all-pervading Brahman directly as 'Idam', this, therefore, the Paramatman is called 'Idandra'. The knowers of Brahman are afraid of addressing Brahman, the Lord of all, directly, because He is the most adorable Being. Therefore, Brahman, who is really Idandra, is called by the indirect name, Indra, in prayer and worship. The Srutis describe Brahman as Idandra.

Even in this world, all respectable persons who are worthy of being revered, such as father, mother, Gurus, teachers, etc., are never called by their own name, by their inferiors. They are addressed as Pitaji, Mataji, Guruji, Swamiji, etc. They all like to be called thus.

The gods are fond of being addressed indirectly, because they are worthy of adoration. When that is the case, what should be said of Mahesvara, who is the Lord of lords, the Deity of all the deities. The repetition '*Paroksha priya iva hi devah*', '*Paroksha priya iva hi devah*', is to indicate the close of the present chapter.

Here ends the Third Section.

### SECTION IV

पुरुषे ह वा अयमादितो गर्भो भवति । यदेतद्रेतस्त-  
देतत्सर्वेभ्योऽङ्गेभ्यस्तेजः संभूतमात्मन्येवात्मानं विभर्ति तद्यदा स्त्रियां  
सिञ्चत्यथैनज्जनयति तदस्य प्रथमं जन्म ॥१॥

1. First, indeed, the germ is in the man. That which is semen, is the essence of strength or vigour, drawn from all his limbs. He bears himself within his self alone. When he deposits it in the woman, he causes it to be born. This is its first birth.

### Notes and Commentary

*Purushe*—in man. *Ha va*—indeed. *Aditah*—first. *Ayam*—this. *Garbhah*—the seed or germ. *Bhavati*—becomes. *Yat*—which. *Etat*—this. *Reta*—seed. *Tat*—that. *Etat*—this. *Sarvebhyah*—all. *Angebhyah*—limbs. *Teja*—essence of strength or vigour. *Sambhutam*—become. *Atmanam*—the Self. *Atmana*—in the self. *Bibarti*—bears or holds. *Tat*—that. *Yatha*—when. *Sthriyam*—in the fire of the woman. *Sinchati*—places or deposits. *Atha*—then. *Enam*—this. *Janayati*—produces. *Asya*—its. *Prathamam*—first. *Janma*—birth.

Jiva, prompted by desires due to ignorance, performs Karmas or rituals and reaches gradually the region of the moon (Chandraloka), by the path of smoke, to reap the fruits of his Karmas, and comes down along with the rain to this world, after his Karma is exhausted. Enveloped in food, he is offered as an oblation in the fire of man. The Jiva takes his seat in the grain. The grain becomes the food of man, and is changed into the vital fluid (semen).

The traveller in Samsara, first becomes semen in man, through the Rasas (blood). This semen is the quintessence drawn from all the component parts, or organs, or limbs of this body, the result of food. The first conception of Jiva is in man, in the body of the father.

The seed or semen constitutes, as it were, his very self. The very virility of man depends on this alone. It is called the Atman, as it is the very essence of the man.

He supports this Atman. He is himself conceived in the form of semen, in his Atman, i.e., the body. He carries himself within himself, because his bodily essence only is transformed into the semen, and is lodged in him. When he sheds this seed in the womb of his wife, when she is fit to conceive, he deposits it in the fire of the woman. (This is a kind of oblation.) Then the father gives birth to it, which he had borne in the form of semen,

when the semen is shed into the womb of a woman. This is the first birth of the Jiva, or man travelling in Samsara. This is his first manifested state.

Scrutis declare: 'This Atman (Purusha) offers that Atman (semen) to that Atman (woman).'

तत्त्विया आत्मभूयं गच्छति यथा स्वमङ्गं तथा तस्मादेनां न हिनस्ति  
सास्यैतमात्मानमत्र गतं भावयति ॥२॥

2. That seed becomes one with the woman, as her own limb, as the parts of her own body. Therefore, it does not produce any suffering to her. She nourishes his (the husband's) self, thus, within her.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Tat*—that. *Sthriya*—of that woman. *Atmabhuyam*—becomes one and the same with the form of a woman. *Tasmat*—therefore. *Yenam*—her. *Svamangam*—one's own limb. *Na hinasti*—does not produce suffering. *Sa*—she. *Atra gatam*—which remains in her. *Atmanam*—self. *Bhavayati*—nourishes.

When the semen has been transferred to the woman, it becomes her very self. It remains inseparable from her, just as it was part and parcel of the father. It is like her own limb, such as her hand or foot. That is the reason the foetus or the child in the womb, does not produce any injury or pain to the mother, as a carbuncle or abscess does. The pregnant woman knows that her husband's self had entered her womb, and she carefully nourishes it by abandoning foods which are injurious to the foetus, and by taking such foods which are wholesome and favourable to it.

सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या भवति तं स्त्री गर्भं विभर्ति सोऽग्र एव  
कुमारं जन्मनोऽग्रेऽधिभावयति । स यत्कुमारं जन्मनो-  
ऽग्रेऽधिभावयत्यात्मानमेव तद्वावयत्येषां लोकानां सन्तत्या एवं  
सन्तता हीमे लोकास्तदस्य द्वितीयं जन्म ॥३॥

3. As she becomes the nourisher of his self within her, so she also should be nourished. The woman bears the son in her womb. He (the father) nourishes the child just before and after its birth. In nourishing the child just before and after its birth, he nourishes himself alone for the continuation of these worlds. Thus are these worlds of progeny perpetuated. This is his second birth.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sa*—she. *Bhavayitri*—nourisher. *Bhavayitavya*—(therefore she also) should be nourished. *Bhavati*—becomes. *Tam*—him. *Stri*—woman. *Garbha*—in womb. *Bibharti*—holds or bears. *Sah*—he. *Agra eva*—even prior to (the birth of the child). *Kumaram*—child. *Janmanah*—birth. *Agre adhi*—before and after. *Adhibhavayati*—nourishes. *Sah*—he. *Yat kumaram*—which child. *Janmano-agre adhi bhavayati*—nourishes before and after birth. *Atmanameva bhavayati*—nourishes himself. *Esham*—these. *Lokanam*—worlds. *Santatya*—progeny. *Evan santata*—thus continuous. *Hi ime*—verily these. *Lokah*—worlds. *Tadasya*—of his. *Dvitiyam*—second. *Janma*—birth.

The father nourishes the child just before and after birth, by performing such natal ceremonies as Jata Karma. When he nourishes the child by such ceremonies, he nourishes his own self, because it is the father's self only that is born in the shape of the son. These religious Samskaras, which are performed during pregnancy and after the birth of the children, enable them to tread the path of righteousness.

It is said in the Srutis: 'The husband enters the wife', etc. It is for maintaining the unbroken continuation of this world-cycle, that the father produces himself in the shape of the son and nourishes him. If none produces children, the world-process would indeed cease. The worlds continue as a stream on account of procreation of children. Therefore, procreation should be done for the continuation of the world, but not for obtaining emancipation.

When the Jiva, the Samsarin leaves the mother's womb as son, he takes his second birth, or second manifested condition, in contradistinction to his form as semen.

सोऽस्यायमात्मा पुण्येभ्यः कर्मभ्यः प्रतिधीयते । अथास्यायमितर  
आत्मा कृतकृत्यो वयोगतः प्रैति स इतः प्रयन्नेव पुनर्जायते तदस्य  
तृतीयं जन्म ॥४॥

4. That son, who is his very self, is made his substitute for the performance of virtuous deeds. This, his other self (the father's self), having discharged his duties and attains old age, departs from this world. He, while departing, hence is born again. This is his third birth.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—he. *Ayam*—this. *Atma*—self. *Punyebhyah*—virtuous. *Karmabhyah*—for deeds. *Pratidhiyate*—is made substitute. *Athasyayamitara*—then his other. *Atma*—self. *Kritakritya*—having discharged his duties. *Praiti*—departs. *Sah*—he. *Itah*—hence. *Prayanneva*—having departed. *Puna*—again. *Jayate*—take birth. *Tadasya*—that his. *Tritiyam janma*—third birth.

The son is made by the father, as a substitute in his stead, to perform all the virtuous deeds enjoined in the scriptures. He now represents the father in whatever actions he had to do.

It is said in the Vajasaneyaka: 'Commanded by my father, I am Brahman. I am sacrifice'. It is said in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that when a man is about to die, he should call his son and tell him all what he wanted to do. The father addresses his son thus: "You are Brahman. You are Yogin, you are Loka, i.e., recite the Vedas which I had to recite, perform the sacrificial rites which I had to perform. Attain the worlds which would be obtained by me. Complete all the works that I have left undone or half done". The obedient son says: 'Yes, I am Brahman, I am sacrifice'. He agrees to complete the works of his father.

Then having entrusted all his responsibilities to his son, having accomplished his duties by fulfilling the three kinds of obligations or debts, and having attained old age, the father dies. After leaving this body, he takes like the caterpillar, another body as determined by his Karma. The birth which he is to take after his death, is his third birth.

The first birth of the person, subject to Samsara, is from the father in the form of semen. The second birth of the same person is in the form of son, in relation to his mother. When the third birth of the same person has to be explained, how is it said that the rebirth of the father after his death, is the son's third birth? There is no flaw, because the identity between the son and the father has already been spoken of. It is intended to mean that father and son are one and the same. The son also, having entrusted all his responsibilities to his son, dies, and is born again like the father.

The Sruti means that whatever has been said in one place is, in reality, to be understood in another place, the father and the son being one and the same self.

It is said in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that the soul prepares a subtle body known as Ativahika Sarira, out of the subtle elements of the present physical body, just before it leaves the present body. It leaves the gross body only after getting this subtle body. It remains in this subtle body till it gets another physical body. This is the third birth of the son.

There are three kinds of debts: (1) The debt to the gods (Deva Rina), which is discharged by the performance of sacrifices. (2) Debt to the forefathers (Pitri Rina), which is discharged by begetting son and continuing the line. (3) Debt to the Rishis (Rishi Rina), which is discharged by the study of the scriptures and dissemination of knowledge among others.

तदुक्तमृषिणा । गर्भे नु सन्नन्वेषामवेदमहं देवानां जनिमानि विश्वा ।  
शतं मा पुर आयसीररक्षन्नथः श्येनो जवसा निरदीयमिति गर्भ  
एवैतच्छयानो वामदेव एवमुवाच ॥५॥

5. It was declared by the Rishi (Vamadeva): "While in the womb, I knew all the births of the gods. A hundred iron-holds held me down. I burst through them with speed like a hawk". Thus spoke Vamadeva, even while lying in the womb.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Taduktam*—it was declared. *Rishina*—by the Rishi (Vamadeva). *Garbhe*—in womb. *Nu*—verily. *San*—being. *Esham*—these. *Avedamaham*—I knew. *Devanam*—of Devas.

*Janimani*—births. *Visva*—all. *Satam*—hundred. *Mam*—me. *Pura*—house or body. *Ayasi*—made of iron. *Apakshan*—held. *Adha*—down. *Syenah*—(like a) hawk. *Javasa*—quickly. *Niradiyam*—have rent. *Iti*—thus. *Garbhe*—in womb. *Eva*—only. *Sayana*—lying. *Vamadeva*—Rishi Vamadeva. *Evam*—thus. *Uvacha*—said.

Man travels in Samsara in rotation, and migrates from one to the other three states. He is caught in the wheel of births and deaths. On account of ignorance, he is hurled into the ocean of Samsara. He in some stage or other, realises through strenuous struggle, the Atman as described in the Srutis, and attains emancipation, like Rishi Vamadeva. He releases himself from the meshes or fetters of Maya, understands the mystery of birth and death and realises the glory of his own Self. He feels that all his worldly ties are cut asunder, and that he has achieved the *summum bonum* or the ultimate aim of life.

While Vamadeva was dwelling in the womb of his mother, he came to know of all the births of all the gods, like Vak, Agni, etc. This was due to his meditation in his many previous births.

*Hundred*: i.e., many. *Purah*—bodies. Bodies, which were like impenetrable iron houses, guarded me from extricating myself from the fetters or meshes of Samsara. Just as a hawk cuts underneath the net in which it has been caught, and escapes, so I have come out quickly on account of the strength, due to my knowledge of this Atman. Rishi Vamadeva spoke thus, even when dwelling in the womb. This is a great wonder indeed!

The bodies are compared to the strong iron-holds, as they imprison the Jiva within their folds. It is extremely difficult to come out of the body prison. It is very hard to break this body, just as it is difficult to break the strong iron-holds. Knowledge of the Self alone can destroy this body.

Rishi Vamadeva got illumination even while dwelling in the womb, on account of the discipline and meditation, which he practised during his previous births. The process of purification had gone on in his previous births. That is the reason the knowledge of Atman dawned in him even before his actual birth. Ashtavakra also spoke to his father while remaining in the womb.

स एवं विद्वानस्माच्छरीरभेदादूर्ध्वं उत्क्रम्यामुष्मिन्स्वर्गे लोके  
सर्वान्कामानाप्त्वामृतः समभवत्समभवत् ॥६॥

॥ इति चतुर्थः खण्डः ॥

6. He (Rishi Vamadeva) became the knower of the Atman and became identical with the supreme Self. He betook to his upward path, and after the destruction of the body, attained all desires in the heavenly world and became immortal, became immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—he. *Eva*—thus. *Vidvan*—knower of Atman (Rishi Vamadeva). *Asmat*—this. *Sarirabheda*—destruction of the body. *Urdhvam*—up, above. *Utkramya*—after passing. *Amushmin*—in this. *Svarge loke*—in heaven worlds. *Sarvan kaman*—all desires. *Aptva*—having enjoyed. *Amrita*—immortal. *Samabhavat*—became.

Rishi Vamadeva attained Self-realisation through knowledge of Atman. He came out of this body, which is as impenetrable as a strong iron hold, and which is created by ignorance, by drinking the nectar of the knowledge of the supreme Self. He freed himself from the grip of Samsara, which is infested by hundreds of various miseries or ills, due to recurring births and deaths. He attained freedom on account of the annihilation of ignorance, which is the seed for embodied existence. He rose upwards from the Samsara after the dissolution of the body, i.e., the final ceasing of the continuity of the stream of embodied existence, caused by Avidya, ignorance, became one with the supreme Self and attained immortality in his own Self, which is described as undecaying, deathless, immortal, fearless, omniscient, beginningless, one without a second, endless, all-pervading and sweet with the nectar of wisdom.

The liberated sage obtains all desires, even while living, by the knowledge of the Atman. The repetition of *Samabhavat* (attained) is to indicate the conclusion of the knowledge of the Atman, with its fruit and its illustration.

Vamadeva attained Videha Mukti, or disembodied salvation, after the fall of the body. Svarga loka means 'in his own Atman', according to Sri Sankara. It means the bliss of Brahman, Moksha. It does not signify, here, heaven.

Here ends the Fourth Section.

## SECTION V

कोऽयमात्मेति वयमुपास्महे कतरः स आत्मा येन वा पश्यति येन वा  
शृणोति येन वा गन्धानाजिग्रहति येन वा वाचं व्याकरोति येन वा स्वादु  
चास्वादु च विजानाति ॥१॥

1. Who is this Atman whom we worship? Which of the two is He, that Atman the real or the phenomenal, the Nirupadhiка or Sopadhiка? Whether he, by whom one sees, or he, by whom one hears, or he, by whom one smells the scents, or he, by whom one utters the speech, or he, by whom one knows what is tasteful and what is not tasteful?

### Notes and Commentary

*Kah*—what. *Ayam*—this. *Atma*—Atman. *Iti*—thus. *Vayam*—we. *Upasmahe*—worship. *Katharah*—of which kind. *Sah*—He. *Atma*—Atman. *Yena*—by which. *Va*—verily. *Rupam*—form. *Pasyati*—sees. *Yena*—by which. *Va*—verily. *Sabdam*—sound. *Srunoti*—hears. *Yena*—by which. *Va*—verily. *Gandha*—scents. *Jighrati*—smells. *Yena*—by which. *Va*—verily. *Vacham*—speech. *Vyakaroti*—utters. *Yena* *va*—by which again. *Svadu*—taste. *Cha*—and. *Asvada*—distaste. *Cha*—and. *Vijanati*—knows.

The seekers after Brahman, who were longing for attaining immortality, who were anxious to get rid of their finite Jivahood (Jivabhavatva), which is impermanent, subject to the operation of the law of cause and effect, who were desirous of freeing themselves from the bondage of Samsara, who were desirous of achieving the goal of universal selfhood (Sarvatmabhava) with the help of Brahma-vidya, the science of the Self, which preceptors like Rishi Vamadeva and others, by their realisation and by their teachings in the scriptures, have rendered very clear, questioned each other in order to determine who the

Atman was. They began to enquire: "Who is this Atman? Who is this Atman whom we are striving to realise as our own Self. How shall we directly worship that Atman whom Vamadeva worshipped and attained immortality?" When they were thus questioning each other, there flashed upon their minds the recollection of a former text (III-11&12), wherein reference has been made to the entry of the two Purushas into the body—"Brahman entered the Purusha through the forepart of the feet". "He split open the skull and entered the Purusha by this passage."

Here two Brahmans, the individual soul and the universal Soul, have entered the body from the opposite directions. They are both the Atman of this body. But one of them must be the Atman, fit to be worshipped or meditated upon. Then who is he that is to be meditated upon?

They again questioned each other. A thought regarding the differentiation of these two arose in them. How? Two entities exist in this body, one who serves as an instrument of cognition, by whom, with the help of various senses, anything is perceived, and another who remembers the impressions of objects perceived by the other senses. Of these two, the one through whose instrumentality cognition takes place, is not fit to become the Atman, because it is only an instrument. The seer, the Atman who stands behind all the senses and the mind, must be meditated upon.

Who is it that cognises? By whom is it then known? This is the answer: By that which having become sight, sees form; by that which having become hearing, hears sounds; by that which having become the sense of smell, smells the odours; by that which having become the organ of speech, utters speech consisting of names, such as cow, horse, good, bad, etc.; and by that which having become the sense of taste, knows what is sweet and what is not.

यदेतत् हृदयं मनश्चैतत् । संज्ञानमाज्ञानं विज्ञानं प्रज्ञानं मेधा  
दृष्टिधृतिर्मतिर्मनीषा जूतिः स्मृतिः संकल्पः क्रतुरसुः कामो वश इति ।  
सर्वाण्येवैतानि प्रज्ञानस्य नामधेयानि भवन्ति ॥१२॥

2. This which is known as the heart, this mind, consciousness, mastery, knowledge of arts, comprehension, power of retaining import of books, perception, fortitude, reflection, independent power of thinking, distress of mind caused by diseases, etc., memory, volition, application, any pursuit for maintenance of life, desire, desire for the company of women, all these are indeed the names of consciousness.

### Notes and Commentary

Yet—what. *Etat*—this. *Hridayam*—heart. *Manah*—mind. *Cha*—and. *Etat*—this. *Samjananam*—consciousness. *Ajananam*—mastery. *Vijnanam*—knowledge of arts. *Prajnanam*—comprehension. *Medha*—power of retaining the import of books. *Drishtih*—perception. *Dhritih*—fortitude by which the drooping body and the senses are kept up. *Matih*—reflection. *Manisha*—independent power of thinking. *Jutih*—distress of mind caused by diseases, etc. *Smritih*—memory. *Sankalpah*—volition. *Krituh*—application. *Asuh*—any pursuit for the maintenance of life. *Kamah*—desire. *Vasah*—desire for the company of women. *Iti*—thus. *Sarvani*—all. *Eva*—verily. *Etani*—these. *Prajnanasya*—of consciousness. *Namadheyani*—names. *Bhavanti*—become.

It is said in Kaushitaiki Upanishad: “that the heart is the very essence of men; the mind is the very essence of the heart, and that from the mind waters and Varuna were created; from the heart, the mind and from the mind, the moon”. That same heart and mind being one only, appear as many.

By this one mind becoming the eye, one beholds forms and colours; by this becoming the nose, one smells; by this becoming speech, one speaks; by this becoming the tongue, one tastes. He cogitates through the mind and determines through the intellect. The knower knows everything through this one sense. This one sense discharges the functions of all organs of knowledge, and brings all varieties of knowledge to the cogniser.

It is said in Kaushitaki Upanishad: “Reaching the organ of speech by wisdom, one obtains all names by speech. Reaching the eye by wisdom, one beholds all forms and colours by the eye”. It is said in the Vajasaneyika also: “One

sees by the mind alone and hears by the mind alone. One knows forms by the heart". Therefore, it is well known that the organ termed heart or mind is the means of the perception of all objects. It is the one instrument of knowledge through which one can know the functions of all sense-organs.

The Prana is identical with it. It is not different from the heart. The Brahmana says: "What is called Prana is indeed Prajna and what is called Prajna is Prana". In the Prana-dialogue, it has been said that Prana is only the combination or the aggregate of the senses. Therefore, Brahman who entered by the feet is not fit to be the Brahman to be worshipped or meditated upon, because it is an adjunct, it plays only a subordinate part, it is only a means of perception to the knower.

The knower, the Atman, for whom the functions, hereafter described, of the sense called the heart or the mind, are the means of perception, can alone be the Atman fit to be worshipped by us. Thus, the seers decided. The functions of the mind which relate to both, what is subjective and objective, and which serve as a means of perception to Brahman, who is consciousness itself, and whose cognition results from his being conditioned by Antahkarana, are thus explained.

Samjnana, Ajnana, etc., which are the functions of the mind, are the means of perception to the knower. They become conditions to Brahman.

Prana is a Karana or sense-organ. Therefore, it cannot become the fit object of meditation. The Sruti proceeds to infer the existence of Brahman, the cogniser or knower, through the Vrittis of the mind such as Samjnana, etc. There must be one to witness the operations of the mind. That silent witness is Brahman. The senses, the mind and the Vrittis acquire their power, intelligence and illumination from the silent Witness, who is self-luminous and all-powerful and all-wise. Brahman is distinct from the senses, sense-perceptions, mind and the various Vrittis of the mind. It is the unchanging, self-luminous, self-existence, constant Witness of all mental modifications.

