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4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

मुण्डक उपनिषत्

Chapter 3

Section 2

Volume 26

61. यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रे
अस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाय ।
तथा विद्वान् नामरूपात् विमुक्तः
परात्परं पुरुषं उपैति दिव्यम् ॥ 3 - 2 - 8

62. स यो ह वै तत् परमं ब्रह्म वेद
ब्रह्मैव भवति न अस्य अब्रह्मवित् कुले भवति
तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं
गुहाग्रन्थिभ्यः विमुक्तः अमृतो भवति ॥ 3 - 2 - 9

63. तत् एतत् ऋचा अभ्युक्तं ।
क्रियावन्तः श्रोत्रियाः ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः
स्वयं जुह्वत एकर्षिम् श्रद्धयन्तः ॥
तेषां एव एतां ब्रह्मविद्यां वदेत
शिरोव्रतं विधिवत् यस्तु चीर्णम् ॥ 3 - 2 - 10

64. तत् एतत् सत्यं ऋषिः अङ्गिराः
पुरोवाच न एतत् अचीर्णव्रतः अधीते ।
नमः परमऋषिभ्यो नमः परम ऋषिभ्यः ॥ 3 - 2 - 11

इति तृतीय मुण्डके द्वितीय खण्डः ॥
इति मुण्डक उपनिषत् समाप्तं

As we saw last time

यतयः संन्यासिनः - The Self-recognized संन्यासी ज्ञानीs, The ज्ञानीs,

परान्तकाले - at the time of their death

सर्वे परिमुच्यन्ति - they are released from all individualities of forms and names, and



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परे अव्यये अक्षर ब्रह्मणि एकीभवन्ति - they all become ONE with the all-pervading, all-inclusive, ever-existent अक्षर ब्रह्मन् - The परमेश्वर Itself. Illustrating the above statement, the Upanishad says:

61. यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रे
अस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाय ।
तथा विद्वान् नामरूपात् विमुक्तः
परात्परं पुरुषं उपैति दिव्यम् ॥

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यथा - Just as

स्यन्दमानाः नद्यः - rivers with flowing waters

नामरूपे विहाय - giving up their names and forms

समुद्रे अस्तं गच्छन्ति - go into the ocean and disappear, becoming ONE with the ocean itself

तथा - similarly

विद्वान् - the Self-recognized wise person, the ज्ञानी

नामरूपात् विमुक्तः - having been released, having become free from every name and form

उपैति - reaches and enters into

परात्परं पुरुषं दिव्यम् - The Supreme Self-effulgent पुरुषोत्तम, The परमेश्वर, becoming ONE with That परमेश्वर Itself.

Just as rivers with flowing waters, giving up their names and forms, enter into the ocean and disappear, becoming ONE with the ocean itself, similarly, the विद्वान्, the ज्ञानी *jñānī*, at the time of death, having been released from every name and form, enters into the Supreme Self-effulgent पुरुषोत्तम, The परमेश्वर, becoming ONE with That परमेश्वर Itself.

Summing up the content of the above message, the Upanishad says:

62. स यो ह वै तत् परमं ब्रह्म वेद



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ब्रह्मैव भवति न अस्य अब्रह्मचित् कुले भवति

तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं

गुहाग्रन्थिभ्यः विमुक्तः अमृतो भवति ॥

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सः यः ह वै तत् परमं ब्रह्म वेद, ब्रह्मैवाहं अस्मि

अयं आत्मा ब्रह्म इति वेद - Indeed, any person, whoever that is, who knows, who recognizes that "I am indeed ब्रह्मन्, The Self I in myself is ब्रह्मन् Itself" the one who recognizes That ब्रह्मन् clearly, directly and immediately

स ब्रह्मैव भवति - That person becomes ब्रह्मन् Itself, परमेश्वर Itself - ब्रह्मचित् आप्नोति परं

अस्य कुले - In the family of the knower of ब्रह्मन्

अब्रह्मचित् न भवति - anyone who says "I don't know ब्रह्मन् ", or anyone who denies the existence of ब्रह्मन् is never born

सः तरति शोकं - The Knower of ब्रह्मन् transcends, overcomes all grief, sorrow and distress

सः तरति पाप्मानं - The knower of ब्रह्मन् transcends, overcomes all sinful thoughts, words and deeds

सः गुहाग्रन्थिभ्यः हृदयग्रन्थिभ्यः विमुक्तः - The knower of ब्रह्मन् is freed from all knots of the heart, all अविद्या काम कर्म बन्धनs , all bondages rooted in Self-ignorance.

सः अमृतः भवति - The knower of ब्रह्मन्, being ONE with ब्रह्मन् Itself, gains Immortality, in terms of knowledge

That is the glory of gaining ब्रह्मज्ञानं, आत्म ज्ञानं - Self-knowledge.

63. तत् एतत् ऋचा अभ्युक्तं ।

क्रियावन्तः श्रोत्रियाः ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः

स्वयं जुह्वत एकर्षिम् श्रद्धयन्तः ॥

तेषां एव एतां ब्रह्मविद्यां वदेत

शिरोव्रतं विधिवत् यस्तु चीर्णम् ॥

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तत् एतत् ऋचा अभ्युक्तं

तत् - On the matter of teaching this Upanishad knowledge to others

एतत् ऋचा अभ्युक्तं - This is what the Veda Mantra (ऋचा) says.

