



केनोपनिषत्
Kena Upanishad
Chapter 2
Volume 4

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति
दभ्रमेवापि नूनं त्वं वेत्त ब्रह्मणो रूपं ।
यदस्य त्वं यदस्य देवेषु
अथ नु मीमाँस्यमेवते ॥
मन्ये विदितं ॥ 2 - 1

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च ।
यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च ॥ 2 - 2

यस्य अमतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः ।
अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातं अविजानतां ॥ 2 - 3

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतं अमृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।
आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दते अमृतं ॥ 2 - 4

इह चेत् अवेदीत् अथ सत्यं अस्ति, न चेत् अवेदीत् महती विनष्टिः ।
भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः
प्रेत्य अस्मात् लोकात् अमृता भवन्ति 2 - 5

इति द्वितीयः खण्डः

This is Chapter 2 of केनोपनिषत् . Let us briefly recall the content of Chapter 1.

The students and the teacher are deeply in reverential and devotional meditation on विद्यं, flow of ब्रह्मविद्या - ब्रह्मज्ञानं - ईश्वर ज्ञानं - आत्म ज्ञानं - SELF-Knowledge. One of the students raises a set of questions about himself and seeks Enlightenment from the teacher.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

Essentially, the question is केन - By Whom कः देवः Who is That Supreme Being - Is there such a Supreme Being by whose power my mind entertains thoughts, my breathing takes place methodically and spontaneously, I am able to speak words and my eyes and ears, indeed all my organs of perception and action, function naturally as they do. If such a Supreme Being does exist, what can you say about that Supreme Being.

The teacher replies - Yes, the ONE about whom you are enquiring, That Supreme Being does exist. That is ब्रह्मन्. About That ब्रह्मन्, all I can say is only this much. That ब्रह्मन् is श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं Ear of the ear, meaning that which cannot be heard by the ear, but by which the Ear is able to hear what it hears.

That same ब्रह्मन् is मनसो मनः Mind of the mind, meaning, That which cannot be comprehended by the mind, but That by which the Mind is able to comprehend the world of objects and experiences.

That same ब्रह्मन् is also वाचो ह वाचं, The word of the word , meaning that which cannot be revealed by words, but that by which words reveal their meaning.

That same ब्रह्मन् is also प्राणस्य प्राणः - The प्राण of प्राण, meaning That which is not sustained by प्राण, but That by which प्राण Itself is sustained, and

That same ब्रह्मन् is also चक्षुषः चक्षुः The Eye of the eye, meaning -That which cannot be seen by the eyes but That by whose grace eyes are capable of seeing.

That ब्रह्मन् is not any organ of any being, it is itself all organs of perception and action in ONE. At the same time, That ब्रह्मन् is not any object in this creation. Further,

अन्यत् एव तत् विदितात् अथो अविदितात् अधि -That ब्रह्मन् is different from all that one knows, and at the same time, different from all that one does not know, which means that That ब्रह्मन् is the Knower "I" in every person. That ब्रह्मन् is the SELF in yourself, the SELF in myself, and the SELF in every self. That is the teaching on the nature of ब्रह्मन्.

The student is still listening and meditating on what he has heard from the teacher, unfolding the nature of ब्रह्मन्. Is the student enlightened now on ब्रह्मन् from the teaching? The teacher is not sure. There is no response yet from the student.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

On the other hand, having been taught that ब्रह्मन् is the SELF in oneself, it is possible that a student may jump to the conclusion "Well, I am ब्रह्मन्. Since I know myself very well, I know ब्रह्मन् very well". If one thinks so, then that would be an erroneous conclusion because ब्रह्मन् is different from all that one knows and also different from all that one does not know. ब्रह्मन् is the knower. The knower cannot be an object of knowledge for the knower, just as fire cannot be consumed by itself.

