



कठोपनिषत्
Katopanishad
Section 5
Volume 28

- सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुः न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैः बाह्यदोषैः ।
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इति पञ्चमी वल्ली

Vedanta describes आत्मा as सर्व भूत अन्तरात्मा

If आत्मा – The Self “I”, is in every देह – in every body-mind-intellect assembly, then what is the relationship between the आत्मा and the देह ? आत्मा is formless, timeless, and limitless, and देह is full of forms, time-bound and limited. That being so, what kind of relationship is possible between आत्मा and देह ?

Relationship there is, and it is a peculiar relationship. It is a relationship with no relationship at all. It is a relationship between सत्यं and मिथ्या – The Real, and an unreal, mistakenly taken as The Real. It is like the relationship between the rope – the Real, and its mistaken appearance as snake – the unreal. Such relationship between



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the Real and the Unreal is called अध्यास in Vedanta. अध्यास means “Superimposition” of an unreal on the Real, because of अविद्या – ignorance of that which is Real. Thus देह and all its attributes constitute an अध्यास – a superimposition on आत्मा – the Self “I” – because of अविद्या – ignorance of the Nature of आत्मा.

That being the case, आत्मा is बाह्यः – outside of देह and all its attributes. Let us understand the word बाह्यः here. बाह्यः is That which is outside. आत्मा is everywhere in the देह. There is no spatial distance separating the आत्मा and the देह, but there is a distance in terms of their स्वरूप – their real nature. The distance is one of अविद्या – ignorance of आत्मज्ञानं – Self-Knowledge.

When you see the appearance of a snake in a rope, snake is everywhere in the rope, there is no spatial distance separating the snake and the rope, but there is a distance in terms of स्वरूप – the real nature of what you see. The reality of rope is outside बाह्यः, of the appearance of snake, and consequently the reality of rope does not enjoy either the attributes of the snake or the attributes of your reactions to the appearance of snake. That is what is pointed out in the verse:

सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुः न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैः बाह्यदोषैः ।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोक दुःखेन बाह्यः ॥

5- 11

सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुः सूर्यः – The Sun is the eye for all people, because it lights up all objects in this creation and by its light, it enables all eyes to see whatever they see. That Sun

न लिप्यते – is not tainted by, touched by or affected by

चाक्षुषैः दोषैः, बाह्य दोषैः – whatever is seen as a result of

चाक्षुषैः दोषैः – defective eye-sight or

बाह्यदोषैः – external impurities such as dirt, filth etc. Thus,

यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुः सूर्यः चाक्षुषैः बाह्यदोषैः न लिप्यते

Just as the Sun, which lights up all objects on earth, and by its light, enables all people to see whatever they see, and thus, it serves as the eye for all people, and just as that Sun is not tainted by, touched by, or affected by, whatever is seen either by the defects in the eyesight, or by the external blemishes, such as dirt and filth in the objects seen outside, just as even though the Sun by its light, aids your eyes to see whatever you



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see, and hence remains connected to your eyes, still, the Sun is away from your eyes, is away from what is lighted up and is also away from what happens in your mind and बुद्धि as a result of what you see outside,

तथा – similarly

एकः (सन्) सर्व-भूत-अन्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्यः

एकः (सन्) – Being ONE,

सर्व भूत-अन्तरात्मा, लोकदुःखेन न लिप्यते, आत्मा – is not tainted by, touched by, or affected by the sorrow and distress experienced by the देह – the body-mind-intellect complex of people, because,

बाह्यः – आत्मा – The Self “I” – (in terms of its स्वरूप) is outside of one’s देह and all its attributes, such as the सुख, दुःख experiences in life.

That means the आत्मा is very much like the Sun. Just as the Sun is the Light for the eyes to function, The आत्मा is the Light for the sense organs, mind and बुद्धि to function and experience life. Suppose there is दुःख – sorrow and distress in the अन्तःकरण – Mind and बुद्धि, आत्मा lights up the दुःख just as the Sun lights up all the dirt and filth on earth. Just as the Sun is outside of all that is lighted up, so also आत्मा is outside of all the सुख-दुःख experienced by the अन्तःकरण – Mind and बुद्धि.

Every kind of दुःख – worldly pain, arises only from अविद्या–born काम and कर्म desire and desire-prompted actions, both of which are only अध्यास – superimpositions on आत्मा – The Self “I” – which means आत्मा is बाह्यः in terms of स्वरूप – True Nature. आत्मा is outside of, away from, untouched by काम and कर्म and all their effects on one’s अन्तःकरण – mind and बुद्धि.

