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ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

मुण्डक उपनिषत्

Chapter 2

Section 2

Volume 15

33. आविः सन्नहितं गुहाचारं नाम
महत् पदं अत्र एतत् समर्पितं ।
एजत् प्राणात् निमिषत् च यत् एतत् जानथ
सत् असत् वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानात् यत् वरिष्ठं प्रजानाम् ॥ 2 - 2 - 1

34. यत् अर्चिमत् यत् अणुभ्यः अणुः च
यस्मिन् लोकाः निहिताः लोकिनः च ।
तत् एतत् अक्षरं ब्रह्म सः प्राणः तद् वाङ् मनः
तत् एतत् सत्यं तत् अमृतं तत् वेद्व्यं सोम्य विद्धि ॥ 2 - 2 - 2

In this section, the Upanishad points out the means by which one can recognize, by one's own बुद्धि, the formless All pervading ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर, The आत्मा, The Self I, already in oneself as ONESELF Itself.

In the opening verse, the Upanishad points out the nature of That ब्रह्मन्, which is the target to be reached and recognized by one's own बुद्धि. The Upanishad says:

33. आविः सन्नहितं गुहाचारं नाम
महत् पदं अत्र एतत् समर्पितं ।
एजत् प्राणात् निमिषत् च यत् एतत् जानथ
सत् असत् वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानात् यत् वरिष्ठं प्रजानाम् ॥ 2 - 2 - 1

The Upanishad uses the word आविः to indicate That Formless ब्रह्मन्, unfolded in Taittiriya Upanishad as सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन्. The word आविः is indclinable. It literally means प्रकाशं - light, ज्योति स्वरूपं, that which is in the form of light, but it is not any particular object light. It is ज्योतिषां अपि तत् ज्योतिः (G.13.17). It is The Light of all lights. It is the light because of which all objects in this creation shine as they are. Such light is ज्योति स्वरूप शुद्ध चैतन्य आत्मा - Self-effulgent Pure Awareness, Pure



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ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

Consciousness, The Self I in oneself. Thus the word **आविः** does not refer to any object of one's thought. It refers to the light of Pure Awareness, Pure Consciousness, already existing in every conscious being, lighting up every object of one's thought.

One's mind, in its natural outward looking disposition always tends to objectify the meaning of every word. The mind must now learn to look inward of oneself, with **आवृत्त चक्षुः** - with the eyes turned inside, so that one can recognize That **आविः** - The Light of Pure Awareness. In order to help one's mind to turn inside, the Upanishad points out That **आविः** as:

**आविः सन्नहितं गुहाचार नाम
महत् पदं अत्र एतत् समर्पितं ।**

आविः सन्नहितं

As Sri Krishna says:

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदिसन्निविष्टः (15 -15)

That is **सन्नहितं आविः**:

हृदि बुद्धौ स्वरूपेण निहितं is **सन्नहितं आविः** - That which abides in the heart and **बुद्धिः**, in the entire **अन्तःकरण** of every person, behind all forms of one's emotional and intellectual recognition and appreciation is **सन्नहितं आविः** - **बुद्धौ स्थितं आविः**, **आविः** abiding in one's **बुद्धिः**.

That which abides as the very basis, as the very essence of all forms of thinking, including the thinker, That subject I, is **सन्नहितं आविः**. That means, all thoughts including the "I" thought abide only in That Pure Awareness, **आविः**.

Remaining as The self-effulgent light by its very nature, **आविः** lights up all forms of thought processes. Thus the word **आविः** retains its meaning as light, and at the same time, the word **सन्नहितं** negates **आविः**, being an object of one's thought.