एष ब्रह्मैष इन्द्र एष प्रजापतिरेते सर्वे देवा इमानि च पञ्च महाभूतानि  
पृथिवी वायुराकाश आपो ज्योतीषीत्येतानीमानि च क्षुद्रमिश्राणीव ।

बीजानीतराणि चेतराणि चाण्डजानि च जारुजानि च स्वेदजानि  
 चोद्दिज्जानि चाश्वा गावः पुरुषा हस्तिनो यत्किंचेदं प्राणि जङ्गमं च  
 पतत्रि च यच्च स्थावरम् । सर्वं तत्प्रज्ञानेत्रं प्रज्ञाने प्रतिष्ठितं प्रज्ञानेत्रो  
 लोकः प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठा प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म ॥३॥

3. This Brahman, this Indra, this Creator, all these gods, these five great elements, earth, air, ether, water, fire, all these small creatures, these others, the seeds of creation, these egg-born (oviparous), the womb-born (viviparous), sweat-born, sprout-born, horses, cows, men, elephants, whatever else which breathes and moves and flies and is immovable—all these are guided by wisdom and are supported by wisdom. The universe has wisdom for its guide. Wisdom is the basis or stay of all. Verily wisdom (Prajnanam) is Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

*Esha*—this. *Brahma*—Brahman. *Esha*—this. *Indra*—Indra. *Esha*—this. *Prajapati*—creator (Hiranyagarbha). *Ete*—these. *Sarve*—all. *Devah*—gods. *Imani cha panchamabhabhutani*—these five great elements. *Prithivi*—earth. *Vayu*—air. *Akasa*—ether. *Apah*—water. *Jyotishi*—fire. *Iti*—thus. *Etani*—these. *Imani cha kshudra misrani*—these multiple of small creatures. *Beejani cha itarani*—these other seeds. *Andajani*—egg-born. *Jarujani*—womb-born. *Svedajani*—sweat-born. *Udbhijani*—sprout-born. *Asvah*—horses. *Gavah*—cows. *Purushah*—men. *Hasthinah*—elephants. *Yatkimcha idam*—whatever here. *Prani*—that lives. *Jangama*—that which moves or walks. *Pataricha*—that which flies. *Yattha*—and those. *Sthavaram*—unmoving. *Sarvam*—all. *Tat*—that. *Prajnanetram*—that which has Prajna as its controller. *Prajnane*—in Brahman or consciousness. *Pratishtitam*—established. *Prajnanetra*—having knowledge as its basis. *Lokah*—the world. *Prajna*—knowledge or consciousness. *Pratishta*—basis or stay. *Prajnanam*—consciousness absolute. *Brahman*—Brahman.

This Atman, who is of the nature of consciousness, is the lower Brahman (Apara Brahman), called Hiranyagarbha or cosmic Prana, is the life-principle (Prana or Kriyasakti) dwelling in all bodies. He (Hiranyagarbha) has entered the reflecting

medium of the inner sense-organ (Antahkarana), and appears like so many reflectors of the sun in various sheets of water, and is described as Prana and Prajnanatma. He is Indra, because of his qualities, or the Lord of the Devas. He is Prajapati, the first born, who has a body and form, from whom all the protectors of the world, fire, etc., were born from the cavity of the mouth, etc., fashioned in the Virat Purusha—the lump described in Section I. He is also Agni and all other gods. He is, again, the five elements which are the material cause of all bodies, viz., earth, etc. He is all that is food and is fit for food.

He constitutes all the lower forms of creatures, such as serpents, etc. The several beings are divided into distinct classes. What are these? They are: those born of eggs, like birds; those born of womb, like men (Jaru, Jarayu); those born of sweat, like lice, etc.; those born of seed, like trees; horses, cattle, men, elephants, that which moves, that which flies with its wings, in the sky, and that which is immovable. All these are under the sway of Prajna (Prajna-netram).

Prajna is consciousness. Prajna is Brahman Himself. That which is controlled by this is Netram. Netram is that by which it is guided. Prajna-netram means that the whole world which has Prajna as its controller. Brahman is the cause of the world-manifestation. Brahman is the light of this universe. The universe depends upon Brahman during creation, preservation and destruction.

*Prajna-netro-lokah* may mean also that the universe has wisdom for its eye. Wisdom is the basis, or mainstay, of all the universe.

All objects from Brahma, down to a tiny worm or clod of earth, the whole of the subjective and the objective world are all different manifestations of the same Brahman. They solely depend upon Brahman. Hence, all these have been called here as Prajna-netra, i.e., what is manifested by Prajna or wisdom. Therefore, wisdom (Prajnanam) is Brahman.

That Brahman, who is free from all conditions, and is untainted, pure, actionless, peace, secondless, knowable by eliminating all distinguishing attributes, as 'not this', 'not this', and beyond all word and thought, becomes the omniscient Isvara, Lord of all, Antaryamin, the inner ruler or the universal

controller, and guide of the common seed of the whole unmanifested world, through His association with Maya.

The same Brahman becomes Hiranyagarbha when He identifies Himself with the intellect, which is the seed of all the manifested world. He also becomes the Virat, known as Prajapati, who issues from within the cosmic egg with a body. He is the first embodied being. He becomes a Devata, springing from the same cosmic egg, and bears the name of Agni. Similarly, Brahman acquires several names according to the several bodily limiting conditions. From Hiranyagarbha down to the smallest worm, Brahman receives different names and forms under conditions of different bodies.

Not only the common people, but even learned men regard this single entity, who is beyond all conditions differentiated thus by various Upadhis, limiting adjuncts, in various ways and consider it also as of various kinds. The Sutris say: "some call it Agni, others Manu, Prajapati, some Indra, others Prana and others the eternal Brahman, etc".

When one attains knowledge of Brahman, the appearances and plurality vanish altogether. Secondless Brahman alone remains. The sage realises that the indwelling Atman in the body is the same as that which pervades the entire universe (Sarvatmabhava). All limitations, differences, distinctions and watertight compartments vanish, in toto.

*Prajnanam Brahma*—Pure consciousness is Brahman. This is one of the Mahavakyas, great sentences, of the Upanishads. This is the Lakshana Vakya, because it gives a description of the nature of Brahman. The other three Mahavakyas are: (1) *Aham Brahmasmi*: I am Brahman. This is Anusandhana Vakya. This is contained in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad of Yajurveda. (2) *Tat-tvam-asi*: Thou art That. This is Upadesa Vakya. The teacher says to the aspirant: 'Thou art Brahman'. This is contained in the Chhandogya Upanishad of Sama Veda. (3) *Ayamatma Brahma*: This Atman is Brahman. This is Anubhava Vakya. The aspirant realises the identity of Atman and Para-Brahman, the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. This is contained in the Mandukya Upanishad of Atharva Veda.

The Aitareya Upanishad begins with the text 'Atma va idameka evagra asit—in the beginning, there was verily Atman alone' and concludes with the text '*Prajnanam Brahma*—pure consciousness is Brahman'.

स एतेन प्रज्ञेनात्मनास्माल्लोकादुत्क्रम्यामुष्मिन् स्वर्गे लोके  
सर्वान्कामानाप्त्वाऽमृतः समभवत्समभवत् । इत्योम् ॥४॥

॥ इति पश्चमः खण्डः ॥

4. He was exalted to the state of Brahmanhood, on account of his knowledge of Atman. He left this world and obtained all that he desired, in that world of supreme bliss, and attained immortality.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He (Vamadeva or any other sage). *Etena*—by this. *Prajnena*—kind of knowledge. *Atmana*—the Atman. *Asmat*—from this. *Lokat*—from world. *Utkramya*—having left. *Amushmin*—in that. *Svarge*—in heaven. *Loke*—world. *Sarvan*—all. *Kaman*—desires. *Aptva*—having obtained. *Amritah*—immortal. *Samabhavat*—became.

Any seeker after Truth, who knows the Self in the way explained, can attain immortality like Rishi Vamadeva. A liberated sage does not move to any world. He gets absorbed in the all-pervading Brahman. He realises that the individual soul is identical with Para-Brahman.

The repetition of 'Samabhavat', 'Samabhavat' is to indicate the close of the chapter.

Here ends the Section Fifth.

ॐ वाङ्मे मनसि प्रतिष्ठिता । मनो मे वाचि प्रतिष्ठितम् ।  
आविरावीर्म एधि । वेदस्य म आणीस्थः । श्रुतं मे मा प्रहासीरनेना-  
धीतेनाहोरात्रान्संदधाम्यृतं वदिष्यामि । सत्यं वदिष्यामि । तन्मामवतु ।  
तद्वक्तारमवतु । अवतु माम् । अवतु वक्तारम् । अवतु वक्तारम् ॥५॥  
शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

॥ इति ऐतरेयोपनिषत्संपूर्णा ॥

Thus ends the Aitareya Upanishad.

# SVETASVATARA UPANISHAD

## INTRODUCTION

The Svetasvatara Upanishad is a small Upanishad. It contains 113 Mantras (verses). It is divided into six chapters. It belongs to the Krishna Yajurveda. Though it is not included in the ten major Upanishads, it is considered as an ancient and important Upanishad. It gets its name from the Rishi Svetasvatara who taught the truth contained in it to his disciples and aspirants.

In this Upanishad, Siva or Rudra is declared to be the creator, preserver and destroyer of this world. He is the material and efficient cause of this world. He is spoken of as the highest deity. He is identified with the Supreme Brahman.

The word 'Svetasvatara' means one who has controlled his senses (Sveta—pure, Asva—senses). Many of the Mantras of this Upanishad are quoted by the commentators of the Brahma-Sutras, in support of their doctrines.

It presents a mixture of Vedanta, Sankhya and Yoga tenets. It treats of Brahman, Isvara, the Individual Soul, the Universe and Freedom. It gives a summary of the nature of the universe and the individual soul. It gives means of liberation for the Jiva who is chained to the wheel of birth and death.

It treats of the discrimination between the individual soul, Isvara, the Universe and Brahman, the process of Yoga and its goal, its means, condition, intermediate states and ultimate result of practising Yoga. It treats of Yoga in its three forms, viz., Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga.

## CHAPTER I

ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै तेजस्वि  
नावधीतमस्तु । मा विद्विषावहै ।

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om! May He protect us both (teacher and pupil). May He cause us both to enjoy the bliss of Mukti. May we both exert to find out the true meaning of the scriptures. May our studies be fruitful. May we never quarrel with each other.

Om Santih, Santih, Santih!

हरिः ॐ । ब्रह्मवादिनो वदन्ति । किं कारणं ब्रह्म कुतः स्म जाता  
जीवाम केन क्व च सम्प्रतिष्ठाः । अधिष्ठिताः केन सुखेतरेषु वर्तमहे  
ब्रह्मविदो व्यवस्थाम् ॥१॥

1. Hari Om! The enquirers of Brahman converse (among each other). What is the cause? Is it Brahman? Whence are we born? By whom do we live? Where do we ultimately abide? By whom governed, in pains and pleasures, do we live our various conditions, O ye knowers of Brahman?

#### Notes and Commentary

*Brahmavadinah*—enquirers of Brahman. *Vadanti*—converse. *Kim*—what. *Karanam*—cause. *Kutah*—whence or why. *Jatah smaah*—we are born. *Jivamah*—do we live. *Kena*—by whom. *Kva*—where. *Cha*—and. *Sampratishthah*—finally rest. *Adhishtitah*—governed. *Kena*—by whom. *Sukhetareshu*—in pleasure and pain. *Vartamahe*—do we exist. *Brahmavidah*—knowers of Brahman. *Vyavastham*—rule.

*Kim karanam Brahma*: What is the cause? Is it Brahman? What is the final cause of this world? Is it Brahman? What sort of a cause is Brahman? Is it the material cause, or the efficient cause, or both? What is the source for this life? Is there any supporter or controller or Inner Ruler for this life? On what are we established at the time of the destruction of this world (Pralaya)? What becomes of the soul after death? Does the soul exist after death? Or, is it annihilated completely? Is it absorbed in Brahman? Is there any supreme Lord who governs the Jivas, the individual souls?

कालः स्वभावो नियतिर्यदृच्छा भूतानि योनिः पुरुष इति चिन्त्या ।  
संयोग एषां न त्वात्मभावादात्माप्यनीशः सुखदुःखहेतोः ॥२॥

2. Time, inherent nature, law or necessity or chance or the elements or matter or a womb or a male, are to be considered as the cause. It is not a combination of these because of the existence of the soul (Atman). The soul (the individual soul) also is not free, as he is under the sway of pleasure and pain.

### Notes and Commentary

*Kala*—time. *Svabhavah*—inherent nature. *Niyatih*—law or necessity. *Yadriccha*—chance. *Bhutani*—matter. *Yoni*—womb. *Purushah*—male. *Esham*—of these. *Samyoga*—combination. *Anisa*—not Lord of itself.

The cause for this universe is here considered one by one and rejected as not satisfactory.

Is Time Brahma (as cause)? No. The individual soul is not powerful. He cannot be the author of the creation. He is impotent over the cause of pleasure and pain.

ते ध्यानयोगानुगता अपश्यन्देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैर्निर्गूढाम् ।

यः कारणानि निखिलानि तानि कालात्मयुक्तान्यधितिष्ठत्येकः ॥३॥

3. They, who practised meditation, realised or saw as the cause of creation, the power of God (Devatma-Sakti) hidden in His own qualities (Gunas), which alone rules over all these causes (enumerated above in verse 2,) beginning with time and ending with the individual soul.

### Notes and Commentary

*Te*—they. *Dhyanayoganugatah*—practising the Yoga of meditation. *Apasyan*—realised, saw. *Devatma-saktim*—the power of God. *Svagunai*—by the Gunas. *Nigudham*—hidden. *Ya*—who. *Nikhilani*—all. *Tani*—those. *Karanani*—causes. *Kalatma-yuktani*—beginning with time and ending with the individual soul. *Adhitishthati*—rules. *Eka*—the secondless.

Meditation leads to realisation. Devatma-Sakti: this is the power of God. It is Maya. Its qualities are Sattva (purity, goodness), Rajas (activity, passion), Tamas (darkness, inertia). Svaguna refers to these three qualities.

तमेकनेमिं त्रिवृतं षोडशान्तं शतार्धारं विंशतिप्रत्यराभिः ।  
अष्टकैः षड्भिर्विश्वरूपैकपाशं त्रिमार्गभेदं द्विनिमित्तैकमोहम् ॥४॥

4. We understand Him as a wheel, which has one felly with a triple tyre, with sixteen end parts, fifty spokes, twenty counter spokes, with six sets of eights, which has one rope of various forms, which has three different roads or paths, and which has one revolution for two traces.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tam*—Him. *Eka nemim*—with one felly. *Trivritam*—with a triple tyre. *Shodasantam*—with sixteen end parts. *Satardharam*— with fifty spokes. *Vimsatipratyarabhi*—with twenty counter spokes. *Ashtakai shadbhi*—with six sets of eight. *Visvarupaikapasam*—with one rope of various forms. *Trimargabhedam*—with three different roads or paths. *Dvinimittaikamoham*—with each revolution which is the cause for two.

God is meditated upon as the wheel of this universe. The circumference (Nemi) of the wheel represents nature, known variously as unmanifested ether, Maya, Prakriti, Sakti, Ajnana, etc. It is the cause on which the whole creation depends.

The three tyres represent the three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, or time, space and causation.

The sixteen end parts represent the sixteen modifications or Vikritis of the Sankhya philosophy, by which the creation is completed. They are the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of action, and mind and the five gross elements, viz., earth, water, fire, air and ether. According to another explanation, the sixteen parts are the Virat, Sutratman, and the fourteen worlds.

Fifty spokes: These consist of the five classes of ignorance, viz., Tamas (obscurity), Moha (illusion), Mahamoha (extreme illusion), Timira (darkness) and Andha-timira (utter-darkness); the twenty-eight disabilities; the nine Tushtis or satisfactions; and the eight Siddhis or perfections, viz., Tara, Sutara, Tarayanti, Pramoda, Pramodita, Promodamana, Samyaka and Satpramodita.

The twenty counter spokes are the ten senses and their ten objects. These are the wedges to strengthen the spokes. Counter-spokes are pieces of wooden bolts, to secure firmly the spokes.

Six sets of eight: (1) The eight producers of the Samkhya or the eightfold Prakriti, viz., the five elements, mind, intellect and egoism. (2) The eight constituent parts of the body (Dhatus), viz., external skin, internal skin, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen. (3) Ashta Siddhis, or eight forms of superhuman powers, viz., Anima, Mahima, etc. (4) Eight mental states (Bhava), viz., virtue, unrighteousness, knowledge, ignorance, dispassion, attachment, superhuman power and want of superhuman power. (5) The eight deities, viz., Brahma, Prajapati, Devas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Pitrис and Pisachas. (6) The eight virtues of the soul, viz., compassion, forbearance, absence of jealousy, purity, freedom from fatigue (Anayasa), auspiciousness (Mangalam), freedom from poverty (Akarpanya) and desirelessness (Nispriha).

Three different roads are virtue (Dharma), vice (Adharma) and knowledge (Jnana).

The rope is desire. It is of various kinds.

Moha literally means delusion. Here it means revolution, with reference to the wheel. This revolution is the cause of two, viz., virtue and sin, or happiness and misery.

पञ्चस्रोतोऽन्वं पञ्चयोन्युग्रवक्रां पञ्चप्राणोर्मि पञ्चबुद्ध्यादिमूलाम् ।  
पञ्चावर्ती पञ्चदुःखौघवेगां पञ्चाशद्देवां पञ्चपर्वामधीमः ॥५॥

5. We understand Him as a river of five streams, from five sources, impetuous and crooked, whose waves are the five Pranas or vital breaths, whose original source is fivefold perception (the mind), which has five whirlpools, which is impelled by the velocity of the fivefold misery or pain, which is divided by the five kinds of misery, and which has five turnings or branches.

### Notes and Commentary

*Panchasrotumbum*—which contains the waters of five streams. *Panchayonyugravakram*—which has five sources,

impetuous and crooked. *Panchapranormim*—whose waves are the five Pranas. *Panchabudhyadimulam*—whose original source is fivefold perception, the mind. *Panchavartam*—which has five whirlpools. *Panchaduhkhaughavegam*—which is impelled by the velocity of five kinds of pain. *Panchasadbhedam*—which has fifty aspects. Sri Sankara reads as 'Pancha klesha bhedam—which is divided by five kinds of misery'. *Panchaparvam*—which has five branches. *Adhima*—we think or understand.

1. The five senses represent the five streams.
2. The five elements are the five sources.
3. The five Pranas represent the waves.
4. This universe is dependent on the mind only. If there is the mind, there is the universe, if there is no mind, there is no universe. In the superconscious state, Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the mind is annihilated. Therefore, the universe vanishes.
5. The five objects of the senses, viz., sound, touch, colour, taste and smell (Sabda, Sparsa, Rupa, Rasa, Gandha) are called whirlpools, because the individual souls get drowned in them.
6. The five kinds of pain are: the pain arising from existence in the womb, birth, old age, disease and death.

Just as the water of a river has come from the ocean, and will go back to the ocean, so also this world has come out of Brahman, and it will get absorbed in Brahman.

सर्वजीवे सर्वसंस्थे बृहन्ते अस्मिन्हंसो भ्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रे ।  
पृथगात्मानं प्रेरितारं च मत्वा जुष्टस्तस्तेनामृतत्वमेति ॥६॥

6. In this infinite wheel of Brahman, in which everything lives and rests, the pilgrim soul, or the reincarnating Self, is whirled about, when he thinks that he and the Supreme Ruler are different or separate. He attains immortality when he is blessed or favoured by Him.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sarvajive*—in which everything lives. *Sarvasamsthe*—in which everything rests. *Brahmachakre*—in the wheel of

Brahman. *Hamsa*—the pilgrim soul, or the reincarnating soul. *Bhramyate* —is whirled about. *Amritatvam*—immortality. *Eti*—attains.

*Hamsa*: The Jiva is called Hamsa (pilgrim or traveller), because he travels along the road of Samsara. Hamsa literally means swan. Man takes several births, passes through various Yonis, and evolves gradually through various experiences. Ultimately, he becomes one with Brahman. This is compared to a pilgrimage. When the Jiva thinks that he is one with the Supreme Being, Brahman, he attains immortality.

*Brahmachakra*: the wheel of Brahman is this world.

Through the grace of the Lord only, one is endowed with the four means of salvation, gets a taste for Vedanta, and eventually realises his identity with the Supreme Self.

उद्गीतमेतत्परमं तु ब्रह्म तस्मिंस्त्वयं सुप्रतिष्ठाक्षरं च ।  
अत्रान्तरं ब्रह्मविदो विदित्वा लीना ब्रह्मणि तत्परा योनिमुक्ताः ॥७॥

7. This is verily declared as the Supreme Brahman. In that is the triad. It is the firm support. It is the indestructible. By knowing what is therein, the knowers of Brahman become devoted to Brahman, merge themselves in It, and are liberated from birth.

### Notes and Commentary

*Supratishtha*—firm support. *Aksharam*—the indestructible. *Brahmavidah*—knowers of Brahman. *Tatparah*—devoted to it. *Yonimuktah*—liberated from the womb, i.e., from rebirth.

*Etat*—this, i.e., the absolute Brahman, without qualities. *Trayam*—the triad. They are the world, the individual soul and the cosmic soul. It may mean also the waking state, dream and deep sleep. The knowers of Brahman sublate the limiting adjuncts such as physical sheath, vital sheath, etc. through Vichara, enquiry, through the 'Neti-Neti' doctrine, and take out the inner essence, i.e., Brahman. They merge themselves in the essence.

*Supratishtha*: Brahman is the firm support. He is the substratum for this world. The entire world rests in Him alone, after cosmic Pralaya or dissolution.

*Yonimuktah*: They are released from birth. They are freed from all the evils incident on birth, old age and death.

संयुक्तमेतत्कर्मक्षरं च व्यक्ताव्यक्तं भरते विश्वमीशः ।  
अनीशश्वात्मा बध्यते भोक्तृभावाज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥८॥

8. The Lord supports this universe, which consists of a combination of the perishable and the imperishable, the manifest and the unmanifest. As long as the individual soul does not know the Lord, he is attached to the sensual pleasures. He becomes the enjoyer and is bound. When he knows the Lord, he is released from all fetters.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Samyuktam*—joined together. *Ksharam*—perishable. *Aksharam*—imperishable. *Vyaktavyaktam*—manifest and unmanifest. *Visvam*—universe. *Isa*—the Lord. *Bharate*—supports. *Anisah*—without the Lord. *Bhoktri-bhavat*—because of being the enjoyer. *Badhyate*—is bound. *Sarvapasaih*—from all fetters. *Muchyate*—is released.

The ignorant Jiva, identifies himself with the body and the senses, and develops the Bhava that he is the enjoyer and actor (Karta-Bhokta). This is the cause for his bondage. Vyakta is the manifested universe. Avyakta is the unmanifested Mula-prakriti, which contains the seed for this manifested universe.

ज्ञाजौ द्वावजावीशानीशावजा ह्येका भोक्तृभोग्यार्थयुक्ता ।  
अनन्तश्वात्मा विश्वरूपो ह्यकर्ता त्रयं यदा विन्दते ब्रह्मेतत् ॥९॥

9. The knowing Lord and the unknowing individual soul, the Omnipotent and the impotent, are both unborn. She (i.e., nature, Prakriti) too, who is connected with the enjoyer and objects of enjoyment, who causes the realisation of the enjoyer and the enjoyed, is unborn. When all these three are realised as Brahman, the Self becomes infinite, universal and inactive (free from the sense of agency or actor).

### Notes and Commentary

*Jnajnau*—the knowing (Lord) and the unknowing (individual soul). *Isanisau*—the Omnipotent and the impotent. *Ajau*—are unborn. *Bhoktribhogyartha yukta*—who is connected with the enjoyer and the objects of enjoyment. *Ananta*—infinite. *Akarta*—inactive. *Bhavati*—becomes.

Maya is also unborn (Aja). She is the producer of all. She is the power of the Supreme Soul. The Triputi, or the triad, namely the enjoyer, the enjoyment and the objects of enjoyment, are her modifications only. As the Lord is endowed with the illusory power of Maya, He appears to have all those differences.

The Atman is always the witnessing subject. He is always independent. Object is always dependent upon the perceiving subject.

In Nirvikalpa Samadhi, superconscious state, the Triputi vanishes. The subject and the object become one. The Triputi melts in Brahman. On account of ignorance, the individual soul thinks that he is the doer and the enjoyer. This is the cause of human miseries and sufferings. When the individual soul realises his identity with the Supreme Soul, the sense of actorship vanishes. He realises his infinite nature, universality and absolute freedom.

