



कठोपनिषत्
Katopanishad
Section 3
Volume 18

विज्ञानसारथिः यस्तु मनः प्रग्रहवान् नरः । सः अध्वनः पारं आप्नोति तत् विष्णोः परमं पदं ॥	3 - 9
इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्थाः अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः । मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिः बुद्धेः आत्मा महान् परः ॥	3 - 10
महतः परं अव्यक्तं अव्यक्तात् पुरुषः परः । पुरुषात् न परं किञ्चित् सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥	3 - 11
एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढः आत्मा न प्रकाशते । दृश्यते तु अग्रयया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ॥	3 - 12

As we may recall the Upanishad words that we saw last time

विज्ञानसारथिः अध्वनः पारं आप्नोति
तत् विष्णोः परमं पदं ॥

If a जीव - an individual person, has विवेक-विज्ञान बुद्धि - a cultivated पूर्ण ज्ञानं, that बुद्धि reaches अध्वनः पारं - that which is beyond संसार गति - that which is beyond the road of transient realities, and that is विष्णोः परमं पदं - The all-pervading पर ब्रह्मन्, the परमेश्वर, the अन्तर्यामी अमृत आत्मा - the indwelling immortal Self "I" within oneself.

Now, the Upanishad tells how a विवेक-विज्ञान बुद्धि recognizes the आत्मा "I" within oneself.

Such recognition takes place through successive steps of self-recognition within oneself as indicated in the following two verses:

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्थाः अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः । मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिः बुद्धेः आत्मा महान् परः ॥	3 - 10
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महत्तः परं अव्यक्तं अव्यक्तात् पुरुषः परः ।
पुरुषात् न परं किञ्चित् सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥

3 -11

हि - It is obvious

इन्द्रियेभ्यः पराः अर्थाः - The sense objects (अर्थाः) are more subtle than the sense organs (इन्द्रियेभ्यः) - because, in the evolution of one's physical body, the sense objects (शब्द, स्पर्श, रूप, रस, गन्ध) are the very cause for the birth of sense organs (the ear, the skin, the eyes, the tongue and the nose).

As pointed out last time, from the सत्त्वगुण component of each one of the individual great elements (the पञ्च महाभूताः - आकाश, वायु, अग्नि, आपः and पृथिवी), the sense objects and the sense organs are born of सूक्ष्म भूताः - subtle elements. Still, the sense objects are more subtle than the sense organs, because the sense objects are the cause for the birth of sense organs, and consequently, the sense objects are interior and superior to the sense organs. Each sense object is the inner self of each corresponding sense organ.

All this we saw last time. Now we continue:

अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः, मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिः

अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः - The mind is even more subtle than the sense objects, and naturally, more subtle than sense organs as well, and

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिः - the बुद्धि is still more subtle than the mind, and naturally, more subtle than the sense objects and sense organs as well. How?

Here the analysis goes one step higher, and so does one's recognition of oneself. Now the analysis is shifted from व्यष्टि - the individual, to समष्टि - the total with respect to the attributes of the subtle पञ्च महाभूताः - the five great elements present in a given individual जीव - person.

As pointed out earlier, the sense objects and the sense organs of a particular जीव are born from the सत्त्व गुण component of each individual सूक्ष्म भूत - subtle element, namely आकाश, वायु, अग्नि, आपः or पृथिवी: present in the individual जीव - the individual person. On the other hand, the mind and बुद्धि of a particular जीव are born



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

from **totality** of the सत्त्व गुण components of **all** the सूक्ष्म पञ्च महाभूताs - all the five subtle great elements present in that जीव - the individual person.

Naturally, therefore, the mind and बुद्धि have the potential capability to recognize the sense objects even in the absence of sense organs. All sense perceptions are received only by one mind and one बुद्धि. Consequently, the mind and बुद्धि are more subtle, more pervasive, more immense, than both sense objects and sense organs, and hence more interior, higher and superior to them. Even between mind and बुद्धि, बुद्धि is superior to the mind, because of the differences in the functional capabilities of their discrete nature (वृत्तिस) such as

- ✓ Mind can operate only within the fold of what is known, whereas बुद्धि can explore within regions hitherto unknown.
- ✓ Mind is of the nature of indecision and vacillation, whereas बुद्धि is of the nature of independent analysis and decision.
- ✓ When the बुद्धि is functioning, the mind is under the control of the बुद्धि. Only when the बुद्धि is not functioning, one is carried away by one's impulsive mind. The moment बुद्धि begins to function, mind comes under its control.