There is no other knower different from ब्रह्मन् to whom ब्रह्मन् can become an object of knowledge. Therefore in order to dispel a possible erroneous conclusion from his teaching, the teacher says,

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति
दभ्रमेवापि नूनं त्वं वेत्त ब्रह्मणो रूपं ।
यदस्य त्वं यदस्य देवेषु
अथ नु मीमाँस्यमेव ते ॥
मन्ये विदितं ॥

2 - 1

यदि मन्यसे - In case you think

ब्रह्मणो रूपं सुवद इति - I know ब्रह्मन् very well indeed (सुवेद) then

नूनं - certainly

त्वं वेत्त ब्रह्मणो रूपं दभ्रं एव - You know ब्रह्मन् very little indeed. Your knowledge of ब्रह्मन् is trivial indeed.

यत् अस्य ब्रह्मणः रूपं त्वं वेत्त, यत् अस्य

ब्रह्मणः रूपं देवेषु वेत्त - The ब्रह्मन् that you know, based on your qualities and attributes, and also even the qualities and attributes of celestial beings that you are familiar with, such as वायु देवता, अग्नि देवता, पृथिवी देवता etc. - all such knowledge of ब्रह्मन्

दभ्रं एव - is indeed trivial, very little

अथ नु - Therefore, certainly

ब्रह्मणो रूपं मीमाँस्यं एव - your notion of ब्रह्मन् needs further enquiry. You must think more about my teachings on ब्रह्मन्, within yourself, with the help of the pointers already provided to you.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

In case you think that you know ब्रह्मन् very well, then certainly your knowledge of ब्रह्मन् is trivial, is insignificant. Your knowledge of ब्रह्मन् gained from the expressions of ब्रह्मन् as seen in the attributes of yourself, and also, even in the attributes of देवs, celestial beings like इन्द्र, अग्नि, वायु etc. - your knowledge of ब्रह्मन् gained from all such attributes is very little indeed. Therefore your notion of ब्रह्मन् needs further enquiry. You must contemplate on ब्रह्मन् within yourself with the help of the pointers already given to you. So says the teacher.

The student in this Upanishad is not an ordinary one. He is indeed an extraordinary one. He did not come to any erroneous conclusion on ब्रह्मन्. He understood the teachings on ब्रह्मन् exactly as they should be understood. However, in view of the concerns of the teacher as expressed above, he continues his contemplation on ब्रह्मन् and then based on his own personal experience and clarity of vision, he gives a firm response to the teacher in the following words.

मन्ये विदितं

मन्ये I think विदितं-ब्रह्मन् is known to me as That should be known.

The teacher asks "How? How is ब्रह्मन् known to you?"

The student replies

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च ।

यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च ॥ 2 - 2

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति - न अहं मन्ये सुवेद इति - I do not think I know ब्रह्मन् very well, in the sense of सुवेद. सुवेद means knowing something very well in all details. That kind of knowing is applicable only to objective knowledge. Knowledge about ब्रह्मन् is not a matter of objective knowledge. The student knows that ब्रह्मन् is not one of the objects in this creation. Therefore he says

न अहं मन्ये सुवेद इति - I do not think I know ब्रह्मन् as an object of knowledge; and then the student hastens to add

नो न वेदेति वेद च which means न उ न वेद इति न वेद वेद च - not that I do not know ब्रह्मन्, I do not know and I also know. Therefore



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च means - I do not think that I know ब्रह्मन् very well, not that I do *not* know ब्रह्मन्. I do not know and I also know.

This statement may appear contradictory but for the one who already clearly understands the teachings on the nature of ब्रह्मन्, there is no contradiction. What the student says is this "I do not know ब्रह्मन् as an object of knowledge; but I do know ब्रह्मन् as myself. I as the knower of ब्रह्मन्, recognize MYSELF as ब्रह्मन्." The knower of ब्रह्मन् recognizing oneself as ब्रह्मन् is similar to one recognizing oneself by one's name. In such recognition, no object recognition is involved, only self-recognition is involved. It is in that sense the student says वेद च - I know ब्रह्मन् as MYSELF.