क्षरं प्रधानममृताक्षरं हरः क्षरात्मानावीशते देव एकः ।  
तस्याभिध्यानाद्योजनात्तत्त्वभावाद्दूयश्चान्ते विश्वमायानिवृत्तिः ॥१०॥

10. Matter is perishable, but God (Hara) is immortal and imperishable. He, the only God, rules over the perishable matter and the individual souls. By meditating upon Him, by union with Him and by becoming one with Him, there is, finally, cessation of all illusion.

### Notes and Commentary

*Pradhanam*—matter. *Ksharam*—perishable. *Hara*—God. *Amritaksharam*—immortal and imperishable. *Isate*—rules over. *Yojanat*—by union. *Tattvabhatavat*—by becoming one with Him. *Visvamayanivritti*—cessation of all illusion.

*Hara*—the destroyer. God is called *Hara*, because He destroys all ignorance of the individual souls.

*Pradhana* or the *Mula-Prakriti*, is not perishable in itself. It is without beginning (*Anadi*). It is unborn, *Aja* (vide verse I-9). It is called perishable in order to show the difference between God and nature. The whole Nature vanishes for the sage, who has attained liberation. Therefore, nature is said to be perishable.

Concentration ends in meditation. Meditation leads to *Samadhi*. The aspirant first attains union with the Lord. This is *Savikalpa Samadhi*. Then he merges himself in the Lord. He enters into His being. This is *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*.

In the *Gita* you will find, "*Jnatum, drashtum cha tattvena praveshtum cha*—known, seen and also entered in it" (XI-54).

In *Savikalpa Samadhi*, there is yet a slight difference between the meditator and the meditated. There is *Triputi*, or the triad. In *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*, there is *Triputilaya*. The *Triputi* entirely vanishes. Even the slight distinction disappears, because the meditator realises his identity with *Dhyeya*, the object meditated upon. *Dhyata* (meditator), *Dhyana* (meditation) and *Dhyeya* become one. Meditation ceases here.

ज्ञात्वा देवं सर्वपाशापहानिः क्षीणैः क्लेशैर्जन्ममृत्युप्रहाणिः ।  
तस्याभिध्यानात्तृतीयं देहभेदे विश्वैश्वर्यं केवल आप्तकामः ॥११॥

11. By knowledge of God, all the bonds (of ignorance) are destroyed; there is cessation of birth and death, with distress destroyed. By meditating on Him, one attains the third state, viz., universal lordship at the dissolution of the body. All his desires are gratified, and he becomes one without a second (*Kevala*).

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sarvapasapahani*—breaking of all bonds. *Aptakamah*—one whose desires are gratified. *Visvaisvaryam*—lordship of the universe.

When the meditator merges himself in the Lord, he becomes one without a second. This is the state of *Kaivalya*. How can desires remain now, when he becomes an *Aptakama*, when he attains suzerainty by becoming one with the Lord? All the

divine Aisvarya roll under his feet. Hence all his desires are satisfied. He cannot have any longing for worldly pleasures or objects.

*Klesas*: ignorance and its effects. There are five afflictions —Avidya (ignorance), Asmita (egoism), Raga and Dvesha (likes and dislikes), and Abhinivesa (clinging to the mundane life).

एतज्जेयं नित्यमेवात्मसंस्थं नातः परं वेदितव्यं हि किंचित् ।  
भोक्ता भोग्यं प्रेरितारं च मत्वा सर्वं प्रोक्तं त्रिविधं ब्रह्मेतत् ॥१२॥

12. This is to be known as eternally existing in one's own Self. Truly, there is nothing higher than that to be known. When one recognises the enjoyer, the object of enjoyment and the dispenser or the Supreme Ruler, all has been said. This is the threefold Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

*Atmasamstam*—existing in one's own Self. *Jneyam*—to be known. *Veditavyam*—to be known. *Bhokta*—enjoyer. *Bhogym*—the enjoyed. *Proktam*—is declared in the Vedas.

Knowing all these three kinds, viz., the enjoyer or the individual soul, the objects of enjoyment and the Dispenser or the Supreme Ruler as Brahman, one attains the final emancipation.

The individual soul is, in essence, the eternal Brahman. He is not aware of his essential nature on account of Avidya, ignorance. He identifies himself with the physical body, on account of ignorance, and so he forgets all about his divine nature. Brahman, or the Eternal, exists in one's own Self already, even before realisation. He is ever shining in the chambers of one's heart, from eternity. Realisation is not achieving something. It is only knowing one's own infinite nature by tearing the veils, by annihilating the ignorance, by cutting asunder the three knots or Hridaya-granthis, viz., Avidya (ignorance), Kama (desire) and Karma (action).

By knowing Brahman, everything else will be known. Knowledge of the Self is the highest. There is nothing to be known beyond this. Brahman is the substratum for everything.

Just as one will have knowledge of all products of clay, if he gets knowledge of clay, so also one will have knowledge of everything, if he attains knowledge of Brahman. That is the reason Saunaka asked Angiras, “*Kasmin bhagavo vijnate sarvam idam vijnatam bhavati*—what is that, by knowing which, everything else is known?” (Mundaka Upanishad). A knower of Brahman can give answer for any question, on any secular science, even though he has not studied the science, because he has tapped the very source of all knowledge.

वह्नेर्यथा योनिगतस्य मूर्तिर्न दृश्यते नैव च लिङ्गनाशः ।  
स भूय एवेन्धन योनिगृह्यस्तद्वोभयं वै प्रणवेन देहे ॥१३॥

13. As fire is not perceived when it is latent in its cause, the firewood, and yet there is no destruction of its subtle form, because it is again perceived in its cause, the firewood, by rubbing, so also the Atman is perceived in the body by meditating on the sacred syllable Om.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Vahni*—fire. *Murtih*—the form. *Linganasa*—destruction of its subtle form.

Om is a symbol of Brahman. When one meditates on Om and its significance with feeling (Bhava), he attains Self-realisation. He beholds the Atman in the chambers of his heart. “*Tajjapastadarthabhavanam*—Its repetition, and its meditation, with meaning, should be practised” (Yoga Sutras). Meditation corresponds to the rubbing of the firewood.

स्वदेहमरणिं कृत्वा प्रणवं चोत्तरारणिम् ।  
ध्याननिर्मथनाभ्यासाद्वेवं पश्येन्निगृहवत् ॥१४॥

14. By making one's own body the lower piece of wood or friction stick, and the syllable Om the upper friction stick, and by practising the friction or churning of meditation, one will realise God who is hidden, as it were.

### Notes and Commentary

*Svadeham*—one's own body. *Aranim*—the lower piece of wood. *Pranavam*—the syllable Om. *Uttararanim*—the upper wood. *Dhyana nirmathana abhyasat*—by practising churning or friction in the form of meditation. *Devam*—God. *Pasyet*—should see. *Nigudhavat*—like something hidden.

Just as fire becomes visible by rubbing the sticks, so also God becomes visible when one meditates on Om.

तिलेषु तैलं दधनीव सर्पिरापः स्रोतः स्वरणीषु चाग्निः ।  
एवमात्माऽत्मनि गृह्यतेऽसौ सत्येनैवं तपसा योऽनुपश्यति ॥१५॥

15. As oil in sesame seeds, as butter in curd, as water in river-beds, and as fire in wood, even so is Atman perceived within his own Self by a person, who beholds Him by truth and austerity (by controlling his senses and the mind).

### Notes and Commentary

*Tileshu*—in the sesame seeds. *Tailam*—oil. *Dadhini*—in curd. *Sarpih*—butter. *Srotahsu*—in river-beds. *Atmani*—in the Self (intellect, Buddhi).

The similes indicate that the Atman is all-pervading, and is hidden in all beings.

सर्वव्यापिनमात्मानं क्षीरे सर्पिरिवार्पितम् । आत्मविद्यातपोमूलं  
तद्ब्रह्मोपनिषत्परं तद्ब्रह्मोपनिषत्परमिति ॥१६॥

॥ इति श्रेताश्वतरोपनिषत्सु प्रथमोऽध्यायः ॥

16. The Atman, which pervades all things, like butter in milk, is rooted in Self-knowledge and austerity. This is the mystic doctrine (Upanishad) concerning Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

*Atmavidya tapomulam*—rooted in Self-knowledge and austerity.

Here ends the First Chapter of the Svetasvataropanishad.

## CHAPTER II

युज्जानः प्रथमं मनस्तत्त्वाय सविता धियः ।  
अग्नेज्योतिर्निर्चाय्य पृथिव्या अध्याभरत् ॥१॥

1. Concentrating first the mind and the senses (upon Brahman) for realising the Truth, may Savitri, having seen the illuminating fire, bring it out of the earth.

## Notes and Commentary

*Prathama*—first. *Manah*—the mind. *Dhiyah*—the senses. *Tattvaya*—for realising the Truth. *Yunjanah*—concentrating. *Agnerjyoti*—the illuminating fire.

The ways to develop concentration on Brahman are described in this chapter. The first four verses contain the praise of Savitri, the god of the sun, for the attainment of concentration. They are taken from the Samhita portion of the White Yajur-veda. The seeker after Truth, calls upon Savitri earnestly, for inspiration and self-control.

The aspirant should purify his mind first, through selfless service (Nishkama Karma Yoga), Japa, Kirtan, Sattvic food, service of Guru and the poor. Then only will he be able to realise the benefits of concentration. The senses should be brought under control. They should be withdrawn from their respective objects. One cannot have concentration of mind if the senses are not controlled. Discipline of the senses is the first spiritual practice.

*Agnerjyoti*: the illuminating fire of wisdom. This is Brahma Jnana, or knowledge of the Self, which destroys the darkness of ignorance, burns the Karmas and gives illumination to the individual soul, by enabling him to realise his identity with the Supreme Soul.

*Prithivi*—earth, matter in general.

युक्तेन मनसा वयं देवस्य सवितुः सवे । सुवर्गोयाय शक्त्या ॥२॥

2. By the grace of the divine Savitri, let us, with concentrated mind, strive vigorously for the attainment of Supreme Bliss.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yuktena manasa*—with concentrated mind. *Vayam*—we. *Saktya*—vigorously. *Suvargeyaya*—for the attainment of Supreme Bliss.

Constant and vigorous Sadhana, or Abhyasa, is necessary for the attainment of Self-realisation. Regularity in Sadhana is of paramount importance. Purushartha is essential. God helps those who help themselves.

Gita says: “*Abhyasena cha kaunteya vairagyena cha grihyate*—O Kaunteya, by practice and by dispassion, it may be restrained”. “*Abhyasavairagyabhyam tannirodha*—it can be controlled by incessant practice and dispassion”—Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

*Suvarga* here means Supreme Bliss of Brahman.

युक्त्वाय मनसा देवान्सुवर्यतो धिया दिवम् ।  
बृहज्योतिः करिष्यतः सविता प्रसुवाति तान् ॥३॥

3. Having controlled the senses, through which heaven is attained, with the mind and the intellect, let Savitri cause them to manifest the divine infinite light.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yuktvaya*—having controlled. *Manasa*—with the help of the mind. *Devan*—the senses. *Suvaryatah*—heaven aspiring. *Dhiya*—with the help of the intellect. *Bhrihajyotih*—infinite light. *Tan*—them.

The senses have a natural tendency to run towards the external objects. The Sadhaka should check the outgoing tendency of the senses, through the practice of Dama (self-restraint) and Pratyahara (abstraction or withdrawal). He should not allow the senses to come in contact with the objects. He should disconnect the senses from the mind, by allowing the mind to think constantly of the form of the Lord, or the attributes of Brahman. This is a trying discipline indeed, but the fruit of the practice is everlasting peace and immortality. Therefore, you will have to practise it at all costs.

Heaven means here sensual pleasure, derived from enjoying external objects.

You will have to control the senses with the help of pure mind and pure intellect. You will have to purify the mind through Japa, Vairagya, etc. The senses play with the help of the mind. If the mind is rendered pure and strong, the senses will come under your control very easily.

युज्जते मन उत युज्जते धियो विप्रा विप्रस्य बृहतो विपश्चितः ।  
वि होत्रा दधे वयुनाविदेक इन्मही देवस्य सवितुः परिष्टुतिः ॥४॥

4. Great is the glory of the Savitri, who is all-pervading, infinite, all-knowing, the one alone who knows the rules, has arranged the sacrificial rites by the Brahmanas. The wise control their mind and intellect and practise meditation.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Yunjate*—control. *Manah*—the mind. *Dhiyah*—the intellect. *Viprah*—the wise. *Viprasya*—all-pervading. *Vipaschita*—all-knowing. *Parishtutih*—glory. *Mahi*—great.

The Vrittis, or thought-waves of the mind, should be controlled. Then only one can realise the Self within, which is ever serene. Just as you cannot see the bottom of the lake when there are waves on the surface of the lake, so also you cannot see the Atman, if there are thought-waves on the surface of the mind-lake. You will find in Patanjali Yoga Sutras: “*Yogaschitta vritti nirodha*—Yoga is the restraint of the modifications of the mind”. When the Vrittis are controlled, the Yogi rests in his own Satchidananda Svarupa, or essential all-blissful Self.

युजे वां ब्रह्म पूर्व्यं नमोभिर्विश्लोक येतु पथ्येव सूरे: ।  
शृण्वन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्रा आ ये धामानि दिव्यानि तस्थु: ॥५॥

5. I worship your ancient Brahman with reverence. My verses go forth like the suns on their course. May the sons of the immortal listen, even those who inhabit celestial regions.

### Notes and Commentary

*Purvyam*—the apparent. *Amritasya*—of immortality. *Putrah*—sons. *Divyani*—celestial. *Dhamani*—regions. *Tasthuh*—inhabits.

The Rishi, who has attained Self-realisation, is exhorting others also to strive for attaining this supreme state—even those who are dwelling in the celestial regions. The happiness enjoyed by the gods is nothing, when compared to the bliss enjoyed by a realised sage.

All beings are the sons of the immortal Brahman, because they have come out of Brahman. They are nectar's sons. Brahman is the source for everything.

अग्निर्यत्राभिमथ्यते वायुर्यत्राधिरुद्धयते ।  
सोमो यत्रातिरिच्यते तत्र संजायते मनः ॥६॥

6. Where fire is kindled or churned out, where air is controlled, where the Soma juice overflows, there the mind is born.

### Notes and Commentary

*Agni*—fire. *Yatra*—where. *Abhimathyate*—is kindled or churned out. *Vayu*—air. *Yatra*—where. *Adhirudhyate*—is controlled. *Soma*—Soma juice. *Atirichyate*—overflows. *Tatra*—there. *Manah*—mind. *Samjayate*—is born.

After the fire has been kindled and stirred by the wind on the Soma sacrifice, the poets drink the Soma juice and are inspired. They compose new songs on account of the inspiration.

When the fire, i.e., the Supreme Self (the knowledge of Brahman) which burns all ignorance, has been kindled, by rubbing in the body with the sacred syllable Om, where the Anahata sounds are generated by the practice of Pranayama, then one attains Brahman, Self-realisation.

The aspirant begins with sacrifice, then practises Yoga and ultimately attains Nirvikalpa Samadhi, perfect Knowledge and eternal Bliss.

Fire stands for knowledge of the Self. This supreme knowledge is churned out by study of philosophical books under a competent Guru, and constant meditation on Brahman, the Absolute. Guru represents the upper piece of wood. The disciple represents the lower one. Meditation corresponds to the process of rubbing or churning.

*Vayuryatradhirudhyate*—where air is controlled. This refers to the practice of Pranayama (restraint of breath).

When one does actions selflessly, when one serves humanity with Narayana Bhava, or Atma Bhava, without expectation of fruits, when one offers the actions and their fruits to the Lord, one experiences immense joy and exhilaration of spirits. This is drinking Soma juice.

In this verse, the synthesis of Jnana Yoga, Raja Yoga and Karma Yoga is recommended. Karma Yoga will purify the mind. Raja Yoga will steady the oscillating mind. Jnana Yoga will remove the veil of ignorance. The central basic Yoga is Jnana Yoga. All other Yogas are auxiliaries (Sahakaris).

सवित्रा प्रसवेन जुषेत ब्रह्म पूर्व्यम् ।  
तत्र योनिं कृणवसे न हि ते पूर्तमक्षिप्त ॥७ ॥

7. Let us love the ancient Brahman, by the grace of Savitri. If there thou attainest thy source (Brahman), thy former work will no longer bind thee.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Yatra*—where. *Yonim*—the source. *Purvam*—former acts. *Purvym*—the ancient.

This verse treats of Bhakti Yoga. Now the synthesis of Yoga, referred to in the previous verse, is completed. Without Bhakti, you cannot attain the grace, which is essential for attaining the knowledge of Brahman. When one attains the source, i.e., Brahman, he is not bound by his former actions. The fire of knowledge burns the seeds of Karmas. Hence, the sage does not take rebirths.

The rules and results of Yoga are described in the following verses.

त्रिरुन्नतं स्थाप्य समं शरीरं हृदीन्द्रियाणि मनसा संनिवेश्य ।  
ब्रह्मोदुपेन प्रतरेत विद्वान् स्रोतांसि सर्वाणि भयावहानि ॥८॥

8. Keeping his body in a straight posture, holding the chest, neck and head erect, and drawing the senses and the mind into the heart, the wise should cross over the fearful currents (of the world), by means of the raft (or boat) of Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sariram*—the body. *Trirunnatam*—with the chest, neck and head. *Samam*—held erect in a straight posture. *Vidvan*—the wise. *Bhayavahani*—fearful. *Srotamsi*—currents. *Brahmodupena*—by means of the raft of Brahman. *Pratareta*—should cross over.

In the Gita also you will find: “*Samam kaya sirogrivam dharayan*—keeping the body, head and neck straight” (VI-13).

The senses and the mind have a tendency to run towards external objects. This is called Bahirmukha Vritti. The Sadhaka should practise Antarmukha Vritti, by withdrawing again and again the senses and the mind from the objects, through Pratyahara (abstraction) and fixing the mind in the heart.

The fearful currents are the currents of Raga and Dvesha (likes and dislikes), Vasanas (desires), and Trishnas (cravings), which hurl the man down into the ocean of births and deaths.

The raft of Brahman is Om, the Pranava. Silent Japa of Om, with meditation of its meaning, will help one to cross the ocean of Samsara, i.e., to free oneself from the round of births and deaths.

प्राणान्प्रपीड्येह संयुक्तचेष्टः क्षीणे प्राणे नासिकयोच्छ्वसीत ।  
दुष्टाश्वयुक्तमिव वाहमेन विद्वान्मनो धारयेताप्रमत्तः ॥९॥

9. Controlling the senses, repressing and regulating the breathings, checking the movements of the body, gently breathing through the nostrils, the wise should undistractedly restrain his mind, that chariot yoked with vicious horses.

### Notes and Commentary

*Pranan*—the senses. *Vaham*—the reins. *Dharayet*—restrain.

He should attend to the mind, just as the charioteer attends to a car drawn by restive horses. He should keep his hold on the mind, just as the charioteer keeps his hold on the reins attached to the turbulent horses.

In the Gita, you will find: “*Pranapanau samau kritva nasabhyantara charinau*—equalising the outgoing and incoming breaths, moving within the nostrils” (V-27).

*Dushtasvayuktam vaham*: The wise should control the turbulent horses (the senses) by holding the reins (mind) properly. A similar metaphor comes in the Katha Upanishad (I-3-iii to ix).

The practice of Pranayama is prescribed here. When the breath is controlled, the mind gets controlled. There is intimate connection between the mind and breath. Do inhalation (Puraka) and exhalation (Rechaka) for two months. Then practise Kumbhaka (retention of breath) gradually. Do not retain the breath for a long time. Retention of breath for 30 to 60 seconds will suffice. Adjust the diet also. Take light Sattvic food. Do not overload the stomach. Be moderate in eating (Mitahara).

समे शुचौ शर्करावह्निवालुकाविवर्जिते शब्दजलाश्रयादिभिः ।  
मनोऽनुकूले न तु चक्षुपीडने गुहानिवाताश्रयणे प्रयोजयेत् ॥१०॥

10. One should perform his exercises in concentration, on a level place, free from pebbles, fire, wind, dust, dampness and disturbing noises, where the scenery is charming and pleasing to the eyes, and where there are bowers, caves, good water-places, which help the practice of concentration.

### Notes and Commentary

*Samey*—where the floor is even. *Suchau*—pure. *Sarkara-vahni-valuka-vivarjite*—free from pebbles, fire and dust. *Sabdajalasrayadibhi*—(free from) disturbing noises and dampness. *Manonukule*—helpful for concentration of the mind.

If the place is charming, if the scenery is beautiful, if the spiritual vibrations are elevating, and if the place is solitary and quiet, one will get concentration of mind quickly, and without any effort. A damp place or room is not favourable for the practice of Pranayama. You should not practise Pranayama in a dusty place also.

नीहरधूमाकानिलानलानां खद्योतविद्युत्स्फटिकशशीनाम् ।  
एतानि रूपाणि पुरस्सराणि ब्रह्मण्यभिव्यक्तिकराणि योगे ॥११॥

11. When Yoga is being performed, forms like snow or frost, smoke, the sun, fire, wind, fire-fly, lightning, crystal and the moon appear. They precede the manifestation of Brahman.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Niharadhumarkanilanalanam*—of snow, smoke, the sun, wind and fire. *Khadyotavidyut-sphatikasasinam*—of fire-fly, lightning, crystal and the moon. *Rupani*—forms. *Yoge*—in the practice of Yoga. *Purassarani*—precede.

Snow, frost, smoke, etc.—these are the preliminary appearances, which precede the manifestation of Brahman, in Yoga.

The appearances of these forms indicate that you are progressing in concentration, and that you will soon attain Self-realisation. These forms represent the various stages in concentration.

पृथ्व्यप्तेजोऽनिलखे समुत्थिते पश्चात्मके योगगुणे प्रवृत्ते ।  
न तस्य रोगो न जरा न मृत्युः प्राप्तस्य योगाग्निमयं शरीरम् ॥१२॥

12. When the fivefold quality of Yoga, arising from earth, water, fire, air and ether, has been produced, then the Yogi is endowed with body, made strong by the fire of Yoga, and so he will not be affected by disease, old age or death.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Panchatmaka*—fivefold. *Yogagune*—quality of Yoga. *Yogagnimayam sariram*—body made strong by the fire of

*Yoga.* *Na*—no. *Rogah*—disease. *Jara*—old age. *Mrityuh*—death.

The quality of each element, i.e., smell of the earth, taste of water, sound of ether, form of fire, touch of air, is the *Yogaguna*. By fixing the mind on the tip of the nose, the Yogi experiences divine supersensuous smell (*Divya Gandha*). By fixing the mind on the tip of the tongue, he experiences divine taste; by fixing the mind on the forepart of the palate, he experiences divine colour; by fixing the mind on the middle of the tongue, a divine touch and by fixing the mind on the root of the tongue, a divine sound. The mind is steadied by means of these divine experiences, because it is not attracted by the external objects.

The Yogi obtains an adamantine body (*Vajrakaya*) through the practice of *Pranayama*, concentration and *Yogic Kriyas*. He can keep it as long as he likes. Yogi Changdev of Maharashtra kept his body for 1400 years.