So saying, the Upanishad quotes the following Veda Mantra

क्रियावन्तः - Those who are active in worldly life, following the basic teachings of the Vedas, namely सत्यं वद, धर्मम् चर, स्वाध्यायात् मा प्रमदः, etc. - Be truthful in thought, word and deed at all times, maintain proper conduct, ethical behavior and good moral character in daily life, and never neglect scripture readings every day, etc. Those who are active in daily life following the above basic Vedic teachings are क्रियावन्तः

श्रोत्रियाः - Those who are really interested in spiritual upliftment through Upanishad teachings

ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः - Those who are interested in gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं through ईश्वर उपासन - worship of परमेश्वर seeking ज्ञान प्रसादं

स्वयं जुहवत एकर्षिम् श्रद्धयन्तः शिरोव्रतं विधिवत् यस्तु चीर्णम् (कृतं) - एकर्षिम् and शिरोव्रतं *śirovratam* are certain Vedic rituals described in Rig Veda and Atharva Veda respectively. We need not have to know the details of these Vedic rituals, except to understand that the purpose of any and every Vedic ritual is only for अन्तः करण शुद्धि - gaining purity of mind and बुद्धि, and for cultivating self-discipline. The Upanishad refers here to those who do these Vedic rituals properly (विधिवत्) with श्रद्धा and devotion.

तेषां एव - Only to those people, namely क्रियावन्तः, श्रोत्रियाः, ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः and those who do Vedic rituals of any kind properly with श्रद्धा and devotion, only to those people

एतां ब्रह्मविद्यां वदेत् - this ब्रह्मविद्या knowledge should be communicated. In other words, do not talk about ब्रह्मविद्या knowledge indiscriminately to everybody. This ब्रह्मविद्या knowledge should be communicated only to those who are genuinely interested in this knowledge, and who are likely to be benefited by this knowledge, by virtue of their mental disposition and spiritual maturity, says the Upanishad.



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Is that what we are doing here? Yes, certainly, most certainly. Let us understand this clearly. ब्रह्मविद्या knowledge and परमेश्वर are identical. A temple for परमेश्वर is a temple for ब्रह्मविद्या knowledge. Any one who visits any Hindu Temple anywhere, at any time, with an attitude of worship, is interested in ब्रह्मविद्या knowledge, and is most likely to be benefited by this knowledge, whether the person himself or herself knows that or not, at the time of one's visit. ब्रह्मविद्या knowledge Itself is always open to every interested person. That explains what we are doing here.

64. तत् एतत् सत्यं ऋषिः अङ्गिराः

पुरोवाच न एतत् अर्चीर्णव्रतः अधीते ।

नमः परमऋषिभ्यो नमः परम ऋषिभ्यः ॥

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तत् एतत् सत्यं, एतत् अक्षरं पुरुषं एव, सत्यं - The अक्षर पुरुष, The पुरुषोत्तम about whom this Upanishad teaching is concerned, That अक्षर पुरुष alone is सत्यं, The Absolute Truth, never subject to change

ऋषिः अङ्गिराः पुरा उवाच - Rishi Angiras communicated this knowledge to his disciples in ancient times

अर्चीर्णव्रतः न एतत् अधीते - The one who does not have any self-discipline, especially the one who does not have संन्यास बुद्धि, सर्व कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि - an attitude of renunciation for the fruits of all actions, such a person may not read this Upanishad, which means such a person cannot derive the full benefit of reading this Upanishad.

Every person has some degree of self-discipline with respect to something or other, and also every person now and then sacrifices something for gaining something better in one's estimation. But neither that self-discipline, nor that attitude of renunciation is all-inclusive or in full measure. While this is not a limitation for reading this Upanishad, this is indeed a limitation for deriving the full benefit of this Upanishad. That is what is said here. In conclusion

परमऋषिभ्यो नमः - नमस्कार to all the great enlightened Rishis. Again

परमऋषिभ्यो नमः - नमस्कार to all the great enlightened Rishis

This concludes this extraordinary Upanishad called मुण्डक. We return to भगवत् गीता next time, and start with Chapter 16.



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

Today is a great and auspicious day in our scripture reading program at this temple. On this day, we have, by now, listened to detailed public presentations of five great Upanishads: ईश, केन, कठ, तैत्तिरीय and मुण्डक उपनिषत्s Upanishads, all in their entirety. All this is extraordinary knowledge, ever-enlightening, inspiring and uplifting.

Being in the company of these Upanishads, we have been in the company of our great Immortal Forefathers; and while being so, we have learnt more about our own selves and our roots, our ultimate destination, and the indescribable joy of being the best and the highest in our own selves, through self-discovery.

Bringing this message of the भगवत् गीता and The Upanishads together, to the temple community is the true purpose of any Hindu Temple.

Being true to the message of the भगवत् गीता and the Upanishads, in our daily life, is our own true strength, and the true joy of life Itself.

With this recognition, let us return to continue our readings from the भगवत् गीता next time.