Because of the above natural differences in their functional capabilities, बुद्धि is even more subtle than the mind. Therefore the Upanishad says:

अर्थभ्यश्च परं मनः, मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिः - The mind is even more subtle, even more pervasive, even more immense than the sense objects, and hence mind is the inner self of both sense organs and sense objects, and hence higher and superior to both of them. The बुद्धि is still more subtle, still more pervasive, still more immense than the mind, and hence बुद्धि is the inner self of mind, sense objects and sense organs, and hence बुद्धि is higher and superior to all of them. From बुद्धि onwards, the analysis shifts to a still higher level, and so does one's recognition of oneself.

Till now, the analysis has been dealing with individual उपाधि - व्यष्टि उपाधि - the vehicle of the individual जीव. Now the analysis goes to समष्टि उपाधि - the vehicle of



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ब्रह्मचिद्या **Brahma Vidya**

the totality of the जीव of the entire creation, because the individual जीव is an inseparable part of the totality of the जीव of this entire creation.

Up to बुद्धि उपाधि, the individuality of the जीव is discernable. When the individual जीव is recognized as part of the समष्टि जीव of this entire creation, the individual merges into the total, and the individuality of the जीव disappears into the totality of the entire creation.

As we may recall, the Taittiriya Upanishad talks about creation in detail. For now, let us remember the Upanishad declaration

सोऽकामयत - सः अकामयत

The birth of this creation is the will of the परमेश्वर - ब्रह्म काम - the desire of सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म. That ब्रह्म काम has ब्रह्म लक्षणं, which means ब्रह्म काम is itself ब्रह्मन्. More about ब्रह्म काम we will see later.

The जीव of the totality of this entire creation is that which is first born (प्रथमजा) as ब्रह्म काम - as the will of परमेश्वर. That समष्टि जीव for this entire creation is called हिरण्यगर्भ - which is समष्टि सूक्ष्म शरीर उपहित चैतन्यं - the total all-inclusive awareness-consciousness conditioned by, manifested by, the total सूक्ष्म शरीर - the subtle vehicle for this entire creation.

When one goes from the individual to the total, the total is naturally परं - higher, superior and interior. Therefore, the बुद्धि of the जीव, being an integral part of हिरण्यगर्भ, recognizes हिरण्यगर्भ as महान् आत्मा - the higher self - the superior self - the inner self of the individual जीव. Therefore the Upanishad says:

बुद्धेः आत्मा महान् परः

बुद्धेः महान् आत्मा परः - The महान् आत्मा, The हिरण्यगर्भ is परः - higher, superior and more subtle, more pervasive and more immense than the बुद्धि of the individual जीव, which means that the inner self of all बुद्धिs of all beings in this creation, ie, the समष्टि आत्मा, the महान् आत्मा, the हिरण्यगर्भ is higher and superior to the बुद्धि, mind and



ब्रह्मचिद्या **Brahma Vidya**

sense objects and sense organs of the individual जीव. Thus the बुद्धि of the individual जीव, now recognizes that महान् आत्मा - the हिरण्यगर्भ as the inner self of all the बुद्धिs, all the minds, all the sense objects, and all the sense organs of all the जीवs in this entire creation.

Further, the Upanishad continues in the next verse

महतः परं अव्यक्तं

महतः - Even more than the महान् आत्मा - the हिरण्यगर्भ

परं - higher, superior, more subtle, more pervasive, more immense and more interior, is

अव्यक्तं - the unmanifest माया - the inherent power of ब्रह्मन्, because, the immediate cause for हिरण्यगर्भ is माया - the inherent power of ब्रह्मन्, which is in the form of सर्व कार्य कारण शक्ति समाहार सूक्ष्म रूपं - totality of all potential powers of the entire cause-effect manifestations in this creation, in a subtle form.

Therefore, the बुद्धि of the individual जीव now recognizes माया as the inner self of हिरण्यगर्भ, and hence the inner self of all the बुद्धिs, all the minds, all the sense objects and all the sense organs of all the जीवs in this entire creation. Further,

अव्यक्तात् पुरुषः परः - Even higher than, even superior to, even more subtle, more immense, and more interior to अव्यक्त - the unmanifest माया is पुरुषः - the पुरुषोत्तम - the परमेश्वर - the पर ब्रह्मन् - the सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्मन् - the ever existent-all conscious-all knowledge- all inclusive- limitless ब्रह्मन्.

The word पुरुषः itself is a महावाक्य.