Further, the student hastens to add also

यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च

यः नः - Whoever among us students

तद्वेद - knows the content of that statement, namely

नो न वेदेति वेद च meaning न उ न वेद इति न वेद वेद च - "not that I do not know ब्रह्मन्, I do not know and also I know"

तद्वेद meaning तत् ब्रह्मन् वेद - that person also knows ब्रह्मन्

Whoever among us students, clearly understands the meaning of the statement नो न वेदेति वेद च "not that I do not know ब्रह्मन् - I do not know and also I know" that person also recognizes ब्रह्मन् as one-SELF.

By making the above statements, the student makes it absolutely clear to the teacher that he recognizes ब्रह्मन् not as an object of knowledge, but as the true nature of one's own SELF, exactly as indicated by the teaching in Chapter 1, namely

अन्यत् एव तत् विदितात् अथो अविदितात् अधि - ब्रह्मन् is different from all that is known and also all that is unknown.

The teacher is naturally pleased with the student's statement on ब्रह्मन्. Confirming the student's understanding, the teacher now expands on that teaching.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

यस्य अमतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः ।

अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातं अविजानतां ॥ 2 - 3

यस्य अमतं तस्य मतं

यस्य अमतं - To That person for whom

ब्रह्मन् is अमतं - unknown

तस्य मतं - ब्रह्मन् is truly known

To that person for whom ब्रह्मन् is unknown ब्रह्मन् is truly known.

Let us understand this statement properly. The person who truly knows ब्रह्मन्, who has realized ब्रह्मन् in one's own self, that person knows that ब्रह्मन् cannot be known through his sense organs and mind. Consequently, for that person, ब्रह्मन् is unknown as an object of knowledge. On the other hand

मतं यस्य न वेद सः

मतं यस्य - To that person who considers that he knows ब्रह्मन् (just like he knows many things in this creation)

न वेद सः - सः न वेद - That person does not in fact know ब्रह्मन्. That person has only a concept of ब्रह्मन्. A concept of ब्रह्मन् is not ब्रह्मन्. Therefore he does not really know the true nature of ब्रह्मन्, because he has not realized ब्रह्मन् in himself.

The same message is reaffirmed in the second line in a generalized manner

अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातं अविजानतां

अविज्ञातं विजानतां - ब्रह्मन् is अविज्ञातं . ब्रह्मन् is not known

ब्रह्मन् is in fact unknown to

विजानतां those who have truly realized ब्रह्मन् in themselves, because for them, ब्रह्मन् is not an object of knowledge. ब्रह्मन् is the SELF in oneself, not knowable by one's sense organs and mind.

Thus, अविज्ञातं विजानतां is the same message as यस्य अमतं तस्य मतं given in the first line. Similarly,



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विज्ञातं अविज्ञानतां - ब्रह्मन् is considered as known only by those who really do not know ब्रह्मन् - those who have not realized ब्रह्मन् in themselves, those who identify the SELF with their body-mind-intellect complex.

Again, विज्ञातं अविज्ञानतां is the same message as मतं यस्य न वेद सः given in the first line.

The repetition of the same teachings in different words is simply to reconfirm the messages involved, in view of their apparent contradiction in tone.

If ब्रह्मन् is entirely unknown to the knower of ब्रह्मन् - अविज्ञातं विज्ञानतां, then what is the difference between the one who truly knows ब्रह्मन् as It is, and the one who is totally ignorant of ब्रह्मन् ? In other words, realization of ब्रह्मन् in oneself means what? This question is answered in the next verse.

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतं अमृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।
आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दते अमृतं ॥

2 - 4

This verse is the most profound verses in all Upanishad teachings. The topic here is self-realization - what is involved in it and what is its significance. There are clearly four distinct messages here. They are

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतं
अमृतत्वं हि विन्दते
आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं
विद्यया विन्दते अमृतं

The first message is about self-realization. What is realization of ब्रह्मन् - परमेश्वर - आत्मा -The SELF in oneself?