लघुत्वमारोग्यमलोलुपत्वं वर्णप्रसादं स्वरसौष्ठवं च ।

गन्धः शुभो मूत्रपुरीषमल्पं योगप्रवृत्तिं प्रथमां वदन्ति ॥१३॥

13. When the body is light and healthy, when his mind is free from desire, when he has a shining complexion, sweet voice and pleasant odour, when the excretions become scanty, they (realised Yogis) say that he has attained the first degree of concentration.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Laghutvam*—lightness. *Arogyam*—health. *Alolupatvam*—freedom from desires. *Varnaprasadam*—shining complexion. *Svara saushtavam*—sweet voice. *Subha gandhah*—pleasant odour. *Alpa mutrapurisham*—scantiness of excretion. *Cha*—and. *Prathama*—first. *Yoga pravrittīm*—signs of entering *Yoga*. *Vadanti*—they say.

*Yoga pravrittīm*: These are the first results of *Yoga*. These are the first signs of entering *Yoga*.

*Aloluptvam* means also steadiness of mind.

यथैव बिम्बं मृदयोपलिप्तं तेजोमयं भ्राजते तत्सुधान्तम् ।  
तद्वात्मतत्त्वं प्रसमीक्ष्य देही एकः कृतार्थो भवते वीतशोकः ॥१४॥

14. Just as a metal disc, or a mirror, which was stained by dust before, shines brilliantly when it has been cleansed, so also the embodied being (the individual soul, Jivatman) realises oneness, attains the end or the goal, and is freed from sorrow, when he realises the true nature of the Atman.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yathaiva*—just as. *Mridayopaliptam*—stained by dust. *Tat*—that. *Bimbam*—metallic disc or mirror. *Sudhantam*—when it has been cleansed. *Tejomayam*—brilliantly. *Bhrajate*—shines. *Tadva*—so also. *Dehi*—the embodied being. *Atmatattvam*—the true nature of the Atman. *Prasamikshya*—having seen. *Ekah*—single. *Vitasokah*—free from sorrow. *Kritartho bhavate*—attains the end or the goal.

The benefits of Self-realisation are described in this verse. The Jiva experiences pain and sorrow on account of ignorance, on account of his identification with the body, on account of his 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness'. When he realises the true nature of the Atman, or his oneness with the Supreme Self, all sorrows come to an end. He enjoys eternal bliss and perennial joy. This is the drift of this verse.

यदात्मतत्त्वेन तु ब्रह्मतत्त्वं दीपोपमेनेह युक्तः प्रपश्येत् ।  
अजं ध्रुवं सर्वतत्त्वैर्विशुद्धं ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥१५॥

15. When by means of the real nature of his Self the Yogi sees, as a lamp, the real nature of Brahman, then having known the unborn, Eternal God, who is free from all the modifications of Prakriti, he is freed from all fetters or sins.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yada*—when. *Yukta*—the Yogi. *Dipopameneha*—like a lamp. *Atmatattvena*—by means of the real nature of the Self. *Brahmatattvam*—the real nature of Brahman. *Prapasyet*—sees. *Ajam*—unborn. *Dhruvam*—eternal. *Sarvatattvai*

—God. *Jnatva*—having known. *Sarvapasai*—from all fetters. *Vimuchyate*—is freed.

Tattva is a term of the Sankhya philosophy. It means a principle, something from which something else is derived. The nature of a thing is Tattva.

Brahman is beyond nature and the three Gunas. When the Yogi realises the Self, or attains Self-realisation, he is freed from the bondage of all Karmas.

एष ह देवः प्रदिशोऽनु सर्वाः पूर्वो ह जातः स उ गर्भे अन्तः ।  
स एव जातः स जनिष्यमाणः प्रत्यङ्गजनांस्तिष्ठति सर्वतोमुखः ॥१६॥

16. He indeed is the God who pervades all regions. He is the first born (Hiranyagarbha). He has entered into the womb. He alone is born and He will be born. He is inside all persons as the Indwelling Self, looking everywhere (having His face in all directions).

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sarvah pradisah*—all directions. *Sa ha purva jatah*—He is the first born. *Garbhe antah*—inside the womb. *Janishyamanah*—is to be born. *Pratyang-jana-tishthati*—stands inside all persons as the Indweller or Antaryamin. *Sarvato mukhah*—looking everywhere, having His face in all directions.

Hiranyagarbha is the cosmic mind or cosmic Prana, the sum total of all Jivas. He is omnipresent, and so He has His face in all directions. He dwells in every creature as the Self of all.

यो देवोऽग्नौ योऽप्सु यो विश्वं भुवनमाविवेश ।  
य ओषधीषु यो वनस्पतिषु तस्मै देवाय नमो नमः ॥१७॥

॥ इति द्वितीयोऽध्यायः समाप्तः ॥

17. Salutations, salutations to the God who is in fire, who is in water, who is in the plants, who is in the trees, and who has pervaded the whole universe.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yat*—which. *Devah*—God. *Agnau*—(is) in the fire. *Yah*—who. *Apah*—is in the water. *Yah*—who. *Visvam*—all. *Bhuvanam*—universe. *Avivesa*—has entered. *Yah*—who. *Oshadhishu*—in the plants. *Yah*—who. *Vanaspatishu*—in the trees. *Tasmai Devaya*—to that God. *Namo namah*—salutations, salutations.

Brahman is behind all phenomena. He abides in all these names and forms. He is the substratum for everything. He is the basis or support for everything.

Here ends the Second Chapter of the Svetasvataropanishad.

### CHAPTER III

य एको जालवानीशत ईशनीभिः सर्वाल्लोकानीशत ईशनीभिः ।

य एवैक उद्धवे संभवे च य एतद्विद्वरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥१॥

1. He who rules alone by His powers, who rules all the worlds by His powers, who is one and the same, at the time of creation and dissolution of the worlds—they who know Him, become immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

*Ya*—who. *Ekah*—one. *Isata*—rules. *Lokan*—worlds. *Sarvan*—all. *Udbhave*—at the time of creation. *Sambhave*—at the time of dissolution. *Amritah*—immortal. *Bhavanti*—become.

In this chapter, the Supreme Self is represented as the Isa, or Rudra, who rules by His own creative power of Maya.

Nirguna Brahman, the Impersonal Absolute, is free from Maya. He is free from any Upadhi, limiting adjunct (Nirupadhika). Isvara, the Personal God (Saguna Brahman), is connected with Maya. Maya is His Upadhi or Karana Sarira. He is Saupadhika Brahman. He has Maya under His perfect control. Para-Brahman and Saguna Brahman are one and the same. Satchidananda is Svarupa Lakshana. Omnipotence, omniscience, etc., are His Tatastha Lakshana. The same

Impersonal Absolute becomes the Personal God, for the pious meditation of devotees.

Jala means snare or Maya. Maya is the inscrutable power of the Lord. It is the seed for this world.

एको हि रुद्रो न द्वितीयाय तस्थुर्य इमाँल्लोकानीशत ईशनीभिः ।  
प्रत्यङ्गनांस्तिष्ठति संचुकोचान्तकाले संसृज्य विश्वा भुवनानि  
गोपा: ॥२॥

2. There is one Rudra only, who rules all the worlds by His powers. There is no one beside Him who can make Him the second. He is present inside the hearts of all beings. He creates all the worlds, and maintains, and finally withdraws them into Himself.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who. *Iman*—these. *Isata*—rules. *Isanibhih*—by His own powers. *Samchukocha*—withdraws into Himself. *Lokan*—worlds. *Antakale*—at the end of time.

Rudra represents here Para-Brahman, or the Supreme Self, the Infinite or the Absolute.

Rudra, after having created all objects, draws together, or takes them all back into Himself at the end of time, i.e., during cosmic Pralaya or dissolution.

In Siva Purana, Rudra is another name for Siva. Rudra is one who destroys the sins and removes the miseries of His devotees and confers on them wisdom and bliss. Rudra is the Antaryamin, the Indweller of all beings. He witnesses silently, the actions and thoughts of men, and dispenses the fruits of their actions.

विश्वतश्कुरुत विश्वतोमुखो विश्वतोबाहुरुत विश्वतस्पात् ।  
सं बाहुभ्यां धमति संपतत्रैर्यावाभूमी जनयन्देव एकः ॥३॥

3. That one God, having His eyes, His face, His arms and His feet in every place, when producing heaven and earth, forges them together with His arms and His wings.

### Notes and Commentary

*Visvataschakshuh, visvatomukhah, visvatobahuh, visvataspat*—having eyes, face, arms and feet in every place. *Dyavabhumī*—heaven and earth.

Virat is the Creator of the world. All the eyes, faces, hands and feet belong to Him only. The sum total of all physical bodies of Jivas, is Virat Purusha.

*Dhamati*: He joins men with arms, birds with wings (Samyojayati).

यो देवानां प्रभवशोद्दवशं विश्वाधिपो रुद्रो महर्षिः ।  
हिरण्यगर्भं जनयामास पूर्वं स नो बुद्ध्या शुभया संयुनक्तु ॥४॥

4. May Rudra, the Creator and Supporter of the gods, the great Seer, the Lord of all, who created at first, Hiranyagarbha, endow us with good thoughts (pure intellect).

### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who. *Devanam*—of the gods. *Prabhavah*—Creator. *Udbhavah*—Supporter. *Visvadhipah*—the Lord of all. *Maharshih*—the great seer. *Budhya subhaya*—with pure intellect. *Samyunaktu*—may endow.

(This verse is repeated in Chapter IV-12.)

Rudra represents Para-Brahman here.

*Maharshih*: Omniscient Seer. He witnesses the thoughts of actions of men. Therefore, He is able to dispense the rewards of their actions in a just manner.

*Hiranyagarbha*: Cosmic soul, cosmic mind, cosmic Prana. He is the golden egg, Brahman.

This is a prayer to Rudra for obtaining a pure auspicious and subtle intellect. The seeker after Truth can behold the subtle, pure Atman with the help of pure, sharp-pointed and subtle intellect only.

'This Atman is hidden in all beings, and does not shine forth, but it is seen by subtle seers through their sharp and subtle intellect' (Kathopanishad III-12).

या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूरघोराऽपापकाशिनी ।  
तया नस्तनुवा शन्तमया गिरिशन्ताभिचाकशीहि ॥५ ॥

5. O Rudra, with Thy form which is auspicious, which is not dreadful, and which manifests what is holy, with that all-blessed form, appear to us, O Dweller among the mountains.

#### Notes and Commentary

Ya—what. Te—thy. Siva—auspicious. Aghora—not dreadful. Tanu—body. Taya—by that.

Lord Siva dwells in the snow-clad peaks of Mount Kailasa in the Himalayas. Therefore, the seeker after Truth addresses Him: 'O Dweller among the mountains'. He has got two forms, viz., one form that is calm or benign (Santa), and the other that is terrible (Ghora).

यामिषुं गिरिशन्त हस्ते बिभर्षस्तवे ।  
शिवां गिरित्र तां कुरु मा हिंसीः पुरुषं जगत् ॥६ ॥

6. O Lord of the mountains! Make propitious the arrow, which Thou holdest in Thy hand to shoot. Do not hurt man or the world, O mountain-protector.

#### Notes and Commentary

Yam—what. Ishum—arrow. Girisanta—O Dispenser of happiness from the mountain. Haste—in Thy hand. Bibharshi—Thou holdest. Astave—to shoot. Giritra—O mountain-protector.

The arrow is the Tat-tvam-asi Mahavakya, or the Pranava. This is a potent weapon of the Lord to annihilate the ignorance of His devotees.

ततः परं ब्रह्मपरं बृहन्तं यथानिकायं सर्वभूतेषु गूढम् ।  
विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारमीशं तं ज्ञात्वाऽमृता भवन्ति ॥७ ॥

7. Higher than this Personal God is the Supreme Brahman, who is infinite, who is concealed within all beings, according to their bodies, and who is the only pervader of the whole universe. By knowing Him as Lord one becomes immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tata*—than that (Personal God). *Param*—supreme. *Brahma*—Brahman. *Param*—higher. *Brihantam*—infinite. *Yathanikayam*—according to the bodies. *Sarvabhuteshu*—in all beings. *Gudham*—hidden. *Visvasya*—of the universe. *Ekam*—single. *Pariveshtitaram*—pervader. *Isam*—Lord. *Tam*—Him. *Jnatva*—having known. *Amrita*—immortal. *Bhavanti*—become.

He who realises the Saguna Brahman, or the Personal God, attains Krama Mukti, progressive emancipation. He goes to Brahmaloka. But he, who realises his identity with the Nirguna Brahman, or Para-Brahman, who is free from Maya, attains the highest realisation, Kaivalya Mukti.

The grace of the Personal God is necessary for attaining the highest realisation. Personal God and the Impersonal Absolute are not two different beings. They are only two aspects of the same deity. The same Impersonal Absolute assumes a personal form to please the devotees. When the devotee sheds tears of Viraha, and when his heart is filled with Prema for the Lord, the impersonal entity has to put on the same form, on which the devotee meditates. The Lord becomes the slave of Bhaktas.

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ।  
तमेव विदित्वातिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥८॥

8. I know this mighty Being (Purusha), who shines effulgent, like the sun beyond darkness. One passes beyond death only by knowing Him. There is no other road for obtaining liberation.

### Notes and Commentary

*Veda*—know. *Aham*—I. *Etam*—this. *Purusham*—Being. *Mahantam*—mighty. *Adityavarnam*—effulgent like the sun. *Tamasah*—of darkness. *Parastat*—beyond. *Tameva*—Him alone. *Viditva*—having known. *Atimrityumeti*—goes beyond death. *Na*—not. *Anya*—other. *Pantha*—road. *Vidyate*—there is. *Ayanaya*—for this.

The seer, Rishi, is very bold in his declaration. There is no trace of doubt for him. Have you ever come across such a bold

statement in the books written by Western philosophers? They will write many volumes on philosophy, and in the end they will conclude, saying: "The absolute is beyond realisation. There is nothing beyond intellect". They have no realisation.

They are not endowed with that pure, subtle and sharp-pointed intellect. They have not done any rigorous Tapas, or discipline of the mind, and the senses, and meditation. Whereas the Hindu Rishis, Seers, had direct intuitive perception of the Absolute, in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. That is the reason the Seer asserts, with all emphasis and force at his command: "I know this mighty Being".

*Aham*—I, i.e., Rishi Svetasvatara.

*Tamas*—darkness. This is Avidya, ignorance, which is the cause for births and deaths.

Knowledge of Brahman, the Absolute, alone can destroy the darkness of ignorance, and free men from the round of births and deaths. There is no other way of escape.

यस्मात्परं नापरमस्ति किंचिद्यस्मान्नाणीयो न ज्यायोऽस्ति कश्चित् ।  
वृक्ष इव स्तब्धो दिवि तिष्ठत्येकस्तेनेदं पूर्णं पुरुषेण सर्वम् ॥१९॥

9. There is nothing higher than or different from Him, nothing greater or more minute than Him. He alone stands in the heaven like a tree, one without a second and immovable. The whole world is filled by that Being.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Yasmat*—than whom. *Param*—higher. *Aparam*—different. *Kinchit*—anything. *Yasmat*—than whom. *Aniya*—more minute. *Jyayo*—greater. *Kaschit*—anyone. *Nasti*—there is not. *Vriksha iva*—like a tree. *Stabdha*—immovable. *Eka*—one. *Divi*—in the heaven. *Tishthati*—stands. *Tena*—by that. *Purushena*—by Purusha. *Idam sarvam purnam*—the whole of this is filled (world).

*Jyaya*: older in age, i.e., greater.

Brahman is the source or cause or womb for everything. How can there be anything then, which is higher than or different from Him; greater or more subtle or minute than Him?

He pervades all things. He is more subtle than Prana, mind or ether. He is the soul of an ant. How can there be anything then, more subtle or more minute than Him? Infinity is one. Absolute is one. There cannot be two infinities. Therefore, Brahman is one without a second. The whole world is filled by Him without and within. Therefore, He is Paripurna. If you keep a vessel filled with water in another bigger vessel also filled with water, the small vessel is Paripurna within and without. So is Brahman.

ततो यदुत्तरतरं तदरूपमनामयम् ।  
य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्त्यथेतरे दुःखमेवापियन्ति ॥१०॥

10. That which is beyond this world, is without form and without suffering. Those who know It become immortal, but others instead, suffer pain only.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Tatah*—than that. *Yat*—which. *Uttarataram*—for higher. *Tat*—that. *Arupam*—formless. *Anamayam*—without suffering. *Ya*—who. *Etat*—this. *Viduh*—know. *Te*—they. *Amritah*—immortal. *Bhavanti*—become. *Atha*—but. *Itare*—others. *Duhkham*—pain. *Eva*—only. *Apiyanti*—suffer.

Brahman is infinite, indivisible, limitless, limbless (Niravayava) and all-pervading and extremely subtle. Therefore, He cannot have a form. Gross objects only have form. He is free from the three kinds of pain, viz., Adhyatmic (from one's own body, diseases), Adhibhautic (from Bhutas, like snake, tiger, etc.), Adhidaivic (from the Devas, like thunder, rain, etc.). He is beyond this world. He transcends this world of names. He has no relation with this universe, as He is pure consciousness, Chaitanya. How can there be real connection between matter and soul? And yet He is the support for this world and matter. Gita says: "Asaktam sarvabhricchaiva—unattached, yet supporting all" (XIII-14). This is a great mystery indeed.

सर्वाननशिरोग्रीवः सर्वभूतगुहाशयः ।  
सर्वव्यापी स भगवांस्तस्मात्सर्वगतः शिवः ॥११॥

11. He (the Lord) is the face, the head and neck of all. He dwells in the heart of all beings. He pervades all. Therefore He is Omnipresent and propitious.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sarvanana-sirogrivah*—He is the face, head and neck of all. *Sarvabhuṭaguhasayah*—dwelling in the hearts of all. *Sarvavyapi*—all-pervading. *Sah*—He. *Bhagavan*—the Lord. *Tasmat*—therefore. *Sarvagata*—Omnipresent. *Sivah*—propitious.

Bhagavan is one who possesses the six divine attributes:

*Aisvaryasya samagrasya viryasya yasasah sriyah;*  
*Jnanavairagyayoschaiva shannam bhaga itirana.*

He possesses the six divine attributes, viz., Aisvarya (Vibhutis, powers), Virya (strength), Yasa (fame), Sri (wealth), Jnana (wisdom) and Vairagya (dispassion). Therefore, He is called Bhagavan. All faces, heads and necks, belong to the Lord. He is the Virat Purusha. He is the Antaryamin, Inner Ruler of all beings. So He guides the senses, mind and the intellect and actions.

The previous verse treats of the pure, formless, transcendental Brahman. This Sloka treats of the Personal God, Saguna Brahman.

In this Upanishad, there is a beautiful synthesis of the ideas of Personal God and the Impersonal Absolute, the Saguna Brahman and the Nirguna Brahman. Just as water assumes the forms of vapour and ice, so also the formless Brahman assumes forms to satisfy the devotees.

महान्प्रभुर्वै पुरुषः सत्त्वस्यैष प्रवर्तकः ।  
 सुनिर्मलामिमां प्राप्तिमीशानो ज्योतिरव्ययः ॥१२॥

12. That person (Purusha) is indeed the great Lord. He controls everything. He is light. He is everlasting. He guides the intellect of all beings, in order to enable them to attain that extremely pure state (Moksha).

### Notes and Commentary

*Mahan*—great. *Prabhuh*—Lord. *Vai*—indeed. *Purushah*—person. *Sattvasya*—of the intellect of all beings. *Esha*—He. *Pravartakah*—guide. *Sunirmalam*—extremely pure. *Imam*—this. *Praptim*—attainment. *Isanah*—controller. *Jyotih*—light. *Avyayah*—everlasting.

When the mind is purified, the seeker after Truth will feel the guiding hand of the Lord, because the Lord dwells in his intellect. The Lord is the Light of lights. He is self-luminous. He removes the veil of ignorance that screens the mind of the individual soul, and helps him to attain the pure and blissful state of Mukti, the final emancipation.

अंगुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषोऽन्तरात्मा सदा जनानां हृदये संनिविष्टः ।  
हृदा मन्वीशो मनसाभिक्लृप्तो य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥१३॥

13. The Purusha of the size of a thumb, who is concealed by the heart, intellect and mind, always dwells in the hearts of creatures as their Inner Self. Those who know Him become immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

*Angushthamaträh*—being of the size of the thumb. *Purushah*—the person. *Antaratma*—the Inner Self. *Sada*—always. *Jananam*—of creatures. *Hridaye*—in the heart. *Sannivishtah*—dwells. *Hrida manisha*—by the heart and intellect. *Manasa*—and by mind. *Abhiklurptah*—(who is) concealed. *Ya*—who. *Etat*—this. *Viduh*—know. *Amritah*—immortal. *Te*—they. *Bhavanti*—become.

*Angushthamatra purushontaratma*: This comes in Kathopanishad also (IV-12 & 13). It is very difficult for a neophyte to fix the mind on the Infinite. Therefore, he is asked to meditate on a being of the size of a thumb, in his heart, to begin with.

सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।  
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वा ऽत्यतिष्ठदशाङ्गुलम् ॥१४॥

14. The person (Purusha) has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. He envelops the whole world on all sides and extends beyond it by ten fingers' breadth.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sahasrasirsha*—has a thousand heads. *Purushah*—the person. *Sahasrakshah*—has a thousand eyes. *Sahasrapat*—has a thousand feet. *Sah*—He. *Bhumim*—the world. *Visvatah*—on all sides. *Vritva*—having enveloped. *Atyatishtat*—extends beyond. *Dasangulam*—ten fingers.

This verse comes in the Purusha Sukta. This is a famous verse of the Rig-veda X-90-I.

*Dasangulam*: means endless. He transcends the world. It may be meant for the heart, which is ten fingers above the navel. He dwells in the hearts of beings also as the Inner Self, though He is great and Infinite, though He is the Soul of the universe. He is immanent in all.

In the first part of the verse, the immanence of God is described. The second half describes the transcendence of Brahman, Supreme Soul.

*Thousand heads*: This indicates that the Lord (Virat Purusha) possesses countless heads. All heads, all eyes, all hands, all feet, belong to the Lord. It is He who works through all hands, eats through all mouths, sees through all eyes, hears through all ears, walks through all feet, and thinks through all minds. If you remember this verse constantly, egoism will vanish. You will identify yourself with the Virat Purusha, the cosmic soul, and have a magnanimous experience. You will have an expanded heart.

पुरुष एवेद् सर्व यद्गूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।  
उतामृतत्वस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥१५॥

15. That person alone (Purusha) is all this, what has been and what will be. He is also the Lord of Immortality. He is whatever grows by food.

### Notes and Commentary

*Purushah*—the person or being. *Eva*—only. *Idam*—this. *Sarvam*—all. *Yadbhutam*—what has been. *Yacchabhyavayam*—what will be. *Uta*—also. *Amritatvasya*—of immortality. *Isanah*—the Lord. *Yadannenatirohati*—He is whatever grows by food.

Though Purusha, the Infinite, has manifested Himself as this universe, He is not affected by it. And yet He is the Lord of Immortality. *Asangoyam Purusha*—This Purusha is unattached. This is the declaration of the Srutis.