From the expression **आविः सन्नहितं** one's **बुद्धिः** learns to appreciate **आविः** as That which is The Self I in oneself itself, in the form of **ज्योतिषां अपि तत् ज्योतिः** - the self-effulgent



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ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

light of all lights, as one's Pure Consciousness, Pure Awareness Itself, because of which alone one is aware of any object in existence. Further

आविः गुहाचारं नाम - When the Upanishad says आविः सन्नहितं, बुद्धौ स्थितं, आविः - Pure Consciousness abides in one's बुद्धि, it simply means that आविः is available for recognition only in one's बुद्धि, in particular; it does not mean आविः is located in one's बुद्धि, or आविः is confined to one's बुद्धि. In fact, आविः has no location, and everything one is aware of is located only in आविः - one's pure consciousness only. Communicating this knowledge, the Upanishad says:

आविः गुहाचारं नाम - That आविः, which is बुद्धौ स्थितं, which is available for recognition in one's बुद्धि, is गुहाचारं नाम प्रसिद्धं, is well-known, is easily recognized as गुहाचारं, That consciousness pervading all parts of one's body vehicle (उपाधि) गुहाचारं means गुहायां चरति आविः - That Pure Consciousness abiding in बुद्धि moves freely in all parts of the body vehicle. How?

आविः दर्शन श्रवण मनन विज्ञानादि उपाधि धर्मैः आविर्भूतं - manifesting Itself in all of one's sense perceptions like seeing, hearing, feeling, etc. and also in all of one's knowledge, thoughts and thought processes

गुहाचारं आविः - आविः गुहायां चरति - आविः moves, says the Upanishad. Does आविः - Pure Consciousness really move? No.

चरति इव - It appears as though It moves, because, wherever thoughts, feelings, etc. go, आविः - consciousness is already there.

Such movement of आविः is like the movement of waves in water. Waves can move only within water. They cannot separate themselves from within water. They cannot separate themselves from water and move. Just as waves are in water and inseparable from water, similarly all sense perceptions and all forms of thoughts and thought processes are in आविः only, in consciousness only, and inseparable from consciousness. Further,

महत् मपदं अत्र एतत् समर्पितं

महत् - That आविः is महत् - great. Why? Because, आविः - Pure Consciousness being Itself Formless, It is behind all forms. It is the subject for everything - hearing, seeing, thinking, etc. It is all pervasive in all of one's actions, physical or mental. Therefore It is great.

सर्व महत्यात् महत् - It is great because It pervades all existence.



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Generally speaking, the space is considered to be all pervasive. In fact it is not as all-pervasive as **आविः**, because space does not pervade consciousness - Awareness, whereas awareness pervades space. When space disappears, as in deep sleep, it does not pervade awareness. In sleep, space disappears, but one is still conscious. Therefore, that which is truly limitless and all-pervasive is only **आविः**, and that is why It is **महत्** - great.

पदं, ज्ञानेन पद्यते, ज्ञायते, इति पदं

आविः - That Pure Consciousness is to be known, can be recognized, only by knowledge. Recognition of **आविः** has to be achieved by every person as:

तत् ब्रह्म अहं अस्मि इति पद्यते ज्ञायते इति महत् पदं - What is unfolded in the Upanishads as **ब्रह्मन्** - That **ब्रह्मन्** I am. Such recognition by knowledge, is indeed achieving recognition of **आविः**, recognition of **ब्रह्मन्**, The Self I Itself in oneself. Such recognition of The Self I Itself in oneself is **महत् पदं** - reaching the highest destination for every person, reaching which destination there is no return to **संसार** - the world of transient existence **तत् धाम परमं मम**, as Sri Krishna says (15 - 6)

अत्र एतत् समर्पितं

अत्र, अस्मिन् **आविः** एव, अस्मिन् **ब्रह्मणि** एव, एतत् एतत् सर्वम्, समर्पितं प्रवेशितं - In that Pure Awareness alone, in that **ब्रह्मन्** alone, all that exist in this creation, including the creation itself, have entered into and resolved themselves without distinction. That means, this entire creation, including all **लोक**s, all **जीव**s, all sense organs, sense objects, experiences, **कर्म**s, **कर्मफल**s, etc., all of them exist, without distinction, losing their individual identities in that ONE awareness only, in That **ब्रह्मन्** only.