As already pointed out ब्रह्मन् - परमेश्वर - आत्मा The SELF is beyond the scope of words and beyond the reach of mind. That being so, how can one describe self-realization? Surely self-realization cannot be described in Absolute terms. For purposes of one's understanding, self-realization is self-recognition - clarity of vision of ब्रह्मन् in oneself. What that vision involves can be described and that is what the Upanishad does by saying



प्रतिबोधविदितं मतं

Here मतं means सम्यक् ब्रह्म दर्शनं - clear vision of ब्रह्मन् in oneself. Such clear vision of ब्रह्मन् in oneself involves

प्रतिबोधविदितं meaning बोधं बोधं प्रति विदितं - ones बुद्धि intuitively recognizing at all times That सत्-चित्-आनन्द-स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् whose reflection is perceived

- **by** every pulsation of action, knowledge and awareness
- **in** every pulsation of action, knowledge and awareness
- **through** every pulsation of action, knowledge and awareness

in all the three states of existence and experience, as indistinguishable from those three states of existence and experience themselves. The three states of existence and experience indicated above are the waking, dreaming and the deep sleep states. The waker is not there in the dreaming state and the deep sleep state, the dreamer is not there in the other two states and the sleeper is not there in the other two states, but the reflection of ब्रह्मन् is there in every cognition - in pulsation of action, knowledge and experience, as Pure awareness in all the above three states, indistinguishable from object awareness itself.

Intuitive recognition of That ब्रह्मन् in oneself - which means Self-realization, involves the ability of one's बुद्धि to spontaneously distinguish That Pure ब्रह्मन् from the reflection of that ब्रह्मन् in every cognition, just as one distinguishes any object from the reflection of that object in any medium.

ब्रह्मन् exists inseparable and indistinguishable from every cognition, every pulsation of thought, word and deed as आधारं आनन्दं - अखण्ड बोधं, as the very basis of all existence - Limitless, Undivided, Infinite, Pure consciousness in which all the three states of existence and experience resolve themselves into ONE पूर्ण आत्मा .

That पूर्ण आत्मा is the SELF - one-SELF - yourself, myself and every self. The intuitive recognition of that self by one's बुद्धि is SELF- Realization, *there being no other means of realizing ब्रह्मन् in oneself*, which means that you are not going to see that all-pervading, all-inclusive, ever-existent ब्रह्मन्, apart from or separate from anything you see or recognize at any time anywhere by any means of perception.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

That **ब्रह्मन्** exists inseparably and indistinguishably in everything you hear, you touch, you feel you see, you taste, you smell, any **कर्म** you do in thought word and deed, any experience you go through in all your waking, dreaming or deep sleep states of existence.

When your **बुद्धि** gains that intuitive ability for the distinct, unbroken and spontaneous recognition of that unchanging **ब्रह्मन्** simultaneously in every object you recognize and in every experience you go through, in all the three states of your existence, **ONLY THEN** there is SELF-Recognition - *there being no other means of realization of **ब्रह्मन्** in oneself.*

Just as you never miss seeing gold in all the different-looking gold ornaments, you never miss recognizing **ब्रह्मन्** in every pulsation of object awareness in all states of your existence and experience. That is the **प्रतिबोधविदितं मतं** - clear vision of **ब्रह्मन्** in oneself That is what is involved in self-recognition, self-realization.

अमृतत्वं हि विन्दते

हि - indeed it is only through such self realization

अमृतत्वं विन्दते - one understands the real meaning of, one gains the realization of **अमृतत्वं** - meaning **नित्यत्वं**, absolute Eternity of Existence - Immortal Existence. Ordinarily, one can think of only relative eternity of existence. It is only through self-realization that one gains the realization of Immortal Existence.

आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं - It is only by **आत्मा** - **ब्रह्मन्** in oneself that any one is inspired to greatness in action. All greatness in action arises only from **परमेश्वर**. It is only by the Grace of **परमेश्वर** already within oneself, that one gains **वीर्यं**, one gains all greatness, all glory, all power, all blessings in oneself.

This is a very profound Upanishad Declaration. Whatever greatness, whatever glory, power, ability, success, prosperity, happiness, accomplishments, etc. one may have, the source of all such greatness is only **ब्रह्मन्** - The all-pervading, all-inclusive **परमेश्वर** - the **आत्मा** already in oneself. This fact should never be forgotten at any time.

Even knowledgeable people, in times of some success, accomplishment, etc., sometimes forget the above eternal truth, and tend to attribute their greatness to their own ego power. Those who do so are surely in for disappointments in life.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

विद्यया विन्दते अमृतं - One gains अमृतं - Immortality only through ब्रह्मविद्या - Knowledge of ब्रह्मन्, Knowledge of the true nature of oneself as ब्रह्मन्. Such knowledge is gained through a life of सत्यं, धर्म, कर्म योग and ज्ञाननिष्ठा as unfolded by the Upanishads and the भगवत् गीता.

That is the four-fold message of the verse:

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतं अमृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।
आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दते अमृतं ॥

One must read this verse again and again in a contemplative mood to absorb its contents fully. The teacher now brings his teachings on ब्रह्मज्ञानं to a close by saying,

इह चेत् अवेदीत् अथ सत्यं अस्ति
न चेत् इह अवेदीत् महती विनष्टिः ।
भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः
प्रेत्य अस्मात् लोकात् अमृता भवन्ति

2 - 5

इह - Here, in this world, while one is still living in this physical body, where alone it is possible to gain ब्रह्मज्ञानं ,
चेत् अवेदीत् means चेत् ज्ञानवान् भवति, - if one becomes a ज्ञानवान्, if one takes the steps necessary to gain ब्रह्मज्ञानं
अथ सत्यं अस्ति - then there is सत्यं ज्ञानं विवेकं - wisdom in that person's life. Then there is purpose in life for that person.

Here in this world, while one is still living in this physical body, where alone it is possible to gain ब्रह्मज्ञानं, if one takes the steps necessary to gain ब्रह्मज्ञानं, then there is wisdom, there is purpose in life for that person. On the other hand

न चेत् इह अवेदीत् महती विनष्टिः

न चेत् इह अवेदीत् - If one does not take the necessary steps to gain ब्रह्मज्ञानं in this life, if one chooses to dissipate one's life without taking the steps necessary to gain ब्रह्मज्ञानं महती विनष्टिः - then there is a great loss for the person. It is a loss that one cannot make up for ages to come, which means that *that person has simply wasted his life.*



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

ब्रह्मन् is manifest in everything in oneself, and also in everything in this creation. If even then, one does not try to recognize That Limitless All-pervading ब्रह्मन्, one suffers a limitless loss, and a wasteful life. On the other hand, if one takes the necessary steps to recognize ब्रह्मन् through knowledge, then there is सत्यं ज्ञानं विवेकं - wisdom in everything a person is - in everything a person does, and life becomes meaningful and fulfilled for that person.

भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः - Recognizing ब्रह्मन् in all beings in this creation, धीराः - the wise people

प्रेत्य अस्मात् लोकात् अमृता भवन्ति - give up, transcend their trivial notions of "I" in their physical bodies and realize "I" The SELF in the Limitless, All-inclusive, Ever-Existent, All-pervading ब्रह्मन्, already in themselves as Immortal, which means that they gain मोक्ष - Total Fulfillment in life. Thus one gains Immortality only through आत्म ज्ञानं - Knowledge of the true nature of oneself as ब्रह्मन्.

Thus ends Chapter 2 of केनोपनिषत्, which completes the ज्ञानं part - The Pure Knowledge part of this Upanishad. We will see the उपासन part, Chapters 3 and 4 next time.