Sayanna gives another explanation, viz., He is also the Lord of all the immortals, i.e., the gods, because they grow to their high state by means of food, or for the sake of food.

*Anna*: literally means food. It means also matter or the world. Just as food is the object of enjoyment for creatures, so also this world is an object of enjoyment for the Lord. He projects this world for His own sporting, *Lila*, *Lokavat tu lila kaivalyam*.

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।  
सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥१६॥

16. With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes, heads and mouths everywhere, with ears everywhere, That exists encompassing everything in the world.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sarvatah panipadam*—with hands and feet everywhere. *Sarvatomkshi-siromukham*—with eyes, heads and mouths, everywhere. *Sarvatah srutimat*—with ears everywhere. *Loka*—in the world. *Sarvam avritya*—encompassing all. *Tishthati*—exists.

This stanza comes in the Gita also (XIII-13). The divine immanence is described again in this verse. All hands, all feet, all eyes, belong to the Lord only. The beautiful synthesis of the conceptions of the Personal God and the Impersonal Absolute, is a Peculiar feature of this Upanishad.

Sankara explains *Loka* by *Nikaya*, body.

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।  
सर्वस्य प्रभुमीशानं सर्वस्य शरणं बृहत् ॥१७॥

17. He shines forth with the qualities of all the senses, yet He is devoid of all the senses. He is the Lord of all, the Ruler of all, the Refuge of all and the Friend of all.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sarvendriyagunabhasam*—shining by the functions of all the senses. *Sarvendriyavivarjitam*—devoid of all the senses. *Sarvasya prabhum*—Lord of all. *Isanam*—ruler. *Sarvasya*—of all. *Sarvasya saranam*—the refuge of all. *Suhrit*—the friend.

*Sarvendriyagunabhasam*: of the external senses as well as the internal sense, the mind. These qualities are sound, colour, taste, touch, smell, doubt, determination.

The first line occurs in the Gita (XIII-14). The Lord sees without eyes, hears without ears, smells without nose. He is Chaitanya, pure consciousness. Therefore, He knows everything, without the organs of perception.

नवद्वारे पुरे देही हँसो लेलायते बहिः ।  
वशी सर्वस्य लोकस्य स्थावरस्य चरस्य च ॥१८॥

18. He dwells in the body, the city of nine gates. He is the soul (*Hamsa*) who sports in the outside world. He is the controller of the whole world, both the stationary and the moving.

### Notes and Commentary

*Navadvare pure*—in the nine-gated city. *Dehi*—the embodied. *Hamsah*—swan (soul). *Lelayate*—sports. *Bahih*—outside. *Vasi*—controller. *Sarvasya lokasya*—of the whole world. *Sthavarasya*—stationary. *Charasya*—of moving. *Cha*—and.

*Hamsah*: He destroys the effect of ignorance. Previously, He is called *Hamsa*, because He travels along the road. The word *Hamsa* literally means swan. The Lord sports in this universe,

and yet He is not affected by it, just as a swan is not affected by the water, though it sports in water.

*Navadvare pure*: in the nine-gated city, that is in the body.

(Compare Katha Upanishad V-1 and Bhagavad Gita V-13)

अपाणिपादो जवनो ग्रहीता पश्यत्यचक्षुः स शृणोत्यकर्णः ।

स वेत्ति वेद्यं न च तस्यास्ति वेत्ता तमाहुरग्र्हं पुरुषं महान्तम् ॥१९॥

19. Without hands and feet, He goes fast and grasps; without eyes He sees; without ears He hears. He knows all that is to be known, yet there is none who knows Him. They call Him the first, the great person.

### Notes and Commentary

*Apanipadoh*—without hands and feet. *Javana*—goes fast. *Grihita*—grasps. *Pasyatyachakshuh*—sees without eyes. *Sah*—He. *Srunoti*—hears. *Akarnah*—without ears. *Sah*—He. *Vetti*—knows. *Vedyam*—that which is to be known. *Na*—not. *Cha*—and. *Tasya*—of his. *Vetta*—knower. *Tam*—Him. *Ahuh*—they say. *Agryam*—first. *Purusham*—person. *Mahantam*—great.

The Lord sees, hears, tastes without senses, because He is an embodiment of consciousness (Chit Svarupa). He is omnipotent. He is not in need of instruments or organs. That is the reason He is called the first, the great person.

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मा गुहायां निहितोऽस्य जन्तोः ।

तमक्रतुं पश्यति वीतशोको धातुः प्रसादान्महिमानमीशम् ॥२०॥

20. Subtler than even the subtlest, and greater than the greatest, the Atman is hidden in the heart of the creature. One becomes free from all grief and desires, by the grace of the desireless Creator, and realises Him as the Great Lord.

### Notes and Commentary

*Anoraniyan*—subtler than the subtlest. *Mahato mahiyan*—greater than the greatest. *Atma*—the Self. *Guhayam*—in the heart. *Nihita*—is hidden. *Asyajantoh*—of this creature. *Tam*—Him. *Akratum*—the desireless. *Pasyati*—sees. *Vitasokah*—

free from grief. *Dhatuh*—of the Creator. *Prasadat*—by the grace. *Mahimanam*—the great. *Isam*—the Lord.

*Jantoh*: of all animate beings. This whole verse occurs in the Katha Upanishad II-20, where *Atman* is read instead of *Isam*.

The grace of the Lord is necessary for the realisation of Advaitic oneness. Bhakti is not contradictory to Knowledge. On the contrary, it is a help to Knowledge. The same soul is in the ant and the elephant also. The same soul pervades the whole universe also. It is infinite. Therefore, the *Atman* is subtler than even the subtlest, and greater than the greatest.

वेदाहमेतमजरं पुराणं सर्वात्मानं सर्वगतं विभुत्वात् ।  
जन्मनिरोधं प्रवदन्ति यस्य ब्रह्मवादिनो हि प्रवदन्ति नित्यम् ॥२१॥

॥ इति तृतीयोऽध्यायः समाप्तः ॥

21. I know this undecaying, ancient, the soul of all, who is omnipresent on account of His all-pervading nature, and whom the knowers of Brahman declare to be free from birth, whom the knowers of Brahman proclaim to be eternal.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Veda*—know. *Aham*—I. *Etam*—Him. *Ajaram*—undecaying. *Puranam*—ancient. *Sarvatmanam*—the soul of all. *Sarvagatam*—Omnipresent. *Vibhutvat*—on account of his all-pervading nature. *Janmanirodham*—free from birth. *Pravadanti*—proclaim. *Yasya*—of whom. *Brahmavadinah*—the knowers of Brahman. *Hi*—verily. *Pravadanti*—declare. *Nityam*—eternal.

There are birth, decay, etc., for the body only, which is made up of flesh, fat, bones, etc. How can there be birth and decay for the all-pervading, infinite, self-luminous soul, who is bodiless (*Asariram*), limbless (*Niravayavam*) and who is eternal?

Brahman is ancient. He exists before you start your enquiry or quest. He is both the enquirer as well as the enquired. He is also the process of enquiry. He exists, or is ever shining, whether you admit His existence or not. He exists before the

birth of Hiranyagarbha, Manu, the Rishis and the Devas. Hence He is ancient. He is the primeval Purusha.

Here ends the Third Chapter of Svetasvatara Upanishad.

## CHAPTER IV

य एकोऽवर्णो बहुधा शक्तियोगात्वर्णनेकान्निहितार्थो दधाति ।  
वि चैति चान्ते विश्वमादौ स देवः स नो बुद्ध्या शुभया संयुनक्तु ॥१॥

1. May that Divine Being, the one who, though Himself colourless, creates various colours in different ways, by means of His own power, with set purpose, and who dissolves the whole world in Himself in the end—may He endow us with a pure intellect.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who. *Ekah*—one. *Avarnah*—colourless. *Bahudha*—in many ways. *Saktiyogat*—by means of His own power. *Anekan varnan*—various colours. *Nihitarthah*—with set purpose. *Dadhati*—creates. *Vichaiti*—dissolves. *Cha*—and. *Ante*—end. *Visvam*—the world. *Devah*—that Divine Being. *Sah*—He. *Nah*—us. *Buddhya subhaya*—with pure intellect. *Samyunaktu*—may endow.

*Nihita*: means also hidden.

*Varnan*—colour, quality, difference. He who is one alone and without distinction, creates countless distinctions according to their necessity, by His union with many powers (Saktis).

Just as a ray of light, which is itself colourless, assumes different colours when it passes through a prism, so also the formless Brahman assumes various forms for His own *Lila*, sporting.

तदेवाग्निस्तदादित्यस्तद्वायुस्तदु चन्द्रमाः ।  
तदेव शुक्रं तद्ब्रह्म तदापस्तप्रजापतिः ॥२॥

2. That itself is Agni (fire), That is Aditya (the sun), That is Vayu (air), That is Chandrama (the moon), That is also the

starry firmament, That is the Brahman (Hiranyagarbha), That is water, That is Prajapati.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tadeva*—that itself. *Agnih*—fire. *Tad Adityah*—that is the sun. *Tad eva sukram*—That is also the starry firmament.

The seers have used masculine and neuter pronouns to indicate the Supreme Being. The various gods are only the different aspects of one and the same divinity, or entity.

Sankara explains Brahma as Hiranyagarbha, the universal soul that pervades all subtle bodies, and Prajapati as Virat, or the universal soul that pervades all gross bodies.

त्वं स्त्री त्वं पुमानसि त्वं कुमार उत वा कुमारी ।  
त्वं जीर्णो दण्डेन वशसि त्वं जातो भवसि विश्वतोमुखः ॥३॥

3. Thou art the woman, Thou art the man, Thou art the youth, Thou art the maiden too, Thou art the old man who totters along leaning on the staff, Thou art born with Thy face turned everywhere.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tvam stri*—Thou art the woman. *Tvam puman*—Thou art the man. *Tvam kumarah*—Thou art the youth. *Tvam kumari*—Thou art the maiden too. *Tvam jirnah*—Thou art the old (man). *Dandena*—with staff. *Vanchasi*—totters. *Tvam*—Thou. *Jata*—born. *Bhavasi*—becomes. *Visvatomukhah*—with Thy face turned everywhere.

All objects of this world are manifestations of Brahman only. If you constantly remember this verse, you will be freed from likes and dislikes. You will realise unity of the Self. *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*—All indeed is Brahman. You will be inspired. You will experience elevation of mind. You will see God in all faces.

*Visvatomukhah*: This indicates the immanence, or omnipresence of God.

नीलः पतङ्गो हरितो लोहिताक्षस्तडिगर्भं क्रतवः समुद्राः ।  
अनादिमत्त्वं विभुत्वेन वर्तसे यतो जातानि भुवनानि विश्वा ॥४॥

4. Thou art the dark blue fly. Thou art the green parrot with red eyes. Thou art the thunder-cloud, the seasons and the oceans. Thou art without beginning, Thou art the Infinite. Thou art He, from whom all the worlds are born.

### Notes and Commentary

*Nilah*—the dark blue. *Patangah*—fly. *Haritah*—green parrot. *Lohitakshah*—with red eyes. *Tadidgarbhah*—the thunder-cloud. *Ritavah*—the seasons. *Samudrah*—oceans. *Anadimat*—without beginning. *Tvam*—Thou. *Vibhutvena*—lordship. *Vartase*—existest. *Yatah*—from which. *Jatani*—are born. *Bhuvanani*—worlds. *Visva*—all.

Whatever you see are all manifestations of the Lord. *Vaasudevah Sarvamiti*—All are Vaasudeva only. Brahman is without beginning. He is the Parama Karana, supreme cause for everything. He is the causeless cause. How can the infinite have a beginning? All effects only can have a beginning.

अजामेकां लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां बह्वीः प्रजाः सृजमानां सरूपाः ।  
अजो ह्येको जुषमाणोऽनुशेते जहात्येनां भुक्तभोगामजोऽन्यः ॥५॥

5. There is one unborn being, a female of red, white and black colours, who produces many offsprings like herself. There is one unborn being, a male who loves her and lies by her; there is another unborn male who leaves her, after having enjoyed her.

### Notes and Commentary

*Ajam*—the female who is unborn. *Ekam*—one. *Lohitasukla-krishnam*—red, white and black in colour. *Bahvih*—many. *Prajah*—offsprings. *Srijamanam*—who produces. *Sarupah*—of the same form. *Ajah*—unborn. *Ekah*—one. *Jushamanah*—being attracted or loved. *Anusete*—lies by her side. *Jahati*—leaves. *Enam*—her. *Bhukta-bhogam*—having enjoyed her. *Ajah*—unborn. *Anyah*—other.

The female of red, white and black colours is Prakriti, with three qualities (Gunas), viz., Sattva (purity), Rajas (passion) and Tamas (darkness). Sattva is white, Rajas is red and Tamas is black. Some interpret the three colours to mean the three primordial elements, viz., fire, water and earth.

The countless offsprings are the various objects of creation. The offsprings resemble their mother, Prakriti, because they are produced and are the effects of Prakriti. They are made up of the same constituents.

The unborn male who loves her is the cosmic Person, Father of all beings. He is Hiranyagarbha or Brahma. It may mean the individual soul, who is in bondage.

Another male is the individual soul who has liberated himself from the bondage of matter. He is a Jivanmukta.

The individual soul runs after the sensual pleasures, gets knocks and blows, and experiences that the sensual pleasures are mixed with miseries and sufferings, and are of an illusory nature. He takes recourse to Satsanga with Mahatmas, gets instructions from them, practises meditation and attains Self-realisation. He abandons Prakriti and her products, viz., all sensual objects and rests in his own unmodified Satchidananda Svarupa. This is the drift of this verse.

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।  
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वादृत्यनशनन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥६॥

6. Two birds of beautiful plumage, who are inseparable friends, dwell upon one and the same tree. Of these two, the one eats the sweet fruit, while the other looks on without eating.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Dva*—two. *Suparna*—birds of beautiful plumage. *Sayuja*—inseparable. *Sakhaya*—friends. *Samanam*—the same. *Vriksham*—tree. *Parishasvajate*—dwell. *Tayoh*—of these. *Anyah*—one. *Pippalam*—fruit. *Svadu*—sweet. *Atti*—eats. *Anyah*—the other. *Anasnat*—without eating. *Abhichakasiti*—looks on.

This verse and the next occur in the Mundaka Upanishad (III-1, 82).

The two birds are the individual soul (Jiva) and the Supreme Soul (Paramatma) or the Lord. Jiva is only a reflection of the Supreme Soul. Hence, they are inseparable.

The tree is this body. The fruits of the tree are the pleasure and pain, the result of one's past actions. The individual soul identifies himself with the body, and does actions with egoism and with expectation of fruits. He has the idea of 'I am the doer' (Katritya Abhimana). Therefore, he reaps the fruits of his actions and takes rebirths, whereas the Lord, or the Supreme Soul, stands as a silent witness. He is quite unattached. So He is ever happy.

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः ।  
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः ॥७॥

7. Dwelling on the same tree, the individual soul gets entangled and feels miserable. He is deluded and grieves for his impotence. When he sees the other, the Lord, contented and knows His glory, he becomes freed from sorrow.

### Notes and Commentary

*Samane*—the same. *Vriksho*—on the tree. *Purushah*—the individual soul. *Nimagnah*—gets entangled. *Anisaya*—forgetful of one's nature. *Sochati*—grieves. *Muhyamanah*—deluded. *Jushtam*—who is worshipped by all. *Yada*—when. *Pasyati*—sees. *Anyam*—other. *Isam*—Lord. *Asya*—His. *Mahimanam*—glory. *Iti*—thus. *Vitasokah*—becomes free from sorrow.

When man forgets his essential divine nature on account of ignorance, he becomes helpless and gets deluded. When he becomes egoistic and lustful, when he gets attracted to objects and when he strives with the idea of 'I am the doer', to possess his desired objects, he is caught up in the whirlpool, or the current, of Samsara.

When he frees himself from attachment and egoism, and when he attains God-realisation through purity and meditation, he is freed from grief and pain, and attains everlasting bliss and immortality.

ऋचो अक्षरे परमे व्योमन्यस्मिन्देवा अधि विश्वे निषेदुः ।

यस्तं न वेद किमृचा करिष्यति य इत्तद्विदुस्त इमे समासते ॥८॥

8. Of what use are the Vedas to him, who does not know that indestructible, highest ethereal Being, in whom all the gods and the Vedas reside? Only those who know That, rest contented.

### Notes and Commentary

*Richa*—the Vedas. *Akshare*—indestructible. *Parama*—highest. *Vyoman*—in the ethereal being. *Yasmin*—in whom. *Devah* visve—all the gods. *Adhinisheduh*—reside. *Yah*—whom. *Tam*—Him. *Na veda*—does not know. *Kim*—what. *Richa*—with the Vedas. *Karishyati*—will do. *Ye*—who. *Iti*—only. *Tat*—That. *Viduh*—know. *Te ime*—these. *Samasate*—rest contented.

Mere study of the Vedas, or theoretical knowledge of Brahman (Paroksha Brahma Jnana), will not help one in the attainment of Self-realisation. Those who have direct intuitive perception of the Supreme Self (Aparoksha Brahma Jnana), will enjoy the Supreme Peace and eternal satisfaction.

छन्दांसि यज्ञाः क्रतवो व्रतानि भूतं भव्यं यच्च वेदा वदन्ति ।

अस्मान्मायी सृजते विश्वमेतत्स्मिंश्चान्यो मायया संनिरुद्धः ॥९॥

9. The Lord of Maya projects or creates the Vedas, the sacrifices, the ceremonies, religious observances, what has been, what is to be, all that the Vedas declare, and this whole world including ourselves. The other is bound by Maya in this.

### Notes and Commentary

*Chhandamsi*—the Vedas. *Yajnah*—sacrifices. *Kratavah*—the ceremonies. *Vratani*—religious observances. *Bhutam*—what has been. *Bhavyam*—which is to be. *Yat*—that which. *Vedah*—the Vedas. *Vadanti*—declare. *Asman*—these including ourselves. *Mayi*—the Lord of Maya. *Srijate*—creates. *Visvametat*—this world. *Tasmin*—in this. *Cha*—and. *Anya*—other. *Mayaya*—by Maya. *Samniruddhah*—is bound.

*Isa*, the Lord, creates everything through Maya or Devatma-sakti.

*Anyah*—the other, refers to Jiva or the individual soul.

Just as a cobra is not affected by the poison, so also the *Isvara*, the Lord of Maya, is not affected by the Maya, whereas the individual soul is bound or fettered by Maya.

There are no proper corresponding terms in English for Maya and Mayin. Maya means making or illusion. Mayin is the maker or juggler.

मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम् ।  
तस्यावयवभूतैस्तु व्याप्तं सर्वमिदं जगत् ॥१०॥

10. Know then that *Prakriti* (nature) is Maya, and the great God is the Lord of Maya. This whole world is pervaded by beings who are His parts.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Mayam*—Maya. *Tu*—indeed. *Prakritim*—*Prakriti*. *Vidyat*—know. *Mayinam*—the Lord of Maya. *Cha*—and. *Mahesvaram*—the great Lord. *Tasya*—His. *Avayavabhatih*—by beings who are His parts. *Vyaptam*—is pervaded. *Sarvam*—all. *Idam*—this. *Jagat*—world.

Mayin is the illusion-maker. There is an attempt here to reconcile the doctrine of the Vedanta with the Sankhya.

The five great elements are His parts. This is another interpretation.

यो योनिं योनिमधितिष्ठत्येको यस्मिन्निदं स च वि चैति सर्वम् ।  
तमीशानं वरदं देवमीड्यं निचाय्येमां शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ॥११॥

11. One attains infinite peace when he realises that Lord, the adorable God, the bestower of blessings who, though one, presides over the various aspects of *Prakriti*, and in whom this universe dissolves, and in whom it appears in various forms.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who. *Yonim yonim*—all the various aspects of Prakriti. *Adhitishthati*—presides over. *Eka*—one. *Yasmin*—in whom. *Idam*—this. *Samcha vichaiti*—appears and dissolves. *Tam*—Him. *Isanam*—Lord. *Varadam*—bestower of blessings. *Idyam*—the adorable. *Nichayya*—realising. *Imam*—this. *Santim*—peace. *Atyantam*—eternal. *Eti*—attains.

In accordance with the view of the Sankhyas, the first producer is *Avyaktam*, or Prakriti. *Mahat*, egoism, mind, Tanmatras and the five elements are products of Prakriti (*Vikritis*). *Mahat* and egoism are both producers and products.

यो देवानां प्रभवश्चोद्दवश्च विश्वाधिपो रुद्रो महर्षिः ।

हिरण्यगर्भं पश्यत जायमानं स नो बुद्ध्या शुभया संयुनक्तु ॥१२॥

12. May Rudra, the Creator and Supporter of the gods, the great seer, the Lord of all, who saw Hiranyagarbha being born, endow us with pure or auspicious intellect.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who. *Devanam*—of the gods. *Prabhavah*—Creator. *Cha*—and. *Udbhavascha*—and Supporter. *Visvadhipah*—the Lord of all. *Rudrah*—Rudra. *Maharshi*—the great Rishi, seer. *Hiranyagarbham*—Hiranyagarbha. *Pasyata*—saw. *Jayamanam*—being born. *Sah*—He. *Nah*—us. *Buddhya*—with intellect. *Subhaya*—pure or auspicious. *Samyunaktu*—may endow.

This is almost a repetition of verse 4 of chapter III. Rudra is here identified with Para Brahman, the Supreme Self.

यो देवानामधिपो यस्मिल्लोका अधिश्रिताः ।

य ईशो अस्य द्विपदश्चतुष्पदः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥१३॥

13. Let us give reverence, with oblations to that blissful God, who is the Lord of the Devas, who rules the bipeds and the quadrupeds, and in whom all the worlds rest.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who. *Devanam*—of the gods. *Adhipah*—is the Lord. *Yasmin*—in whom. *Lokah*—the worlds. *Adhisritah*—rest. *Yah*—who. *Ise*—the Lord. *Asya*—this. *Dvipadah*—biped. *Chatushpawah*—quadruped. *Kasmai devaya*—to that God. *Havisha vidhema*—let us give reverence with oblations.

Some read *Tasmal* instead of *Kasmai*.

सूक्ष्मातिसूक्ष्मं कलिलस्य मध्ये विश्वस्य स्रष्टारमनेकरूपम् ।  
विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारं ज्ञात्वा शिवं शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ॥१४॥

14. He who realises Him, who is subtler than the subtlest, who creates the world in the midst of chaos, who assumes many forms, who is the only one that envelops the world, the blissful one (Siva), attains infinite peace.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sukshmatisukshmam*—subtler than the subtlest. *Kalilasya madhye*—in the midst of chaos. *Visvasya*—of the world. *Srishtaram*—Creator. *Anekarupam*—who assumes many forms. *Visvasya*—of the world. *Ekam*—One. *Pariveshtitaram*—the only one who envelops. *Sivam*—the blissful one. *Jnatva*—having known. *Atyantam*—infinite. *Santim*—peace. *Eti*—attains.