Let us note here the Upanishad words:

आविः सन्नहितं बुद्धौ स्थितं - Pure Awareness is in **बुद्धि**

अत्र अस्मिन् **आविः** एव सर्वम् समर्पितं - That **बुद्धि** and all that is recognized by **बुद्धि**, all of them are in That Pure Awareness only.

Therefore, just as space is in pot, and pot is in space, so also Awareness is in **बुद्धि** and **बुद्धि** is in Awareness. **बुद्धि** is in Awareness simply means, **अत्र सर्वम् समर्पितं** -



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everything is only in Awareness. The word सर्वम् - everything is further explained in the next line.

यत् एजत् प्राणात् निमिषत् च

यत् एजत् - any being which moves

यत् एजत् यत् प्राणात् - any being that breathes

यत् निमिषत् - any being that winks, which means any being which has sense organs like eyes, etc. Therefore

यत् एजत् प्राणात् निमिषत् च means all beings एतत् सर्वम्

अत्र, अस्मिन् आविः एव, अस्मिन् ब्रह्मणि एव, समर्पितं - all conscious beings are only in Pure Awareness, in परब्रह्मन् only. Again, the Upanishad says

यत् आस्पदं सर्वम्, एतत् ब्रह्म, जानथ

यत् एतत् जानथ - Try to know, try to recognize, try to reach

एतत् ब्रह्म - That ब्रह्मन्

एतत् आविः - That Pure Consciousness

यत् आस्पदं सर्वम् - on which everything depends

आस्पदं is the base on which one depends. Therefore any object of one's awareness, any कार्य, any विषय, any effect, any object one sees, is सास्पदं, is dependent on something and That something is आस्पदं.

One can look at any object in existence, and recognize that it depends on some other object in existence. For example, pot depends on clay, which makes clay the basis for the very existence of the pot, and in essence pot is nothing but clay, etc. Similarly, any existent object depends on some other object in existence.

If there is something on which depend all objects in existence, but Itself is totally independent of any object, then That something is the basis for all objects in existence.

That totally independent basis for all objects in existence is indeed that ज्योति स्वरूप शुद्ध चैतन्य आत्मा, The अक्षर ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर indicated here as आविः, The Self-effulgent light of Pure Consciousness, Pure Awareness, The आत्मा, The Self I, already in every self there is.



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एतत् आविः एव, एतत् आत्मा एव, एतत् ब्रह्म एव, जानथ - It is That आविः, That आत्मा, That ब्रह्मन्, that needs to be recognized and reached by oneself, by one's own बुद्धि vehicle, says the Upanishad. Further

सत् असत् चरेण्यं परं विज्ञानात् यत् चरिष्ठं प्रजानाम्

सत् असत् - Here सत् refers to anything that has a form and असत् refers to anything that has no form. The Upanishad says:

सत् असत् तत् आविः एव, आत्मा एव, ब्रह्म एव, इति जानथ - Whatever is in this creation, whether it has a form (such as fire, water, earth, etc.) or it has no form (such as space, air, etc.), all of them arise from That ONE अक्षर ब्रह्मन् only. Since the cause is always in the effect, learn to appreciate and recognize all that is सत् or असत् - Formful or formless, in this creation are only different manifestations of that one आविः, The आत्मा, The ब्रह्मन्, indicated earlier. That means, anything in this creation, whether it is सत् or असत्, is non-separate and inseparable from आविः - The Self effulgent Pure Awareness, Self I, already in every self as one's स्वरूप - real nature.

चरेण्यं तदेव चरणीयं, प्रार्थनीयं, इति जानथ - That आविः alone, That आत्मा alone, That ब्रह्मन् alone, is worthy of adoration, prayer, and achievement in terms of knowledge, because that alone has independent and eternal existence.