Thus आत्मा is Immanent and Transcendent at the same time and असंगः – uninvolved, untouched and uncontaminated by all worldly attributes, at all times. That is the Message here.

The आत्मा – The Self “I” is परमेश्वर Itself, already in yourself. Discover That परमेश्वर within yourself, as Yourself Itself, and so discover Eternal happiness and Eternal Peace already within yourself. That is the Message of Lord यम in the next two verses.



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तं आत्मस्थं ये अनुपश्यन्ति धीराः तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं, न इतरेषाम् ॥ 5-12

नित्यः अनित्यानां, चेतनः चेतनानाम् एको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान् ।
तं आत्मस्थं ये अनुपश्यन्ति धीराः तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वती, न इतरेषां ॥ 5-13

Eternal Happiness and Eternal Peace belong only to a धीरः - a person of heroic wisdom. One realizes one's identity with The आत्मा - The परमेश्वर already within oneself as ONESELF Itself. That आत्मा - The परमेश्वर, is pointed out here by these words:

एकः - The आत्मा - The परमेश्वर is ONE:

वशी - The आत्मा - The परमेश्वर - is the supreme controller, The Lord of this entire creation.

सर्वभूत अन्तरात्मा - That आत्मा - The परमेश्वर is the Innermost Self of all beings in this creation.

नित्यः अनित्यानां - That आत्मा - The परमेश्वर is The Eternal Being behind all the non-eternals in this creation.

चेतनः चेतनानाम् - That आत्मा - The परमेश्वर is The Pure Consciousness in all conscious beings in this creation.

एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति - Being ONE, That आत्मा - The परमेश्वर manifests Itself in the form of many

एकः बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान् - Being ONE, That आत्मा - The परमेश्वर fulfills the desires of many.

The आत्मा - The परमेश्वर is not any extra-cosmic or autocratic Ruler of the Universe. It is not outside of oneself. It is in every self as ONESELF Itself, as one's own Pure consciousness, and, it is this fact that makes God-Realization (Self - Realization) possible, not simply any belief in the existence of God.

The true nature of oneself is परमेश्वर. Any notion of separation from परमेश्वर leads one only to darkness and sorrow, whereas recognition of one's identity with परमेश्वर leads one to Light, Peace and Happiness. In worshipping God in any form and in any name, one is worshipping only one's own Innermost SELF - The परमेश्वर already in oneself.



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Only that person who realizes one's identity with आत्मा – The परमेश्वर, already within oneself, as ONESELF Itself, gains Eternal Happiness, Eternal Peace, and others cannot. That is the content of the above two verses. Now let us see these verses in some detail.

एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा, एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति

एकः means ONE. The परमेश्वर is ONE, because परमेश्वर is all-pervasive, all-inclusive, ever-existent and totally independent and there is none equal to or greater than परमेश्वर.

वशी – That परमेश्वर is वशी, The Supreme Controller of this entire creation. Being both the efficient cause as well as the material cause for this entire creation, परमेश्वर is वशी – The Supreme Lord of this entire creation.

सर्व भूत अन्तरात्मा – That ONE परमेश्वर is the Inner SELF of all beings in this creation because

एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति – That परमेश्वर is the ONE who makes, who creates His ONE Form into many forms.

एकं रूपं IS स्व आत्मरूपं, स्व विज्ञान स्वरूप, शुद्ध चैतन्य स्वरूप, आत्म रूपं – The Form of one's own SELF as Pure Consciousness. Pure Consciousness is the स्वरूप of परमेश्वर. The Form of The Self of परमेश्वर is ONE Pure Consciousness. Therefore,

एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति, सः सर्व, भूत, अन्तरात्मा - That परमेश्वर who makes, who creates from His ONE Form of Pure Consciousness into many forms in this creation, is the Self of all beings in this creation, including the creation itself.

How can परमेश्वर create many forms from His ONE Form, without Himself undergoing any change whatsoever? That is possible for परमेश्वर because of His अचिन्त्य शक्ति – inscrutable power, माया Power – which is not available for any kind of definition or categorical understanding.

Then how can one recognize that माया Power by which ONE Form, without itself undergoing any change, can appear as many different forms? The experiential model for such recognition is simply a reflection on what one sees in one's dream state of existence. In one's dream state of experience, while one is totally unaware of the physical world around, without oneself undergoing any change whatsoever, one creates from oneself the appearance of many forms and names in one's dream, all of which are



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in fact, none other than oneself. So is the nature of this entire creation with respect to The ONE परमेश्वर.