स एव काले भुवनस्य गोप्ता विश्वाधिपः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः ।  
यस्मिन्युक्ता ब्रह्मर्षयो देवताश्च तमेवं ज्ञात्वा  
मृत्युपाशांश्छिनति ॥१५॥

15. He alone is the Protector of the world at the proper time. He is the Lord of the world, hidden in all beings. In Him, the Brahma-Rishis and the deities merge themselves. He who knows Him thus, cuts asunder the fetters of death.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He. *Eva*—alone. *Kale*—at the proper time. *Bhuvanasya*—of the world. *Gopta*—protector. *Visvadhipah*—the Lord of the world. *Sarvabhuteshu*—in all

beings. *Gudhah*—hidden. *Yasmin*—in whom. *Yuktah*—merged. *Bramarishayah*—great seers. *Cha*—and. *Devatah*—the deities. *Tam*—Him. *Evam*—thus. *Jnatva*—having known. *Mrityu-pasan*—the bonds of death. *Chhinatti*—cuts asunder.

The Brahma-Rishis, like Vasishtha, the seers, and the deities like Brahma, find their true essence in Brahman only.

घृतात्परं मण्डमिवातिसूक्ष्मं ज्ञात्वा शिवं सर्वभूतेषु गूढम् ।  
विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारं ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥१६॥

16. He who knows Siva, the blissful one, who is hidden in all beings in an extremely subtle form, finer than the essence of ghee, who alone envelops the universe, is freed from all fetters.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Ghritat*—than ghee. *Param*—finer. *Mandam*—essence. *Iva*—like. *Atisukshmam*—extremely subtle. *Jnatva*—having known. *Sivam*—the blissful one. *Sarvabhuteshu gudham*—hidden in all beings. *Visvasya*—of the universe. *Ekam*—only. *Pariveshtitaram*—Enveloper. *Jnatva*—having known. *Devam*—the deity. *Muchyate*—is freed. *Sarvapasaih*—from all fetters.

Butter or cream or ghee exists in the milk in the form of minute, invisible particles. If the milk is churned, the hidden particles of butter are seen. Even so, the subtle Atman is realised or known through the churning of meditation.

एष देवो विश्वकर्मा महात्मा सदा जनानां हृदये सन्निविष्टः ।  
हृदा मनीषा मनसाऽभिक्लृप्तो य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥१७॥

17. That God, the Creator of the universe, the Supreme Soul, always dwells in the hearts of all beings, being limited by the heart, intellect and mind. Those who know this become immortal.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Esha*—this. *Devah*—God. *Visvakarma*—the Creator of the universe. *Mahatma*—the Supreme Soul. *Sada*—always. *Jananam*—of beings. *Hridaye*—the hearts. *Sannivishtah*—

dwells. *Hrida*—by the heart. *Manisha*—by the intellect. *Manasa*—by the mind. *Abhikriptah*—being limited. *Yah*—who. *Etat*—this. *Viduh*—know. *Amritah*—immortal. *Te*—they. *Bhavanti*—become.

The latter half of the verse occurs in Katha Upanishad, VI-9.

यदाऽत्मस्तन्न दिवा न रात्रिं सन्न चासज्जिव एव केवलः ।  
तदक्षरं तत्सवितुवरेण्यं प्रज्ञा च तस्मात्प्रसृता पुराणी ॥१८॥

18. When ignorance has disappeared, then there is neither day nor night, neither existence nor non-existence. Then there is only Siva, the All-blessed one, who is imperishable, the adorable light of Savita (the deity of the sun). From Him, the ancient wisdom has proceeded.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yada*—when. *Atamah*—absence of darkness. *Tat*—then. *Na diva*—there is no day. *Na*—not. *Ratri*—night. *Nasat*—nor existence. *Nachasat*—nor non-being. *Siva eva kevala*—there is only that All-blessed one, Siva. *Tat*—that. *Aksharam*—imperishable. *Tat*—that. *Savitur-varenyam*—the adorable light of Savita. *Prajna*—wisdom. *Cha*—and. *Tasmat*—from Him. *Prasruta*—has proceeded. *Purani*—the ancient.

*Atamas*—no darkness, i.e., light of knowledge. When the darkness of ignorance and illusion have been dispelled, then all distinctions and differences disappear. There is neither Sat nor Asat, when the darkness of ignorance is dispelled. This does not mean that Brahman, the Absolute, is a mere void. This denotes that the Brahman transcends all relativities of this universe. So it is said: 'He is the auspicious Siva, Imperishable, the Adorable Light', etc.

Brahman is the source for the Vedas. The Vedas are His breath. He is the source of all ancient wisdom which has been handed down to us in the form of the Vedas. Hence, it is said that the ancient wisdom has proceeded from Him alone.

*Savitur-varenyam*—This is the first phrase of the famous Gayatri prayer.

नैनमूर्ध्वं न तिर्यञ्चं न मध्ये परिजग्रभत् ।  
न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति यस्य नाम महद्यशः ॥१९॥

19. No one can grasp Him above, or across, or in the middle. There is no likeness (or equal) of Him whose name is great glory.

### Notes and Commentary

*Urdhvam*—above. *Tiryancham*—across. *Madhye*—in the middle. *Na parijagrabhat*—none can grasp. *Na tasya pratima asti*—There is no likeness or equal of Him. *Yasya*—whose. *Nama*—name. *Mahat*—great. *Yasa*—glory.

As Brahman is extremely subtle, formless, limbless, illimitable and all-pervading and indivisible, He cannot be grasped by the organs of men.

*Tasya pratima nasti*—Some translate this as “there is no image of Him”.

न संदृशे तिष्ठति रूपमस्य न चक्षुषा पश्यति कश्चनैनम् ।

हृदा हृदिस्थं मनसा य एनमेवं विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥२०॥

20. His form cannot be seen. No one perceives Him with the eye. Those who know Him through intuition, thus abiding in the heart, become immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

*Na*—not. *Sandrise*—in the field of perception. *Tishthati*—stands. *Rupam asya*—its form. *Na chakshusha pasyati*—is not seen by the eyes. *Kaschana*—any. *Enam*—this. *Hrida*—by the heart. *Hridistam*—seated in the heart. *Manasa*—by mind. *Yah*—who. *Enam*—this. *Viduh*—know. *Amritah te bhavanti*—they become immortal.

Brahman is beyond the reach of mind and senses.

*Hrida manasa*: This is the eye of intuition, Jnana Chakshu, or Divya Chakshu. When all the Vrittis of the mind subside, through meditation on Brahman (Brahma Chintana), the Brahmakara Vritti is generated. This is the eye of intuition. The meditator realises Brahman through this Brahmakara Vritti.

Brahmakara Vritti corresponds to the eye of intuition. This Brahmakara Vritti arises from the Sattvic Antahkarana of the meditator, who is equipped with the four means of salvation, and who meditates on the significance of 'Tat-tvam-asि' Mahavakya, or great sentence of the Upanishads. This Brahmakara Vritti destroys the Avarana, the veil of ignorance, and Brahman shines by Himself. The individual soul merges himself in the Supreme Soul, through realisation of His identity.

अजात इत्येवं कश्चिद्दीरुः प्रपद्यते ।  
रुद्र यत्ते दक्षिणं मुखं तेन मां पाहि नित्यम् ॥२१ ॥

21. Some, being afraid, approach Thee, thinking that Thou art the unborn. O Rudra! Deign to protect me for ever with Thy benevolent face.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Ajata iti evam*—as the unborn. *Kaschit*—some one. *Bhiru*—who is afraid. *Prapadyate*—approaches. *Rudra*—O Rudra. *Yat*—which. *Te*—Thy. *Dakshinam*—benevolent. *Mukham*—face. *Tena*—with that. *Mam*—me. *Pahi*—protect. *Nityam*—for ever.

Some aspirants, who are endowed with dispassion and discrimination, are terribly afraid of Samsara or Maya. They wish to cross the ocean of births and deaths quickly. They look to the Lord for help, guidance and protection. They pray to Him. They meditate on Him. They sing His praise. Eventually, they attain Him and merge in Him. They become identical with the Lord.

मा नस्तोके तनये मा न आयुषि मा नो गोषु मा नो अश्वेषु रीरिषः ।  
वीरान्मा नो रुद्र भामितो वधीर्हविष्मन्तः सदमित्वा हवामहे ॥२२ ॥

॥ इति चतुर्थोऽध्यायः ॥

22. O Rudra! Injure not our children, nor our grandchildren, nor our lives, cows and horses, nor slay in Thy wrath, our valiant men. We invoke Thee always with offerings.

### Notes and Commentary

*Ma*—not. *Nah*—ours. *Toke*—our children. *Tanaye*—our grandchildren. *Ayushi*—regarding life. *Goshu*—cattle (cows). *Asveshu*—horses. *Ririshah*—injure. *Viran*—valiant. *Bhamitah*—in wrath. *Mavadhish*—do not kill. *Havishmantah*—with offerings. *Sadamat tva*—Thee always. *Havamahe*—invoke.

This is a beautiful prayer for the prosperity of the whole world.

Aspirants are really formidable heroes, for they wage a tremendous war with the mind, senses, Vasanas and old Samskaras. They come across various obstacles. They, through patient and strenuous efforts, overcome them, with vigilance and diligence. Even the great war in the world will stop after some years, but the inner war will continue for a protracted period. Hence, the aspirants are regarded as valiant men, more valiant than the commanders of the war. The dead soldiers will not raise their heads in the war, but in the inner war, the Vasanas and the senses raise their heads again and again.

Here ends the Fourth Chapter of Svetasvatara Upanishad

## CHAPTER V

द्वे अक्षरे ब्रह्मपरे त्वनन्ते विद्याविद्ये निहिते यत्र गूढे ।  
क्षरं त्वविद्या ह्यमृतं तु विद्या विद्याविद्ये ईशते यस्तु सोऽन्यः ॥१॥

1. Ignorance verily is mortal. Knowledge verily is immortal. In the Imperishable and Infinite Highest Brahman, knowledge and ignorance are hidden. Entirely different from these is Brahman, who controls both ignorance and knowledge.

### Notes and Commentary

*Dve*—two. *Akshare*—in the immortal. *Brahmapare*—in the Highest Brahman. *Tu*—verily. *Anante*—in the infinite. *Vidyavidye*—knowledge and ignorance. *Nihite*—exist. *Yatra*—in whom. *Gudhe*—hidden. *Ksharam*—mortal. *Tu*—verily. *Avidya*—ignorance. *Hi*—verily. *Amritam*—immortal. *Tu*—verily. *Vidya*—knowledge. *Vidyavidye*—knowledge and

ignorance. *Isate*—controls. *Yah*—who. *Tu*—verily. *Sah*—He. *Anya*—different.

Ksharam (perishable) is the cause for bondage (Samsritikaranam), Amritam (immortal) is the cause for liberation (Mokshahetu). Brahman is different from both knowledge and ignorance. He is the witness (Sakshin).

Knowledge and ignorance are modifications of the mind only. They exist in Brahman. Brahman rules or governs them.

*Brahmapare*: He, who is greater than Brahma, or Hiranyagarbha, or the Supreme Brahman.

यो योनि योनिमधितिष्ठत्येको विश्वानि रूपाणि योनीश्च सर्वाः ।  
ऋषिं प्रसूतं कपिलं यस्तमग्रे ज्ञानैविभर्ति जायमानं च पश्येत् ॥२॥

2. It is He who, being one only, presides over every source of production, and every form, He sees the birth of the first born seer of golden colour, and endows him with every kind of knowledge, at the commencement of creation.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who. *Yonim yonim*—every source of production. *Adhitishthati*—presides over. *Ekah*—one. *Visvani*—all. *Rupani*—forms. *Yonih*—sources of production. *Sarvah*—all. *Rishim*—the seer. *Prasutam*—sees the birth. *Kapilam*—the golden coloured one. *Yastamagre*—who at the commencement of creation. *Jnanai*—with every kind of knowledge. *Bibharti*—endows. *Jayamanam*—being born. *Cha*—and. *Pasyet*—sees.

The Supreme Self, bears in His thoughts, the wise son (Hiranyagarbha) like a mother, and looks on him like a father, when he is born.

The first born seer of golden colour is Hiranyagarbha, or Brahma, who creates this universe. Kapila is another name for Hiranyagarbha. Hiranyagarbha is endowed with the four kinds of knowledge, viz., virtue, knowledge of the Vedas, renunciation of desires and superhuman powers (Vibhutis or Aisvarya).

एकैकं जालं बहुधा विकुर्वन्नस्मिन्क्षेत्रे संहरत्येष देवः ।

भूयः सृष्ट्वा पतयस्तथेशः सर्वाधिपत्यं कुरुते महात्मा ॥३॥

3. This God spreads out one net after another in various ways, and withdraws it together again, in that field. Thus again, having created the Rulers, the great soul holds his Lordship over all.

### Notes and Commentary

*Ekaikam*—each. *Jalam*—net. *Bahudha*—in various ways. *Vikurvan*—having made. *Asmin*—in this. *Kshetre*—field. *Samharati*—withdraws. *Esha Devah*—this God. *Bhuyah*—again. *Srishtva*—having created. *Patayah*—the Lords. *Isah*—the ruler. *Mahatma*—the great soul. *Sarvadhipatyam*—lordship over all. *Kurute*—holds.

Kshetra, or the field is this world, or the Mula Prakriti, which is the seed for this world, which is known by the names Maya, Pradhana, Avyaktam, the unmanifested, etc.

*Jalam*: is the net of Samsara. Ekaikam means Pratyekam, i.e., for every creature such as gods, men, beasts, birds, etc. The Lord makes differentiation in the genus, species or types, when He creates.

*Bhuyah*: again, relates to the cycles of creation. *Pataya*: the Lords, the guardians (Lokapalas) and Marichi and other progenitors and other divine Rishis.

सर्वा दिश ऊर्ध्वमधश्च तिर्यक्प्रकाशयन्भ्राजते यद्गन्द्वान् ।

एवं स देवो भगवान्वरेण्योः योनिस्वभावानधितिष्ठत्येकः ॥४॥

4. Just as the Sun shines, lighting up all quarters above, below and across, so also does that one adorable God, the blessed One, rule over whatever creatures are born from the womb.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sarvah*—all. *Disah*—quarters. *Urdhvam*—above. *Adhah*—below. *Tiryak*—across. *Prakasayan*—lighting. *Bhrajate*—shines. *Anadvan*—sun. *Evam*—thus. *Sah*—He. *Devah*—God.

*Bhagavan*—Lord. *Varenyah*—adorable. *Yonisvabhavan*—everything that has the nature of a cause. *Adhitishthati*—rules or presides over. *Ekah*—one.

*Yonisvabhavan*: Prakriti and its products, viz., Mahat (Intellect), Ahamkara (egoism), Manas (mind), etc.

All that exists, in likeness with its cause, viz., the five elements, which are the same with its cause, nature. It may be interpreted also in this manner. *Yoni svabhavan*: He (Brahma), the cause of the whole world, rules over the elements, which partake of his nature.

यच्च स्वभावं पचति विश्वयोनिः पाच्यांश्च सर्वान्परिणामयेद्यः ।

सर्वमेतद्विश्वमधितिष्ठत्येको गुणांश्च सर्वान्विनियोजयेद्यः ॥५ ॥

5. He, who is the one source of the world, brings to maturity the nature of all, and leads creatures who can be brought to maturity to perfection, and endows each being with its distinguishing quality, and rules this whole universe.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Yachha*—who. *Svabhavam*—its own nature. *Pachati*—brings to maturity. *Visvayonih*—the source of the world. *Pachyan*—that are fit for being brought to perfection. *Sarvan*—all. *Parinamayet*—changes. *Etat*—this. *Visvam*—universe. *Adhi-tishthati*—rules. *Ekah*—one. *Gunam*—qualities. *Sarvam*—all. *Viniyojayet*—distributes or endows. *Yah*—who.

The whole evolution of the universe is in the hands of the Lord only. He is the Director, Controller, Governor or Ruler. He distributes all the qualities to the objects to which they belong. He dispenses the fruits of actions, in accordance with the law of Karma. The law of cause and effect operates.

तद्वेदगुह्योपनिषत्सु गूढं तद्ब्रह्मा वेदते ब्रह्मयोनिम् ।

ये पूर्वदेवा ऋषयश्च तद्विदुस्ते तन्मया अमृता वै बभूवुः ॥६ ॥

6. He is concealed in the Upanishads that are concealed in the Vedas. Hiranyagarbha knows Him as the source of Himself (or as the source of the Vedas). Those gods and seers, who realised Him in days of yore, became identified with Him and verily became immortal.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tat*—that. *Vedaguhyopanishatsu*—in the Upanishad, that are concealed in the Vedas. *Goodham*—is hidden. *Tat Brahma*—that Hiranyagarbha. *Vedate*—knows. *Brahma yonim*—as the source of Himself (or as the source of the Vedas). *Ye*—who. *Purvam*—in days of yore. *Devah*—the gods. *Rishayah*—the seers. *Tat*—that. *Viduh*—realised. *Te*—they. *Tanmayah*—became identified with Him. *Amritah*—immortal. *Vai*—verily. *Babhuvh*—became.

Realisation of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Self, leads to the attainment of immortality, Moksha.

गुणान्वयो यः फलकर्मकर्ता कृतस्य तस्यैव स चोपभोक्ता ।  
स विश्वरूपस्त्रिगुणस्त्रिवर्त्मा प्राणाधिपः संचरति स्वकर्मभिः ॥७॥

7. He (the individual soul), who is attached with the qualities, performs actions for the sake of fruits, and enjoys the fruits of his own actions. Though he is really the Lord of life, he becomes bound by the three Gunas, assumes various forms, and wanders about through the three paths, on account of his own actions.

### Notes and Commentary

*Gunavayah*—attached to the qualities. *Yah*—who. *Phala-karma karta*—performs actions for the sake of fruits. *Kritasya tasya*—of His own actions. *Upabhokta*—enjoyer. *Sah*—He. *Visvarupa*—assumes various forms. *Trigunah*—bound by the three Gunas. *Trivartma*—through the three faiths. *Pranadhipah*—the Lord of life. *Sancharati*—wanders. *Svakarmabhih*—on account of his own actions.

The three paths are Dharma (virtue), Adharma (vice) and Jnana (knowledge). It may also mean the three paths along which the soul treads after death. They are Devayana (the path of the gods), Pitriyana (the path of the manes or the forefathers) and Tiryangmarga (the path to low births).

अद्वृष्टमात्रो रवितुल्यरूपो संकल्पाहंकार समन्वितो यः ।  
बुद्धेर्गुणेनात्मगुणेन चैव आराग्रमात्रो ह्यपरोऽपि दृष्टः ॥८॥

8. Subtle as the point of an awl, brilliant like the sun, He alone is perceived even as another (different from the universal soul) of the size of a thumb, endowed with egoism and Sankalpa, on account of the limitation of the intellect and heart.

### Notes and Commentary

*Angushtamatrah*—of the size of the thumb. *Ravitulyarupah*—brilliant like the sun. *Sankalpahankara samanvitah*—endowed with egoism and Sankalpa. *Buddhergunenatmagunena chaiva*—also on account of the limitations of the intellect and heart. *Aragramatrah*—as the point of an awl. *Apara*—another (individual soul). *Api*—also. *Drishtah*—is perceived.

The pure, all-pervading Brahman is seen as man or the individual soul, with determination and self-consciousness, and with the quality of intellect and the quality of his body, on account of the limiting principle Avidya, or ignorance. Intellect, heart, mind, body, egoism are all modifications, or effects, of Avidya. If the limitation is transcended by realisation of identity, the individual soul merges himself in Brahman and becomes Brahman. Avidya operates through the three Gunas. One should go beyond the Gunas. Then only he will become one with the Supreme Being. Transcending the Gunas, means annihilation of ignorance, and the vehicles which limit man.

वालाग्रशतभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य च ।  
भागो जीवः स विज्ञेयः स चानन्त्याय कल्पते ॥९॥

9. That individual soul is as subtle as the hundredth part of the point of a hair, divided a hundred times. Yet He is (in essence) infinite. He has to be known.

### Notes and Commentary

*Valagrashatabhagasya*—of the hundredth part of the point of a hair. *Satadha kalpitasya cha*—and divided a hundred times. *Bhaga*—part. *Jivah*—the individual soul. *Sa vijneya*—He has to be known. *Sah*—He. *Anantyaya*—for infinity. *Kalpate*—is capable.

Atman is extremely subtle (Atisukshma). This verse illustrates this point. In the Gita (XIII-15), you will find, "This Atman is not seen on account of its extreme subtlety". To realise this subtle Atma-Tattva, an extremely pure, subtle and sharp-pointed intellect is needed. "Drisyate tvagrya buddhya sukshmaya sukshma-darsibhih" Kathopanishad (III-12).

नैव स्त्री न पुमानेष न चैवायं नपुंसकः ।  
यद्यच्छरीरमादत्ते तेन तेन स रक्ष्यते ॥१०॥

10. He is neither female, nor male, nor neuter. Whatever body He takes, with that He becomes identified or joined or connected.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Naiva stri*—not female. *Na puman*—not male. *Esha*—This. *Na*—not. *Chaivayam*—not also. *Napumsaka*—neuter. *Yadyad*—whichever. *Sariram*—body. *Adatte*—assumes. *Tena tena*—with each one of that. *Yujyate*—joined or connected.

Gender or sex relates to the physical body only. How can then arise gender or sex in the all-pervading, infinite, bodiless, limbless, pure Atman, the Supreme Soul?

सङ्कल्पनस्पर्शनदृष्टिमोहैर्ग्रासाम्बुवृष्ट्या चात्मविवृद्धिजन्म ।  
कर्मानुगान्यनुक्रमेण देहि स्थानेषु रूपाण्यभिसंप्रपद्यते ॥११॥

11. By means of thoughts, contact, sight and delusion, the embodied soul assumes successively, various forms in various places, in accordance with his actions, just as the body grows by the use of food and drink.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sankalpana-sparsana-drishti-mohaih*—by thought, contact, sight and delusion. *Grasambuvrishtya*—by showers of food and drink. *Atmavividdhajanma*—the growth of the body. *Karmanuganyanukramena*—successively in accordance with his actions. *Dehi*—embodied soul. *Sthaneshu*—in various places. *Rupani*—forms. *Abhisamprapadyate*—assumes.

Just as food and drink contribute to the growth of the body, so also the results of various actions contribute to the growth of the individual soul, in various stages and through various forms. Man evolves rapidly through the performance of virtuous actions. Righteous actions purify the heart. Food and drink nourish the body. Virtuous actions nourish the soul.

स्थूलानि सूक्ष्माणि बहूनि चैव रूपाणि देही स्वगुणैर्वृणोति ।  
क्रियागुणैरात्मगुणैश्च तेषां संयोगहेतुरपरोऽपि दृष्टः ॥१२॥

12. The individual soul chooses or assumes many forms, gross and subtle, according to his own qualities, the qualities of his actions and the qualities of his mind. The cause of union with those forms is found to be still another.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sthulani*—gross. *Sukshmani*—subtle. *Bahuni*—many. *Chaiva*—and also. *Rupani*—forms. *Dehi*—the embodied soul. *Svagunaih*—by his own qualities. *Vrinoti*—chooses or assumes. *Kriyagunaih*—by the qualities of actions. *Atmagunaih*—by the qualities of his mind. *Tesham*—their. *Samyoga-hetuh*—the cause of union. *Aparah*—another. *Api*—also. *Drishtah*—is found.

His own qualities are those that belong to his body. The man takes a new body according to the qualities of his previous body, mind and actions. He chooses his new body according to the impressions caused by his previous actions, done by the former body. The cause of union with the body is the Lord.