पुरुषः पुरुषः - you repeat the word twice to recognize its indicated Being. पुरौ उषति इति

पुरुषः; also,

पूर्णः इति पुरुषः - the one that obtains in this body and in every body, as it were,

सर्वस्य जगतः अधिष्ठानः - as the very basis for this entire creation, as the very आत्मा - the self of this entire creation is पुरुषः. And that पुरुष is पूर्ण पुरुष - It fills up all existence.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

That पूर्ण पुरुष is अव्यक्तात् परः - is superior to, is higher than, is more subtle than अव्यक्त - the unmanifest माया, because that पुरुष is the अधिष्ठान - basis for माया. ब्रह्माश्रया माया - माया exists because पुरुष exists, ब्रह्मन् exists. Therefore, the बुद्धि of the individual जीव now recognizes That पुरुष - that पुरुषोत्तम - that सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्मन् - that limitless ब्रह्मन् as the inner self of माया, हिरण्यगर्भ, all the बुद्धिs, all the minds, all the sense objects, and all the sense organs of all the individual जीवs in this entire creation.

Now, what is beyond that पुरुष ? The Upanishad says:

पुरुषात् न परं किञ्चित् - There is nothing higher, superior or interior to that पुरुष. There is no substance of any kind beyond पुरुष - beyond that परब्रह्मन्, who is a mass of pure consciousness (चिन्मात्रघनं). Therefore,

सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः

सा काष्ठा - That पुरुष, that limitless ब्रह्मन् is the culmination, the destination, the ultimate end of all subtleness, greatness in all beings, which means that ब्रह्मन् is प्रत्यग आत्मा - the innermost self of oneself as well as of all beings in this creation. That पुरुष - that ब्रह्मन् is the ultimate end of all superiority, causality, subtlety, immensity and internality commencing from the individual senses onwards. Consequently,

सा परा गतिः - That पुरुष - That पुरुषोत्तम - That परब्रह्मन् is the supreme goal of all जीवs in this creation, including oneself. That परा गतिः - That supreme goal is, as Sri Krishna says

तत् धाम परमं मम

G 15 - 6

The ultimate abode, the ultimate destination of all beings, is My abode - the abode of परमेश्वर, the abode of परब्रह्मन्, which means

तत् विष्णोः परमं पदं is सा परा गतिः - That प्रत्यग आत्मा - the innermost self of oneself, of every self, is the विष्णु स्वरूपं - the abode of परब्रह्मन्, already in one's बुद्धि recognizable by the विवेक विज्ञान बुद्धि of every individual जीव.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

That पुरुष, the पुरुषोत्तम the परमेश्वर is the प्रत्यग आत्मा - the innermost self of this entire creation, of every self in this entire creation, including oneself, that is what the विवेक विज्ञान बुद्धि - the enlightened बुद्धि of a जीव discovers, by successive recognition of oneself from sense organs onwards. That means, what the विवेक विज्ञान बुद्धि recognized earlier through the रथ कल्पना - the chariot imagery, as विष्णोः परमं पदं is indeed identical with प्रत्यग आत्मा - the innermost self - the आत्मा "I" which is the supreme goal to be reached by the जीव "I" in every physical body.

Thus, the Upanishad establishes the identity between तत् विष्णोः परमं पदं - the परमेश्वर in oneself with प्रत्यग आत्मा - the innermost self in oneself as the supreme goal to be reached by the जीव "I" in every शरीर. To unfold that identity is the purpose of the two verses:

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्थाः अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः ।

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिः बुद्धेः आत्मा महान् परः ॥

3 - 10

महत् परं अव्यक्तं अव्यक्तात् पुरुषः परः ।

पुरुषात् न परं किञ्चित् सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥

3 - 11

The Upanishads, again and again, call on us to realize, to recognize the आत्मा "I" - the पुरुष within oneself as oneself, as every self. The पुरुष represents the innermost reach - the highest reach of one's inward journey within oneself, where finite knowing becomes infinite being. That is why the Upanishad says:

पुरुषात् न परं किञ्चित् सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः - There is nothing higher than पुरुष. पुरुष is the supreme goal of life.

The discovery of आत्मा "I" - the immortal self behind every mortal self, together with its identity with पुरुष - the पुरुषोत्तम - the परब्रह्मन् - the परमेश्वर is one of the greatest contributions of Vedanta to humanity. It is not merely an intellectual discovery. It transcends all intellectual discoveries. It is a spiritual realization, confirmed again and again in the very long course of human endeavour. This discovery holds infinite possibilities for the moral, material, intellectual, and spiritual progress of every human being. The truth of आत्मा is universal, and the possibility of recognizing that आत्मा by oneself, in oneself, as oneself is open to every person.