तं आत्मस्थं ये अनुपश्यन्ति धीराः - ये धीराः means ये विवेकिनः. Those people of heroic wisdom, those who are blessed with the four-fold qualifications necessary for gaining आत्मज्ञानं - Self Knowledge

अनुपश्यन्ति means साक्षात् अनुभवन्ति - who directly experience and immediately recognize, through the Teachings of the Upanishads.

तं आत्मस्थं (परमेश्वरं) - the presence of That परमेश्वर abiding within oneself, within one's own शरीर - one's own body.

आत्मस्थं does not mean that one's body is a container for holding परमेश्वर. आत्मस्थं simply means that the बुद्धि in the शरीर serves as a medium for the reflection of परमेश्वर everywhere in one's शरीर. As pointed out earlier, there is no distance in space between the शरीर and परमेश्वर - the distance is only one of ignorance of the true nature of परमेश्वर, who is all-pervasive, all-inclusive and totally independent.

Therefore, those people of heroic wisdom who directly and immediately recognize through the Teachings of the Upanishad, परमेश्वर everywhere in one's शरीर, which means those who recognize "I am परमेश्वर Itself"

तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं - for them, for those who recognize their identity with the स्वरूप of परमेश्वर, there is शाश्वतं सुखं - Eternal Happiness - ब्रह्मानन्दं
न इतरेषां - not for any others

Even though Eternal Happiness - ब्रह्मानन्दं - is the स्वरूप of परमेश्वर - The आत्मा The Self "I", such happiness is not available to those for whom बुद्धि is enveloped by Self ignorance. Continuing the same Message, the Upanishad says:

आत्मा, परमेश्वर is नित्यः अनित्यानां - आत्मा is the changeless and Indestructible in all names and forms subject to change and destruction.

चेतनः चेतनानाम् - The Consciousness in all conscious beings, and



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एकः बहूनां यः विदधाति कामान्

एकः - while being ONE

यः बहूनां कामान् विदधाति - who fulfills, naturally without any effort, the desires of many, which means परमेश्वर is the कर्म फल दाता - The Giver of the fruits of one's actions. Every कर्म फल - the fruit of one's action is an expression of ईश्वर अनुग्रहं - the very Blessings of परमेश्वर.

Let us understand this. If आत्मा - The Self "I" is परमेश्वर and if परमेश्वर is कर्म फल दाता, then I am कर्म फल दाता, which means that I am no more a कर्ता - the doer of an action. If I am always कर्म फल दाता then I am पूर्णः - ONE and all inclusive. Being पूर्णः I am शान्ति Itself. Therefore, the Upanishad says:

तं आत्मस्थं ये अनुपश्यन्ति धीराः - Those people of heroic wisdom who directly and immediately recognize themselves through the Teachings of the Upanishads and by the very Grace of परमेश्वर - as "I am पूर्णः - I am Fullness Itself".

तेषां शाश्वती शान्तिः, न इतरेषां - for them, there is शाश्वती शान्ति - Eternal Peace, not for others.

One experiences शान्ति - Peace of mind now and then, depending on the disposition of one's mind. That is not शाश्वती शान्ति - Eternal Peace, which is totally independent of the disposition of one's mind. शाश्वती शान्ति - Eternal Peace is the very स्वरूप of आत्मा. It is the very nature of Self "I". That स्वरूप शान्ति is Eternal, because It is identical with one's own Self, which is Eternal, Infinite and never subject to change. It is That आत्मा that was described earlier as: एकः बहूनां यः विदधाति कामान् - "though being ONE, आत्मा fulfills the desires of many", which means, being the Infinite SELF of all, आत्मा can be all things to all people. It is with That आत्मा that one needs to realize one's identity. Indicating the profundity and incommunicability of such realization, Lord यम says:

तत् एतत् इति मन्यन्ते, अनिर्देश्यं परमं सुखं ।

कथं नु तद्विजानीयां, किं उ भाति, विभाति वा ॥

5-14

मन्यन्ते means प्रत्यक्षं एव मन्यन्ते - They realize, they recognize directly and immediately. Who are they? The धीराः - people of heroic Wisdom, the ज्ञानीs - the



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Sages. Such people realize, recognize, directly and immediately. What do they recognize?

अनिर्देश्यं परमं सुखं

अनिर्देश्यं – the indefinable, indescribable, the incommunicable परमं सुखं – the most Exalted Happiness, the शाश्वतं सुखं – the Eternal Happiness, the शाश्वती शान्ति – the Eternal Peace, they enjoy in themselves.