अनाद्यनन्तं कलिलस्य मध्ये विश्वस्य स्थारमनेकरूपम् ।  
विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारं ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥१३॥

13. He who knows Him, who has no beginning and no end, who creates the world in the midst of chaos, who assumes many forms, and who alone envelops the universe, is freed from all fetters.

### Notes and Commentary

*Anadyanantam*—without beginning and end. *Kalilasya*—of chaos. *Madhye*—in the midst. *Visvasya*—of the world. *Srashtaram*—Creator. *Anekarupam*—who assumes various forms. *Visvasya*—of universe. *Ekam*—one. *Pariveshtitaram*—he who envelops. *Jnatva*—having known. *Devam*—God. *Muchyate*—frees himself. *Sarvapasaih*—from all fetters.

(Cf. III-7 and IV-14 & 16.)

भावग्राह्यमनीडाख्यं भावाभावकरं शिवम् ।  
कलासर्गकरं देवं ये विदुस्ते जहस्तनुम् ॥१४॥

॥ इति पश्चमोऽध्यायः ॥

14. Those who know the God who is to be realised by direct intuitive perception, who is incorporeal or immaterial, who is the cause of existence and non-existence, who is all-blessed and the cause of the origin of the (sixteen) parts, are freed from further embodiment.

### Notes and Commentary

*Bhavagrahyam*—to be realised by direct intuitive perception. *Anidakhyam*—who is incorporeal or immaterial. *Bhavabhavakaram*—who is the cause of existence and non-existence. *Sivam*—the all-blessed One. *Kalasargakaram*—who is the cause of the origin of the sixteen parts. *Devam*—God. *Ye*—who. *Viduh*—know. *Te*—they. *Jahuh*—give up. *Tanum*—body.

*Kalasargakaram*: also means 'He who creates by means of the Kala, i.e., his inherent power' or 'He who creates the Vedas and other sciences'. The sixteen Kalas are Prana (vital air), Sraddha (faith), Kha (ether), Vayu (wind), Jyotih (fire), Apa (water), Prithvi (earth), Indriyas (organs), Manas (mind), Anna (food), Virya (semen), Tapah (austerity), Mantra (sacred verses), Karma (action), Kala (time) and Nama (name).

Here ends the Fifth Chapter of the  
Svetasvatara Upanishad

## CHAPTER VI

स्वभावमेके कवयो वदन्ति कालं तथान्ये परिमुह्यमानः ।

देवस्यैष महिमा तु लोके येनेदं भ्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रम् ॥१॥

1. Some deluded thinkers speak of Nature, and others speak of Time, as the cause of the universe; but it is the glory of God by which this Brahma-wheel revolves.

## Notes and Commentary

*Svabhavam*—nature. *Eke*—some. *Kavayah*—thinkers. *Vadanti*—say. *Kalam*—time. *Tatha*—also. *Anye*—others. *Parimuhyamanah*—deluded. *Devasya*—of the Lord. *Mahima*—greatness. *Tu*—indeed. *Loke*—in the world. *Yena*—by which. *Idam*—this. *Bhramyate*—is revolved. *Brahma-chakram*—the wheel of Brahma.

*Brahma-chakra*—wheel of Brahman (See verse I-4.)

This Brahma-wheel is made to turn by the greatness of the Lord. The Lord is behind all phenomena of nature. God is the real power behind everything. He is the Lord of Maya or Nature. It is only the deluded thinkers who regard Nature or Time as the cause of this universe (as the first cause).

येनावृतं नित्यमिदं हि सर्वं ज्ञः कालकारो गुणी सर्वविद्यः ।

तेनेशितं कर्म विवर्तते ह पृथ्व्यप्तेजोऽनिलखानि चिन्त्यम् ॥२॥

2. It is at the command of Him, who always envelops this world, who is all-knowing, the Lord of time, possessor of qualities, omniscient, that this work (creation) unfolds itself, which is called or thought as earth, water, fire, air and ether.

## Notes and Commentary

*Yena*—by whom. *Avritam*—pervaded. *Nityam*—eternal. *Idam*—this. *Hi*—indeed. *Sarvam*—all. *Jnah*—all-knowing. *Kala-kalah*—the Lord of time. *Guni*—possessor of qualities. *Sarvavit*—Omniscient. *Ya*—who. *Tena*—by Him. *Isitam*—commanded. *Karma*—work (creation). *Vivartate*—unfolds. *Prithivyaptejo-anilakhani*—as earth, water, fire, air and ether. *Chintyam*—which is called or thought as.

*Kalakalah*: the Lord is the cause of time. He is the author of time.

*Vivartate*: The Vivarta Vada of Sri Sankara is indicated here. Brahman appears as the world, without really undergoing any change, just as the rope appears as the snake.

तत्कर्म कृत्वा विनिवर्त्य भूयस्तत्त्वस्य तत्त्वेन समेत्य योगम् ।  
एकेन द्वाभ्यां त्रिभिरष्टभिर्वा कालेन चैवात्मगुणैश्च सूक्ष्मैः ॥३॥

3. He creates this work and rests again, having entered into union with principle after principle, with one, two, three, or with eight, with time too, and with the subtle qualities of the mind.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Tatkarma*—creation. *Kritva*—having brought out. *Vinivartya*—withdraws Himself. *Bhuyah*—again. *Tattvasya*—of principle. *Tattvena*—with principles. *Sametya*—having undergone. *Yogam*—union. *Ekena*—with one. *Dvabhyaṁ*—with two. *Tribhīḥ*—with three. *Ashtabhiḥ*—with eight. *Va*—or. *Kalena*—with time. *Cha*—and. *Eva*—alone. *Atmagunaiḥ*—qualities of the mind. *Sukshmaih*—subtle.

God creates this universe, and then remains as a silent witness. This is resting for the Lord. He is not in any way affected by the world's process, or phenomena, of this universe. He remains quite unattached like the ether, and yet supports everything.

“*Asaktam sarvabhricchaiva*—unattached, yet supporting all” (Gita XIII-14).

The eight principles are the eight producers of the Samkhyas, viz., *Avyaktam*, which is the root of all, intellect, egoism and the five subtle elements of matter (*Tanmatras*), or the five elements, mind, intellect and egoism.

The one principle to which the soul is joined is *Avyaktam*, or *Prakriti*, the two are *Avyaktam* and intellect, and the three are *Avyaktam*, intellect and egoism.

There is another interpretation. The one principle is *Avidya*, ignorance; two are *Dharma* and *Adharma* (right and wrong) or *Raga* and *Dvesha* (likes and dislikes); the three are the three

bodies, physical, subtle and causal, or the three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas or the three Avasthas, the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states or time, space and causation.

Atmagunas are the affections of the mind, love, anger, etc.

आरभ्य कर्माणि गुणान्वितानि भावांश्च सर्वान्विनियोजयेद्यः ।  
तेषामभावे कृतकर्मनाशः कर्मक्षये याति स तत्त्वतोऽन्यः ॥४॥

4. He gives the start to creation, associated with the three Gunas, and orders all things. He causes destruction of the work, in the absence of the Gunas, and remains apart in His essence after destruction.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Arabhy*—starting. *Karmani*—creation. *Gunavitani*—associated with the Gunas. *Bhavan*—beings. *Cha*—and. *Sarvani*—all. *Viniyojayet*—orders or commands. *Yah*—who. *Tesham*—their. *Abhave*—absence. *Kritakarma nasah*—causes destruction of the work. *Karmakshaye*—after destruction. *Yati*—remains. *Sah*—He. *Tatvatah*—in His essence. *Anyah*—other.

This verse is obscure. This is also interpreted as follows: "Whoever, after he has performed works, endowed with their qualities, dedicates them to the Lord, is liberated from Karma and the round of births and deaths, the results of his deeds, being all destroyed by non-attachment. He is no longer affected by the effects of his actions".

Sri Sankara says: "That person, his works being destroyed and his nature purified, moves on different from all things (Tattva), from all the results of ignorance, knowing himself to be Brahman", or if we read *Anyad*, it means, "he goes to that Brahman, which is different from all things, or the principles of nature; that is to say he becomes like Brahman".

When ignorance is destroyed, the work done by a man ceases. When the work done by a man ceases, the individual soul gets freedom from Samsara, being in truth another, i.e., different from ignorance and its products.

Vijnanatman says: "If a man, having done work, turns away from it, and obtains union of one Tattva (the *Tvam*, Self) with

the real Tattva (the Tat, the Lord), by means of (1) the teaching of the Guru; (2) love of the Guru and the Lord; (3) hearing (Sravana), remembering (Manana) and meditation (Nididhyasana); the eight, i.e., restraint, penance, postures, regulation of breath, abstraction, concentration, meditation and Samadhi; by time, i.e., the right time for work; by the qualities of the Self, viz., pity, etc.; by the subtle ones, i.e., good dispositions for knowledge; then he becomes free".

*Tesham abhave*: in the absence of the Gunas. When the three Gunas are in a state of equilibrium (Gunasamyavastha), Pralaya or dissolution, or involution, of the world takes place. When the equilibrium of the Gunas is distracted (Vishama Avastha), there is creation.

आदि: स संयोगनिमित्तहेतुः परस्त्रिकालादकलोऽपि दृष्टः ।  
तं विश्वरूपं भवभूतमीड्यं देवं स्वचित्तस्थमुपास्य पूर्वम् ॥५॥

5. He is the beginning, the origin of the causes by which the body is united with the soul. He is beyond the three divisions of time (past, present and future). He is without parts also. The adorable Lord, who appears as the world, who is the true source of all creatures and abides in his own heart, is perceived by him, who meditates or worships in his heart previously.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Adi*—beginning. *Sah*—He. *Samyoganimittahetuh*—cause of the union. *Prastrikalat*—beyond the three divisions of time. *Akala*—without parts. *Api*—also. *Drishtah*—is seen. *Tam*—Him. *Visvarupam*—who appears as the universe. *Bhava-bhutam*—the true source of all creatures. *Idyam*—adorable. *Devam*—God. *Svachittastham*—seated in one's own heart. *Upasya*—having meditated. *Purvam*—previously.

This universe is manifestation of the Lord only. It is the body of Virat. He is the first cause of union of spirit with matter. He is beyond the three periods of time, and He is without time also (Akala). He is partless or indivisible (Akhanda).

He who does Upasana or worship previously, attains Jnana or knowledge of Brahman. Bhakti leads to Jnana. Bhakti culminates in Jnana. Para Bhakti and Jnana are one.

The immortal Atman abides in one's heart only. He is the innermost Self of all beings. He is the Antaryamin (Inner Ruler).

स वृक्षकालाकृतिभिः परोऽन्यो यस्मात्प्रपश्चः परिवर्ततेऽयम् ।  
धर्मावहं पापनुदं भगेशं ज्ञात्वाऽत्मस्थममृतं विश्वधाम ॥६॥

6. Highest and other than the world-tree, time and forms is He, from whom this universe proceeds, the source of all virtues, the destroyer of all sins, the Lord of all good qualities—know Him as in one's Self, as the immortal abode of all the universe.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He. *Vrikshakalakritibhī parah*—transcending the tree of Samsara as well as time and form. *Anya*—other. *Yasmat*—from whom. *Prapancha*—universe. *Parivartate*—proceeds. *Ayam*—this. *Dharmavaham*—the source of all virtues. *Papanudam*—the destroyer of all sins. *Bhagesam*—master of all good virtues. *Jnatva*—having known. *Atmasthanam*—seated in one's heart. *Amritam*—immortal. *Visvadharma*—the abode of the universe.

The world is the Samsara Vriksha or Maya. The description of the tree comes in Katha Upanishad VI-1 and Gita XV-1.

He is seen as that, when one has worshipped Him, or when one has known Him within oneself.

The universe turns round from creation to preservation and destruction, from destruction to creation.

He who knows Him, who is the establisher of virtue, the destroyer of all evils, the Lord of all glory and prosperity, who abides in one's own Self and is immortal, obtains that which is different from the material principles of creation.

तमीश्वराणां परमं महेश्वरं तं देवतानां परमं च दैवतम् ।  
पतिं पतीनां परमं परस्ताद्विदाम देवं भुवनेशमीड्यम् ॥७॥

7. May we know Him, the transcendent and adorable master of the world, who is the great supreme Lord of all lords, the supreme Deity of all deities and the supreme Ruler of all rulers.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tam*—Him. *Isvaranam paramam mahaesvaram*—the great supreme Lord of lords. *Tam*—Him. *Devatanam paramam cha daivatam*—the supreme Deity of all deities. *Patim patinam paramam*—the supreme Ruler and the Ruler of all rulers. *Parastat*—transcendent. *Vidama*—may we know. *Devam*—the Lord. *Bhuvanesam*—the Ruler of the world. *Idyam*—adorable.

The Lords are Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Vaivasvata, Yama and others. The Deities are Indra, Agni, Varuna and others. The Rulers are the Prajapatis such as Kasyapa, Hiranyagarbha, etc.

न तस्य कार्यं करणं च विद्यते न तत्समश्वाभ्यधिकश्च दृश्यते ।  
परास्य शक्तिर्विविधैव श्रूयते स्वाभाविकी ज्ञानबलक्रिया च ॥८॥

8. No action (effect) or organ (Karanam) of His is found. There is, not seen, His equal nor a superior. His great power is declared (in the Vedas) to be of various kinds. His knowledge, strength and action are described as inherent in Him.

### Notes and Commentary

*Na*—not. *Tasya*—of His. *Karyam*—effect. *Karanam*—organ. *Cha*—and. *Drisyate*—is seen. *Asya*—His. *Parasakti*—great power. *Vividha*—of various kinds. *Sruyate*—is declared. *Svabhavaki*—natural. *Jnanabalakriya*—knowledge, strength and action. *Cha*—and.

There is no effect (Karyam) for Him or a cause (Karanam). Effect is body. Cause is organ.

न तस्य कश्चित्पतिरस्ति लोके न चेशिता नैव च तस्य लिङ्गम् ।  
स कारणं करणाधिपाधिपो न चास्य कश्चिज्जनिता न चाधिपः ॥९॥

9. There is no master of His in this world, no ruler of His, not even a sign of Him (by which He can be inferred). He is the cause, the Lord of the lords of the organs. He has no progenitor, nor is there any one who is His Lord.

### Notes and Commentary

*Na*—not. *Tasya*—of His. *Kaschit*—any. *Pati*—Lord. *Asti*—is. *Loke*—in this world. *Na*—not. *Isita*—ruler. *Naiva*—there is not. *Tasya*—His. *Lingam*—sign. *Sah*—He. *Karanam*—cause. *Karanadhipadhipah*—Lord of the lords of organs. *Na*—not. *Chasya*—and His. *Kaschit-janita*—any progenitor. *Nacha*—nor. *Adhipa*—Lord.

Linga is a mark or sign by which His existence could be inferred. If He could be inferred by a sign, there would be no necessity for the Vedas to reveal Him. He is beyond logic, syllogism and reason. The existence of God can hardly be logically demonstrated. He can only be intuitively perceived in Samadhi, through the eye of wisdom, Brahmakara Vritti.

यस्तन्तुनाभ इव तनुभिः प्रधानजैः स्वभावतो देव एकः स्वमावृणोत् । स नो दधाद् ब्रह्माप्ययम् ॥१०॥

10. May that only God, who spontaneously covers Himself with the products of Prakriti or nature, just as a spider does with the threads (drawn from its own navel), grant us identity with Brahman.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who. *Tu*—indeed. *Urnabhabhah*—spider. *Iva*—like. *Tantubhiih*—with threads. *Pradhanajai*—with the products of Prakriti or nature. *Svabhavatah*—spontaneously. *Devah*—God. *Ekah*—one. *Svam*—Himself. *Avrinoti*—covers. *Sah*—He. *Nah*—unto us. *Dadhatu*—may grant. *Brahmapayayam*—identity with Brahman.

Brahmapayayam, i.e., Brahman Apyayam, Ekibhavam.

Pradhana is another name for Avyaktam, or Mulaprakriti, or Maya, which is the first cause and which is the seed for this world.

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गृदः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ।  
कर्माध्यक्षः सर्वभूताधिवासः साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च ॥११॥

11. God, who is one only, is hidden in all beings. He pervades all, and He is the Inner Soul of all beings. He presides over all

actions, and all beings dwell in Him. He is the witness and He is the pure consciousness. He is alone or single and is devoid of all qualities.

### Notes and Commentary

*Ekah*—one. *Devah*—God. *Sarvabhuteshu*—in all beings. *Gudhah*—hidden. *Sarvavyapi*—pervades all. *Sarvabhuṭantartatma*—is the Inner Soul of all beings. *Karmadhyakshah*—presides over all actions. *Sarvabhuṭadhiwasah*—all beings dwell in Him. *Sakshi*—witness. *Cheta*—pure consciousness. *Kevalah*—alone. *Nirgunah*—devoid of qualities. *Cha*—and.

God is hidden in all beings, like fire in wood, butter in milk. He is the home for all beings. He is free from the triad of the qualities, viz., *Sattva* (goodness, purity, harmony), *Rajas* (activity, passion) and *Tamas* (darkness, inertia).

एको वशी निष्क्रियाणां बहूनामेकं बीजं बहुधा यः करोति ।  
तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषाम् ॥१२॥

12. He is the one controller of the inactive many. He makes the one seed manifold. The wise, who perceive Him within their Self, to them belongs eternal happiness, not to others.

### Notes and Commentary

*Ekah*—one. *Vasi*—Lord. *Nishkriyanam*—actionless. *Bahunam*—many. *Ekam*—one. *Bijam*—seed. *Bahudha*—many. *Yah*—who. *Karoti*—makes. *Tam*—Him. *Atmasthanam*—dwelling in one's own self. *Yah*—who. *Anupasyanti*—perceive. *Dhirah*—the wise. *Tesham*—to them. *Sukham*—happiness. *Sasvatam*—eternal. *Na itaresham*—not to others.

The actions of living beings are due to their organs. They do not affect the Supreme Being who always remains passive (*Nishkriya*) and who is always the silent witness or *Sakshi*. Nature only is active. The soul is the spectator of the activities of *Prakriti* or nature. (See *Katha Upanishad* V-12 & 13.)

*Bijam*—seed. This is *Avyaktam*, or *Mulaprakriti*, from which everything evolves.

The organs, mind, intellect, etc., derive their power from God only. He controls all the organs, all minds and all individual souls.

नित्यो नित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानामेको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान् ।  
तत्कारणं सांख्ययोगाधिगम्यं ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥१३॥

13. He is the Eternal among the eternals and the intelligent among all that are intelligent. Though one, He grants the desires of the many. He who has known Him, the cause of all, who is to be comprehended by Sankhya (philosophy) and Yoga (religious discipline), is freed from all fetters.

### Notes and Commentary

*Nityah*—Eternal. *Nityanam*—of eternals. *Chetanah*—the intelligent. *Chetananam*—of intelligences. *Ekah*—one. *Bahunam*—of many. *Yah*—who. *Vidadhati*—grants. *Kaman*—desires. *Tatkaranam*—that cause. *Sankhyayogadhidhigamyam*—to be comprehended by philosophy and religious discipline. *Jnatva*—having known. *Devam*—God. *Muchyate*—is freed. *Sarvapasaih*—from all fetters.

*Eternals*: The eternals may be meant for earth, water, ether, etc. These are taken to be eternal by ordinary men and some philosophers. But in reality, Brahman, or the Absolute, is the only eternal substance (Vastu).

*Chetanaschetananam*: The senses, the mind and the intellect appear to be intelligent. They borrow their intelligence from Brahman, the Absolute, who is the only intelligent entity.

The Lord only dispenses the fruits of actions of all individual souls.

One should have a comprehensive understanding of Brahman first, through study of Upanishads (Paroksha Brahma Jnana). He should practise Yama (self-restraint), Niyama (religious observances) and discipline the senses and the mind. Then he should practise constant and regular meditation, and attain direct, intuitive perception of Brahman. Then only he will be freed from all fetters. The fetters are Avidya (ignorance), Kama (desire) and Karma (action).

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।  
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥१४॥

14. The sun does not shine there, neither the moon, nor the stars. There these lightnings do not shine, how then this fire? When He shines, everything shines after Him. By His light all this shines.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Na*—not. *Tatra*—there. *Suryah*—sun. *Bhati*—shines. *Na*—not. *Chandratarakam*—moon or stars. *Na*—not. *Ima*—these. *Vidyutah*—lightnings. *Bhanti*—shine. *Kutah*—where. *Ayam*—this. *Agnih*—fire. *Tam*—He. *Eva*—alone. *Bhantam*—shining. *Anubhati*—shines. *Sarvam*—everything. *Tasya*—His. *Bhasa*—by light. *Sarvam*—all. *Idam*—this. *Vibhati*—shines.

(See Katha Upanishad V-15. Mundaka Upanishad II-2-x and Bhagavad Gita XV-6.)

Light means here knowledge. Eye is a light. One gets knowledge of this world through the eye. Ear is a light. One hears sounds, and through sounds, one gets Artha and Jnana. Buddhi or intellect also is a light. One gets knowledge through intellect. All the senses, mind, intellect, derive their power and knowledge from Brahman, the fountain source of all knowledge.

एको हंसः भुवनस्यास्य मध्ये स एवाग्निः सलिले संनिविष्टः ।

तमेव विदित्वाऽतिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥१५॥

15. He is the one Soul (Hamsa), destroyer of ignorance in the midst of the world. He alone is the fire which is seated in water. Knowing Him truly, one overcomes death. There is no other path for liberation.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Ekah*—one. *Hamsah*—soul (destroyer of ignorance). *Bhuvanasya*—of this world. *Madhye*—in the midst. *Sah*—He.

—Him alone. *Viditva*—having known. *Mrityum*—death. *Atyeti*—overcomes. *Anyah*—other. *Na*—not. *Pantha*—path. *Vidyate*—exists. *Ayanaya*—for liberation.

*Hamsah*—Swan. Here it means the Supreme Self, destroyer of ignorance.

(The last two lines occur in III-8.)

The Brahman has entered the heart, like fire, consuming all ignorance.

This verse bespeaks of the immanence of the Lord. Just as the fire is concealed in the ocean, so also Brahman is hidden in this world. Fire is different from water. It has quite antagonistic properties and yet it is hidden in water. So also, Brahman, that is pure, subtle and spiritual, is concealed in this world, which is gross, material and impure. The Rishis of yore worshipped the fire hidden in the ocean. That fire represents Brahman that is hidden in this world.

स विश्वकृद्विश्वविदात्मयोनिर्जः कालकारो गुणी सर्वविद्यः ।  
प्रधानक्षेत्रज्ञपतिर्गुणेशः संसारमोक्षस्थितिबन्धहेतुः ॥१६॥

16. He creates the universe and knows the universe. He is His own source. He is all-knowing, and He is the Time of time (destroyer of time). He is endowed with all qualities of perfection. He knows everything in detail. He is the master of nature and men, and the Lord of the Gunas. He is the cause of the bondage, the existence and the liberation of the world.

#### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He. *Visvakrit*—Creator of the universe. *Visvavit*—the knower of the universe. *Atmayonih*—His own cause. *Jnah*—all-knowing. *Kala-kalah*—Time of time or destroyer of time. *Guni*—possessor of all qualities of perfection. *Sarvavidyah*—knows everything in detail. *Pradhana-kshetrajanapati*—master of nature and men. *Gunesah*—Lord of qualities. *Samsaramokshasthitibandhahetuh*—the cause of the bondage, existence and liberation of the world.