Therefore, जानथ - learn to understand, appreciate, that gaining totality of knowledge, gaining total freedom, is only to recognize and reach That आविः, That आत्मा, That ब्रह्मन्, already in the heart and बुद्धि of every person (आविः सन्निहितं). Further,

प्रजानां विज्ञानात्, यत् परं यत् चरिष्ठं ज्ञानं,

तत् अविज्ञानं, ब्रह्मज्ञानं, आत्मज्ञानं इति जानथ

प्रजानां विज्ञानं is लौकिक विज्ञानं. All areas of objective knowledge sought after and gained by people, for purposes of various kinds of worldly activities, that is लौकिक विज्ञानं. The Upanishad says:

इति जानथ - Please learn to understand, appreciate, realize and recognize clearly this extraordinary fact, namely:



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ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

प्रजानां विज्ञानात् यत् परं ज्ञानं - That knowledge which is परं, far higher, far superior, to gaining only लौकिक विज्ञानं - worldly knowledge, and also

यत् वरिष्ठं ज्ञानं चरतमं (superlative) ज्ञानं - That knowledge which is most valuable, the most precious, the most sacred and the most worshipful knowledge is:

तत् अविज्ञानं - That knowledge about अविः - The ज्योति स्वरूप शुद्ध चैतन्य आत्मा, The Self-effulgent Pure Awareness, Pure Consciousness, That अक्षर ब्रह्मन्, That आत्मा, The Self I already in every person, indicated in the teachings thus far.

इति जानथ - That is the knowledge to be gained, recognized and reached by oneself.

Again, indicating That अविः, That ब्रह्मन्, That आत्मा, the target to be recognized by knowledge, and reached by one's own बुद्धि, the Upanishad continues:

34. यत् अर्चिमत् यत् अणुभ्यः अणुः च

यस्मिन् लोकाः निहिताः लोकिनः च ।

तत् एतत् अक्षरं ब्रह्म सः प्राणः तद् वाङ् मनः

तत् एतत् सत्यं तत् अमृतं तत् वेद्व्यं सोम्य विद्धि ॥ 2 - 2 - 2

यत् अर्चिमत् - That which is The अविः The all-pervasive bright self-luminous light of pure Consciousness, the light of Pure Awareness, The ज्योतिषां अपि तत्, The Light ज्योति of all lights, shining as the ज्योति स्वरूप आत्मा, the Self I in every person, and indeed in every self there is

यत् अणुभ्यः अणुः च - That which is smaller than the smallest one can think of, That which is more subtle than the most subtle one can think of, and (महतो महीयान्) च also bigger than the biggest one can think of (कठ - 2 - 20)

यस्मिन् (सर्वे) लोकाः निहिताः - That in which all the worlds of beings in this creation, such as Earth, Heaven, etc. are held fixed in their own places, together with

लोकिनः च - all the dwellers in those worlds, because all of them depend on That अविः only for their very existence

तत् एतत् अक्षरं ब्रह्म - That is what अक्षर ब्रह्मन् - Immortal ब्रह्मन् is, indicated earlier (verse 1 - 1 - 6) as अद्रेश्यं, अग्राह्यं, अगोत्रं, अवर्णम्, अचक्षुः श्रोत्रं, अपाणिपादं, नित्यं, विभुः, सर्वगतं, सुसूक्ष्मं, अव्ययं and भूतयोनिम्. Further,



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सः प्राणः - That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् is सर्वायुष प्राणः - Universal Life for all beings. Being so, It is प्राणरूप प्रत्यक्ष ब्रह्मन् only.

तत् तत् उ वाक् - ability to communicate knowledge through spoken words, such as organ of speech itself, is direct manifestation of That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् only. Again

तत् उ मनः - the ज्ञानस्वरूप of one's mind, the knowledge-nature of one's mind, is direct manifestation of That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् only

तत् एतत् सत्यं - It is That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् that is सत्यं - Absolute Reality of all existence, never subject to change

तत् अमृतं - It is That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् that is Immortal, Ever existent

तत् वेद्व्यं - It is That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् that one should learn to recognize and reach by one's own बुद्धि. It is the ultimate destination to reach by knowledge. Therefore,

सौम्य - O! Saunaka

विद्धि - Please understand all that has been pointed out thus far about That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् and try to reach That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् by your own बुद्धि vehicle, says the Upanishad. How to do that, we will see next time.