Therefore, Lord यम says:

एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढः आत्मा न प्रकाशते ।
दृश्यते तु अग्रयया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ॥

3 - 12

एष (पुरुषः) एष आत्मा सर्वेषु भूतेषु

एष पुरुषः - एष आत्मा - That परमेश्वर, that आत्मा "I", which is सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः - which is the highest and ultimate destination for the life of every human being, which is to be reached by knowledge, by recognition that परमेश्वर - that आत्मा - सर्वेषु भूतेषु is in all beings in this creation without exception, which means that The परमेश्वर - the आत्मा "I" is in every human being.

The आत्मा "I" is not an object. It is the very subject itself. As the eternal subject, it is the ever present datum, the basis, the अधिष्ठान of all actions and experiences of a person. Even though that is so, for most people

एषः पुरुषः एष आत्मा न प्रकाशते - That परमेश्वर - that आत्मा "I" does not light up, does not shine forth revealing itself, which means that परमेश्वर - that आत्मा "I" in oneself is not available for recognition for most people, because

गूढः - it appears hidden in the cave of one's बुद्धि - बुद्धिगुह, which is inaccessible for most people. Why is it that one cannot recognize something that is already in one's own बुद्धि? Sri Krishna gives the reason:

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमाया समावृतः

G 7 - 25

The परमेश्वर - the आत्मा "I" is not lighted up for all people because the अन्तःकरण - the mind and बुद्धि of most people is totally obstructed by योग माया - by the मोह created by their माया गुणs and their products, consequently by their अविद्या - spiritual blindness.

That is why the Upanishad said earlier (2 - 7)

श्रवणायापि बहुभिः यो न लभ्यः, श्रवन्तोऽपि बहवः यं न विध्युः ।
आश्वर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा, आश्वर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ॥

2 - 7



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

Even the opportunity to hear about **आत्मा** is not available to many people. Having heard of it, many cannot comprehend **आत्मा**. Wonderful is its teacher, and equally capable is its pupil. Wonderful indeed is one who comprehends it, taught by a qualified and able teacher.

If all people cannot recognize **आत्मा**, then who can recognize **आत्मा**? The Upanishad says:

दृश्यते तु अग्रयया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः

तु - on the other hand

एष पुरुषः एष आत्मा दृश्यते - the परमेश्वर - the आत्मा "I" in oneself, and indeed every self

दृश्यते can be seen, can be recognized, by what? by whom?

अग्रयया बुद्ध्या - by a बुद्धि which is sharp and pointed, and powerful in its mission; by a बुद्धि whose whole sole commitment is the pursuit of ब्रह्मात्म ऐक्यं; by a बुद्धि which is totally committed to the recognition of the identity of The परमेश्वर and The आत्मा in oneself as oneself

सूक्ष्मया बुद्ध्या - by a बुद्धि which is cultivated enough to recognize the progressively increasing orders of subtlety, then only the highest in the order of subtlety can be recognized.

Herein lies the importance of prior cultivation of one's बुद्धि to the highest possible degree in some field of objective knowledge, which gives one the ability to recognize the increasing orders of subtlety involved in cause-effect relationships. Such prior cultivation of बुद्धि is an absolute necessity for the successful subsequent pursuit of Upanishad knowledge to recognize ब्रह्मात्म ऐक्यं - the identity of परमेश्वर and the आत्मा in oneself, as oneself. Therefore, the Upanishad says:

एष पुरुषः एष आत्मा सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः दृश्यते

The परमेश्वर - The आत्मा "I" in oneself, indeed in every self, can be seen, can be recognized by सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः - by people who have cultivated ability to recognize increasing orders of subtlety in all existence, both in the world inside oneself and the world outside oneself. The more subtle the layer of reality is, the more sharp should be the ability of the बुद्धि to penetrate that layer of reality to reach for the **top**.



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

That sharpness is the measure of the purity and power of one's बुद्धि. It is this power in its extraordinary form is what makes the बुद्धि capable of recognizing The परमेश्वर - The आत्मा everywhere, including oneself, as oneself. A person of such extraordinary बुद्धि power is a सूक्ष्मदर्शी - perceiver of subtle truths, those who have cultivated the ability to recognize Absolute Reality - The आत्मा.

There is no limit to the potential power of human mind. The ability to see, to recognize the one behind the many and all the many in the same one, has infinite potentialities for both the material and spiritual progress of every human being. The cultivation of this ability is what Lord यम describes (2 - 12) as अध्यात्म योग and the knowledge about the means for the cultivation of अध्यात्म योग is अध्यात्म विद्या

Sri Krishna says:

अध्यात्म विद्या विद्यानां (G 10-32)

Among the many fields of knowledge, I am अध्यात्म विद्या therefore, अध्यात्म विद्या is a glory of परमेश्वर. Lord यम describes अध्यात्म योग in the next verse, which we will see next time.