स तन्मयो ह्यमृत ईशसंस्थो जः सर्वगो भुवनस्यास्य गोप्ता ।  
य ईशो अस्य जगतो नित्यमेव नान्यो हेतुर्विद्यत ईशनाय ॥१७॥

17. He is like Himself, immortal, and abides in the form of Ruler. He is the all-knowing, all-pervading, protector of the world, the eternal Ruler. No one else is able to rule over it.

### Notes and Commentary

*Sah*—He. *Tanmayah*—like Himself. *Hi*—verily. *Amritah*—immortal. *Isasamsthah*—abides in the form of ruler. *Jnah*—all-knowing. *Sarvagah*—all-pervading. *Asya bhuvanasya*—of this world. *Gopta*—protector. *Yah*—who. *Isa*—Lord. *Asya jagatah*—of this world. *Nityameva*—eternal. *Nanyah*—no other. *Hetuh*—cause. *Vidylate*—does exist. *Isanaya*—to rule over it.

Tanmaya may mean also 'like this world'.

यो ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्वं यो वै वेदांश्च प्रहिणोति तस्मै ।  
तँह देवमात्मबुद्धिप्रकाशं मुमुक्षुर्वै शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ॥१८॥

18. Let me, desirous of liberation, resort to the God for refuge, whose light turns the intellect towards the Atman, who at the commencement of creation, created Brahma and who gave the Vedas to Him.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yah*—who. *Brahmanam*—Brahma. *Vidadhati*—created. *Purvam*—prior to creation. *Yah*—He. *Vai*—verily. *Vedamscha*—and the Vedas. *Prahanoti*—gave. *Tasmai*—unto Him. *Tam*—Him. *Devam*—God. *Atmabuddhi prakasam*—whose light turns the intellect towards the Atman. *Mumukshuh*—desirous of liberation. *Saranam*—refuge. *Aham*—I. *Prapadye*—take.

निष्कलं निष्क्रियं शान्तं निरवद्यं निरञ्जनम् ।  
अमृतस्य परं सेतुं दग्धेन्धनमिवानलम् ॥१९॥

19. Who is without parts, without action, who is tranquil, blameless, spotless, the supreme bridge of immortality, and

who is like the fire that has consumed its fuel (to Him I go for refuge).

### Notes and Commentary

*Nishkalam*—without parts. *Nishkriyam*—actionless. *Santam*—peaceful or tranquil. *Niravadyam*—blameless. *Niranjanam*—spotless. *Amritasya*—of immortality. *Param setum*—the supreme bridge of immortality. *Dagdhendhanamivanalam*—like the fire which has consumed the fuel.

*Analam iva*: Just as the fire burns up the fuel, so also the Lord destroys the ignorance of the devotees, or aspirants, who tread the path of Truth.

यदा चर्मवदाकाशं वेष्टयिष्यन्ति मानवाः ।  
तदा देवमविज्ञाय दुःखस्यान्तो भविष्यति ॥२०॥

20. Only when men shall roll up the sky like a skin, will there be an end of misery, unless God has first been known.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yada*—when. *Charmavat*—like skin. *Akasam*—ether. *Veshtayishyanti*—roll up. *Manavah*—men. *Tada*—then. *Devam-avijnaya*—not knowing God. *Duhkhasyantah*—end of pain. *Bhavishyati*—will happen.

Only when the impossible becomes possible, such as the sky being rolled up by men, will misery cease, unless God has been realised in the heart. Miseries and sorrows will come to an end only when one realises God. If anybody strives to free himself from all miseries, without realising God, all his efforts are as useless as the attempt to roll up the sky. This is the drift of this verse.

तपःप्रभावाद् देवप्रसादाच्च ब्रह्म ह श्रेताश्वतरोऽथ विद्वान् ।  
अत्याश्रमिभ्यः परमं पवित्रं प्रोवाच सम्यगृषिसंघजुष्टम् ॥२१॥

21. Having realised Brahman, through the power of his penance and through the grace of God, the wise Svetasvatara

expounded well to the highest order of Sannyasins, the Truth of that supremely holy Brahman, resorted to by all the seers.

### Notes and Commentary

*Tapahprabhavat*—through the power of penance. *Deva-prasadaccha*—and also by the grace of God. *Brahma*—Brahman. *Svetasvatara*—the sage Svetasvatara. *Vidvan*—having realised. *Atyasramibhyah*—to the highest order of Sannyasins. *Paramam*—supreme. *Pavitram*—holy. *Provacha*—expounded. *Samyak*—well. *Rishisanghajushtam*—resorted to by all seers.

God helps those who help themselves. Self-exertion (Purushartha) and the grace of the Lord, are necessary for attaining Self-realisation. He who has knowledge of Brahman only can become a preceptor.

वेदान्ते परमं गुह्यं पुराकल्पे प्रचोदितम् ।  
नाऽप्रशान्ताय दातव्यं नाऽपुत्रायाऽशिष्याय वा पुनः ॥२२॥

22. This highest mystery or secret, in the Vedanta, expounded in a former age, should not be given to one, whose passions have not been subdued, nor to one who is not a worthy son, nor to an unworthy disciple.

### Notes and Commentary

*Vedanta*—in the Vedanta. *Paramam*—supreme. *Guhyam*—secret. *Purakalpe*—in a former age. *Prachoditam*—expounded. *Na*—not. *Aprasantaya*—to one of uncontrolled passions. *Datavyam*—should be given. *Na*—not. *Aputra*—who is not a worthy son. *Asishyaya*—unworthy disciple. *Va punah*—neither.

The instructions will bear fruit, only if they are imparted to a qualified aspirant.

*Aputra*: one who has not discharged his duties to the parents, who does not possess virtuous qualities.

*Asishyaya*: who is not a worthy disciple, who is disobedient, arrogant, impertinent, wicked, irreligious, who finds faults in the preceptor.

यस्य देवे पराभक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ । तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः  
प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः । प्रकाशन्ते महात्मन इति ॥२३॥

### Notes and Commentary

23. If these truths have been told to a high-souled one, who has supreme devotion to God and as much devotion to his Guru or preceptor as to God, then only, they will shine forth, then only, they will shine forth indeed.

### Notes and Commentary

*Yasya*—for whom. *Deve*—in God. *Parabhaktih*—supreme devotion. *Yata deve*—as to God. *Tatha*—so. *Gurau*—to the preceptor. *Tasya*—His. *Ete*—these. *Kathitha*—expounded. *Arthah*—Truths. *Prakasante*—shine forth. *Mahatmana*—high-souled one.

The Truths of Vedanta are revealed only to an aspirant, who has supreme devotion to the Lord, and as much devotion to his Guru as he has towards the Lord. This verse lays great stress on devotion to Guru. Guru and God are one.

Here ends the Sixth Chapter of the Svetasvatara Upanishad

ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहे । तेजस्वि  
नावधीतमस्तु । मा विद्विषावहै ॥

॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Here ends the Svetasvatara Upanishad.



# **APPENDIX**



## APPENDIX

### WAKING EXPERIENCE HAS RELATIVE REALITY

#### I

Waking experience is like dream experience  
When judged from absolute standpoint.  
But it has Vyavaharika-Satta  
Or relative reality.  
Dream is Pratibhasika-Satta  
Or apparent reality.  
Turiya or Brahman is Paramarthika-Satta  
Or Absolute Reality.  
Waking is reality more real than dreaming.  
Turiya is more real than waking.  
From the point of view of Turiya,  
Both waking and dreaming are unreal.  
But waking, taken by itself,  
In relation to dream experience,  
Has greater reality than dream.  
To a certain extent,  
As Turiya is to waking,  
Waking is to dream.  
Waking is the reality behind dream;  
Turiya is the reality behind waking.  
Dream is no dream to the dreamer.  
Only by one who is awake  
Dream is known to be a dream.  
Similarly, waking appears to be real  
To one who is still in the waking state.  
Only to one who is in Turiya,  
Waking is devoid of reality.  
Waking is Deergha-Svapna,  
A long dream, as contrasted with  
The ordinary dream which is short.

## II

Waking is a part of Virat-Consciousness,  
 Though, in waking, due to ignorance,  
 The Virat is not directly realised.  
 Waking is the connecting link  
 Between Visva and Virat.  
 Man reflects over the world and the Reality  
 When he is awake  
 And when his consciousness is active.  
 In dream, the intellect and the will  
 Are incapacitated due to Avidya  
 And deliberate contemplation becomes impossible.  
 The Visva or the Jiva in the waking state  
 Is possessed of intelligence and free will.  
 The Taijasa or the Jiva, in the dreaming state,  
 Is destitute of such powers of free thinking.  
 Dream experience is the result of  
 Impressions of waking experience;  
 Whereas, waking experience is independent of  
 Dream experience and its effects.  
 There is a kind of order or system  
 In the waking experiences,  
 At least, more than in dream.  
 Every day the same persons and things  
 Become the objects of waking experience.  
 There is a definite remembrance of  
 Previous day's experiences and of  
 Survival and continuity of personality,  
 In waking experience.  
 The consciousness of this continuity,  
 Regularity and unity  
 Is absent in dream,  
 Dream is not well ordered,  
 While waking is comparatively systematic.

## III

There are degrees of reality  
 In the experiences of the individual.  
 The three main degrees are  
 Subjective, Objective and Absolute.

Dream experience is subjective.  
 Waking experience is objective.  
 The realisation of Atman or Brahman  
 Is experience of the absolute Reality.  
 The individual is the subjective being  
 In comparison with the objective world.  
 The subject and the object have equal reality,  
 Though both these are negated in the Absolute.  
 The objective world is the field of waking experience  
 And, therefore, waking is relatively real.  
 But, dream is less real than waking  
 Inasmuch as the direct contact  
 With the external world of waking experience  
 Is absent in dream.  
 Though there is an external world in dream also,  
 Its value is less than that of the world in waking.  
 Though the form of the dream world agrees with  
 That of the waking world,  
 In quality the dream world  
 Is lower than the waking world.  
 Space, time, motion and objects,  
 With the distinction of subject and object,  
 Are common to both waking and dreaming.  
 Even the reality they present  
 At the time of their being experienced  
 Is of a similar nature.  
 But, the difference lies in  
 The degree of reality manifested by them.  
 The Jiva feels that it is in a higher order of truth  
 In waking than in dreaming.

#### IV

The argument that is advanced  
 To prove the unreality of waking  
 Is that waking also is merely mind's play  
 Even as dream is mind's imagination.  
 But, the objects seen in dream  
 Are not imaginations of the dream subject,  
 Which itself is one of the imaginary forms  
 That are projected in dream,  
 The dream subject is not in any way

More real than the dream objects.  
 They both have equal reality  
 And are equally unreal.  
 The dream subject and the dream object  
 Are both imaginations of the mind of Visva  
 Which synthesises the subject and objects in dream.  
 In like manner, the waking individual  
 Is not the cause of the objects seen by it,  
 For both these belong to the same order of reality.  
 Neither of them is more real than the other.  
 The virtues and the defects that characterise things  
 Are present in all subjects and objects  
 That are experienced in the waking state.  
 The subject and the objects in waking  
 Are both effects of the Cosmic Mind,  
 Which integrates all the contents of the universe.  
 The Cosmic Mind has greater reality  
 Than the individual mind.  
 Thus the waking state is relatively  
 More real than the dreaming state.

## V

It cannot be said that  
 Taijasa is related to Hiranyagarbha  
 In the same way as  
 Visva is related to Virat.  
 Taijasa has a negative experience  
 Characterised by fickleness, absence of clearness,  
 Lack of will power and cloudiness of intelligence.  
 To express with certain reservations,  
 The relation of Taijasa to Hiranyagarbha  
 Is something like that of minus two to plus two;  
 Whereas, Visva is to Virat  
 As minus one is to plus one.  
 As minus one has greater positive value  
 Than minus two,  
 And the distance between minus two and plus two  
 Is greater than that between  
 Minus one and plus one.  
 Visva has greater relative value than Taijasa,  
 And is more intimately connected with Virat

Than Taijasa with Hiranyagarbha.  
 Taijasa and Prajna are respectively  
 The parts of Hiranyagarbha and Isvara,  
 Only as limited reflections with negative values  
 And not positively and qualitatively.  
 Otherwise Isvara would have been only  
 A huge mass of ignorance,  
 As he is depicted as the collective totality  
 Of all Prajnas, whose native experience is a state of sleep,  
 Where ignorance covers the existing consciousness.  
 Prajna and Isvara are like minus three and plus three,  
 And their relation is quite obvious.  
 As when a man stands on a river bank  
 And looks at his own reflection below,  
 That which is highest appears as lowest—  
 The original head is farthest from the reflected head,—  
 That which is lowest appears as highest—  
 The original feet are nearest to the reflected feet,—  
 In the same manner, Isvara,  
 Who is the highest among the manifestations of reality  
 And is omniscient and omnipotent  
 Is the positive counterpart  
 Of the negative sleeping experience  
 Of complete ignorance and absence of power.  
 Virat corresponds to the foot of the man  
 Standing on the bank of the river  
 And Visva to the reflected foot.  
 Visva is more consciously related to Virat  
 Than Taijasa to Hiranyagarbha  
 Or Prajna to Isvara,  
 As the foot is nearer to the reflected foot  
 Than the waist to the reflected waist  
 Or the head to the reflected head.  
 These illustrations show that  
 Waking is relatively more real  
 Than dream, which has only a negative value.  
 The illustrations used here  
 Are to be taken in their spirit and not literally,  
 For, Visva, Taijasa and Prajna  
 Are not merely reflections  
 Of Virat, Hiranyagarbha and Isvara respectively,  
 But also their limitations

With qualities distorted  
And experiences wrested from truth.

## VI

As far as the manner of  
Subjective experience is concerned,  
It is true that what is within the mind  
Is experienced as present in external objects.  
But the objects themselves are not  
Creations of the subjective mind.  
There is a great difference between  
Isvara-Srishti and Jiva-Srishti.  
The existence of the objects  
Belongs to Isvara-Srishti.  
But the relation that exists between  
The objects and the experiencing subject  
Is Jiva-Srishti.  
The Jiva is one of the contents of the Jagat  
Which is Isvara-Srishti.  
Hence, the Jiva cannot claim to be  
The creator of the world,  
Though it is the creator of  
Its own subjective modes of  
Psychological experience.  
Waking experience is a perception.  
Dream experience is a memory.  
As perception precedes memory,  
Waking precedes dream;  
That is, dream is a remembrance  
Of waking experiences  
In the form of impressions.  
To Brahman, the waking world is unreal.  
But, to the individual or the Jiva  
It is a relative fact  
Lasting as long as  
Individuality or Jivahood lasts.

## VII

That the waking world has relative reality  
Or Vyavaharika-Satta  
Does not prove that it is real

In the absolute sense.

Comparatively, waking is on a higher order

Than dream experiences,

For reasons already mentioned.

But, from the standpoint of the highest Reality

Waking experience also is unreal.

As dream is transcended in the state of waking,

The world of waking too is transcended

In the state of Self-realisation.

## **WAKING EXPERIENCE IS AS FALSE AS DREAM EXPERIENCE**

### I

Both in waking and in dream

Objects are "perceived" or "seen"

As different from the subject.

The character of "being seen"

Is common to both kinds of experience.

There is subject-object-relationship

In waking as well as in dream.

This is the similarity between the two.

"Something is seen as an object" means

"Something is other than the self".

The experience of the not-Self is illusory,

For, if the not-Self were real,

The Self would be limited and unreal.

The illusory experience of the not-Self

Is common to both waking and dream.

In waking, the mind experiences through the senses;

In dream, the mind alone experiences.

In both the states, the mind alone experiences

Whether externally or internally.

Dream is transcended by waking.

Waking is transcended by TURIYA.

Hence, both dream and waking are contradicted.

Waking contradicts dream,

And dream contradicts waking.

When the one is, the other is not.

Neither of the two is continuously existent.

This proves the unreality of both.

## II

Duality is not real,  
 Because duality is the opposite of eternity.  
 Without duality there is no perception.  
 Hence, anything that is perceived is unreal  
 Whether in dream or in waking.  
 Dream is real when there is no waking.  
 Waking is real when there is no dream.  
 Hence, both are unreal experiences.  
 They depend on one another for their existence.  
 One cannot say whether he is dreaming or waking  
 Without referring one state to another state.  
 Desires are the rulers of all experiences  
 In waking and also in dream.  
 Waking is physical functioning of desires,  
 Dream is mental functioning of desires.  
 The senses are moved by desires in waking;  
 The mind is moved by desires in dreaming.  
 Both the states are like flowing streams.  
 They do not persist for ever in one state.  
 That which persists for ever is real.  
 Dream and waking have a beginning and an end.  
 Change is the character of all perceived objects.  
 Change implies non-existence at the beginning  
 And also at the end.  
 That which does not exist at the beginning  
 And does not exist at the end  
 Does not exist in the middle also.  
 Therefore waking is unreal like dream.

## III

It may be objected by some that  
 Waking is real, because it is the cause of dream,  
 And dream is not the cause of waking.  
 But this objection is without support.  
 If waking is a cause, It must be real.  
 If it is real, It must exist for ever.  
 Waking itself is without reality,  
 For it does not exist always.  
 If the cause itself is unreal,

How can it produce a real effect?  
 Both these are unreal states.  
 One who eats bellyful in waking state  
 May feel hungry in the dream state  
 And vice versa.  
 Things appear to be real only  
 In a particular condition.  
 They are not real always,  
 That which is not always real  
 Is an appearance and so unreal.

## IV

Anything that has got a form  
 Is unreal.  
 Forms are special modes of cognition and perception.  
 They are not ultimate.  
 In waking there are physical forms.  
 In dreaming there are mental forms.  
 Anyhow, all are forms only  
 Limited in space and time.  
 A form lasts only so long  
 As that particular mental condition lasts,  
 When there is a different mental condition  
 The forms of experience also change.  
 This is why the form of the world vanishes  
 When Self-realisation is attained.

## V

Both in dreaming and waking  
 External perceptions are considered as real  
 And internal functions as unreal (i.e., they are ignored).  
 If in waking we make a distinction  
 Between real and unreal,  
 In dream also we do the same thing.  
 Dream is real as long as it lasts,  
 Waking also is real as long as it lasts.  
 Dream is unreal from the standpoint of waking,  
 And equally so is waking to the dreamer.  
 From the standpoint of the highest Truth,  
 Waking is as false as dream.

## VI

It may be said that objects in waking state  
 Serve some definite purpose  
 And those of dream do not serve a purpose.  
 This argument is incorrect,  
 Because, the nature of serving a purpose  
 Which is seen in objects of waking  
 Is contradicted by dream and vice versa.  
 The utility and objective worth  
 Of things, states, etc., in waking  
 Are cancelled in the dream state,  
 Even as the conditions and experiences in dream  
 Are invalidated in waking.  
 Objects act as means to ends  
 Only in a particular condition  
 And not in all conditions.  
 The causal relationship of waking  
 Is rendered nugatory in dream, and vice versa.  
 The logical sequence of waking  
 Is valid to itself alone and not to dreaming.  
 So is dream valid to its own state.  
 Waking and dreaming have their own notions of propriety,  
 And each is stultified by the other,  
 Though each appears to be real to itself.  
 Thus, the validity of both the states  
 Is rejected.

## VII

It may be contended that  
 Objects of dream are queer, fantastic and unnatural,  
 And, hence, waking cannot be like dream.  
 But the experiences in dream,  
 However grotesque or abnormal,  
 Are not abnormal to the dreamer.  
 They appear fantastic only in  
 A different state, viz., waking.  
 One cannot say what is really fantastic  
 And what is normal and real.  
 The mind gives values to objects  
 And its conception of normality and abnormality

Changes according to the state in which it is.  
 There is no permanent standard  
 Of normality, beauty or decorum,  
 Either in waking or in dreaming,  
 Which may hold good for all times.  
 The dreamer has his own conception  
 Of space, time and causation,  
 Even as the waking one has his own notions.  
 One state is absurd when compared to the other.  
 This shows that both states are illogical  
 And, therefore, absurd from the highest standpoint.

### VIII

The world of waking experience is unreal.  
 Because it is the imagination of the cosmic mind.  
 The fact, that in Self-realisation,  
 There is absolute cessation of phenomenal experience  
 Shows that all phenomena are unreal.  
 External forms are the expressions  
 Of the internal Sankalpas or willings;  
 Therefore, external objects have no real value.  
 They appear to exist only  
 As long as the Sankalpas exist.  
 The senses externalise the internal ideas  
 And present them in the forms of objects.  
 When the Sankalpas are drawn within  
 The world of objective experience vanishes *in toto*.  
 The Infinite Subject, viz. the Self, alone remains.  
 There is no such thing as  
 Externality and internality in reality.  
 The ego and the non-ego,  
 The subject as well as the object,  
 All are imaginations of the mind alone.

### IX

It may be said that  
 Objects seen in waking are not  
 Mere mental imaginations,  
 Because the objects of waking experience  
 Are seen by other people also,  
 Whether or not one's mind cognises them,

But it is seen that  
 In the dream state also  
 Objects of experience are open to  
 The perception of other people,  
 Though the people as well as the objects  
 Are all subjective imaginations.  
 It may be said that in waking  
 We perceive through the sense-organs  
 And not merely through ideas.  
 But it is seen that in dream also  
 We perceive through the sense-organs  
 Belonging to the dream-state,  
 Which are not less real than those of waking state.  
 As dream is unreal,  
 Waking also must be unreal.

## X

The objective world of waking experience  
 Cannot have independent existence,  
 Because it is relative to the subject  
 Which cognises or perceives it.  
 The object is called an object  
 Just because there is a perceiving subject,  
 Similarly, a subject is called a subject  
 Just because there is a perceived object.  
 Neither of the two is self-existent,  
 And, therefore, both prove themselves to be unreal.  
 Subject and object appear  
 In the form of cause and effect.  
 Without a cause there is no effect,  
 Without an effect nothing can be a cause,  
 The conception of causation itself is illogical.  
 The mind perceives and recognises objects  
 Only by relating one thing to another.  
 The whole world of perception  
 Is a bundle of unintelligible relationships  
 Which the mind tries to organise into cause and effects.  
 Further, there is no causation at all,  
 Because, cause and effect are continuous.  
 There cannot be a lapse of time  
 In which the cause remains unchanged.

If the cause can exist unchanged for some time,  
There is no reason why it should change at any time at all.  
Either there is continuous causation,  
Or no causation at all.  
If causation is continuous,  
Cause and effect become identical,  
Being inseparable from one another.  
If they are identical,  
It means there is no causation at all.  
If there is no causation,  
There is no world of experience also.  
The whole causal scheme is illogical,  
Because it either requires the existence  
Of a first uncaused cause,  
Or it itself is meaningless.  
There is no meaning in saying that  
There is a first uncaused cause,  
For, thereby, we create a beginning for time.  
If causation were real,  
It would never be possible to get rid of it.  
But Self-realisation breaks the chain of causation.  
Hence, causation is false.  
And, consequently, the world of experience  
Also is false.  
As in dream also, there is experience  
Of the causal series,  
The waking world is false like the dream world.













# THE PRINCIPAL UPANISHADS