एतत् तत् इति – they recognize That अनिर्देश्यं परमं सुखं as एतत् तत् – This is That. This Happiness that I enjoy now is the स्वरूप of That आत्मा – The परमेश्वर already in myself. That आत्मा – the परमेश्वर is not away from me. It is already in me. This Extraordinary Happiness that I enjoy now is indeed the स्वरूप of That परमेश्वर That आत्मा is already in me”. That is what the धीराः – the ज्ञानीs realize, recognize, directly and immediately.

But for the one who is not yet a ज्ञानी, the question arises.

कथं नु तत् विजानीयां – how indeed, shall I know, shall I recognize That आत्मा, already in myself?

किं उभाति, विभाति वा ? - Does that आत्मा shine in Its own Light or is It revealed to my बुद्धि as an object of my knowledge? The answer to this question is – “yes” to both.

भाति च विभाति च – आत्मा indeed shines by Itself, and It also shines severally as objects of Knowledge in your बुद्धि

Lord यम gives this answer in the next verse which is one of the most sublime verses in all Upanishads.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति, न चन्द्र तारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति, कुतोऽयमग्निः ।

तमेव भान्तं, अनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वं मिदं विभाति ॥

5-15

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति, न चन्द्रतारकं, न इमाः विद्युतः भान्ति, कुतः अयं अग्निः :

तत्र – There

तस्मिन् स्वआत्मभूते ब्रह्मणि – In that ब्रह्मन् which is आत्म स्वरूपं – which is identical with आत्मा – The Self “I”



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सूर्यः न भाति --the Sun does not shine, which means even though the Sun lights up every thing, it does not light up आत्मा – The ब्रह्मन्. Similarly,
न चन्द्रतारकं – neither the moon, nor the stars light up आत्मा, ब्रह्मन्
न इमाः विद्युतः भान्ति – even these flashy lightnings do not light up आत्मा. When that is so
कुतः अयं अग्निः – how can this fire light up आत्मा. Surely, fire also does not light up आत्मा

तं एव भान्तं, अनु भाति सर्वं

सर्वं अनुभाति – all of them – the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the fire etc., all of them shine after.

तं भान्तं एव – The Self shining आत्मा alone, which means आत्मा alone shines, and everything else shines after the shine of आत्मा. The Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Mind, the बुद्धि etc. shine because The आत्मा – The Self “I” shines, just as hot water is hot only because of its contact with the fire underneath, and not because of its own nature. Similarly,

आत्म वस्तु भाति – सर्वं अनुभाति आत्मा – shines by Itself, and everything else shines after आत्मा.

All because of ONE Light of आत्मा there are The Light of Sun, the Light of Moon, The Light of Stars, The Light of Fire etc. which means each one of these things – namely, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Fire etc., shine distinctly as they do, only because of ONE Being, namely The ज्योति स्वरूप, चित् स्वरूप आत्मा – Self Effulgent Pure Consciousness, which is the स्वरूप of आत्मा – The True Nature of आत्मा. Therefore the Upanishad says.

तस्य भासा सर्वं इदं विभाति – Because of the shine of आत्मा – all that exist in this creation shine. The Light of आत्मा lights up everything else in this creation. Thus

आत्मा भाति विभाति च – आत्मा shines by Itself, and It also shines variously in different forms – such as The Sun, The Moon, The Stars, The Fire etc.

आत्मा भाति – आत्मा shines without any distinction. आत्मा is Self Effulgent, Self Shining

आत्मा विभाति – आत्मा shines with all distinctions also; and indeed every object in this creation shines after आत्मा only.



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

Thus आत्मा is स्वयं भाति – shines by itself and विशेषेण भाति च – It also shines as various objects of knowledge, such as Sun knowledge, Moon knowledge, and indeed any object knowledge.

Therefore, what is it that I need to do to recognize That चैतन्य स्वरूप आत्मा ? Indeed, nothing. The Self effulgence of आत्मा – The Self “I” – is recognizable by simply recognizing The Consciousness because of which I see, I recognize any object, anywhere at anytime. Thus whatever I see, any where, at any time, I only see तं एव भान्तं अनुभाति सर्वं, तस्य भासा सर्वं इदं विभाति-आत्मा - shines as everything one sees.

With this Great Vedantic Declaration, ends this Section 5 of कठोपनिषत्. We will go to the next and the final Section next time.