



तैत्तिरीय उपनिषत्

Chapter 2

ब्रह्मानन्द वल्ली

Lesson 1 (Continued)

Volume 15

The Upanishad opens with an assuring statement of fact, namely

ब्रह्मवित् आप्नोति परम् - The knower of ब्रह्मन् does reach ब्रह्मन्. In the last two sessions, we saw briefly how the लक्षण वाक्य "सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म" indicates the nature of That ब्रह्मन्, and how and when one becomes a ब्रह्मवित् - a knower of That ब्रह्मन्. Now, referring to that ब्रह्मवित् - the knower of That ब्रह्मन्, the Veda mantra continues

यो वेद निहितं गुहायां परमे व्योमन्

यो वेद - यः वेद - The one who knows That ब्रह्मन्. Now, how and where can one recognize that ब्रह्मन्? निहितं गुहायां परमे व्योमन् - That ब्रह्मन् is already in one's own self. As we may recall the words of कठोपनिषत्,

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो मध्य आत्मनि तिष्ठति ।

ईशानं भूतभव्यस्य न ततो विजुगुप्सते ॥ (K 4 - 12)

एतत् वै तत्

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो ज्योतिः इव अधूमकः ।

ईशानो भूतभव्यस्य स एव अद्य स उ इवः ॥ (K 4 - 13)

एतत् वै तत्

That तत् is तत् ब्रह्म - That ब्रह्मन् indicated by the pointer words सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म. That ब्रह्मन् already exists in the self of every person, manifesting itself in मध्य आत्मनि - in the central space of one's physical body, namely, the हृदय आकाश - the heart space of every person, where That ब्रह्मन् manifests as

अङ्गुष्ठ मात्रः हृत् पुण्डरीकम् - as thumb size full bloom lotus flower, revealing The आत्मा - the Self "I" as आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् - as all-inclusive Supreme Joy. Also as



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ज्योतिः इव अधूमकः - as flame without smoke, revealing The आत्मा - Self "I" as ज्ञान स्वरूप, चित् स्वरूप, शुद्ध चैतन्य स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् - as all-knowledge, as all consciousness, as pure consciousness. Also as

स एव अद्य स उ श्वः - as One existing right now, and will continue to exist tomorrow as well, thus revealing आत्मा - The Self "I" as सत्य स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् - as ever-existent ब्रह्मन्. And also as

भूतभव्यस्य ईशानः - as the Lord of the entire creation, past present and the future, thus revealing आत्मा - The Self "I" as अनन्त स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् - as the all-inclusive Immortal Self already in oneself as oneself itself.

All such revelations of that ब्रह्मन्, already manifesting itself in one's heart space, are clearly and fully recognizable as ब्रह्मज्ञानं - knowledge of ब्रह्मन्, in one's विवेक बुद्धि. For the time being, due to some obstructions, which have somehow developed in one's अन्तःकरण - mind and बुद्धि, That ब्रह्मन् appears hidden in the darkness of one's own बुद्धि गुह - the cave of one's own बुद्धि.

निहितं गुहायां - hidden in the darkness of the cave of one's own बुद्धि. गुह means a cave filled with darkness. Darkness is not an object. It is simply absence of light. Whatever is in a place filled with darkness is hidden from one's vision, because one's eyes do not function properly in darkness.

Even though the sun is always shining, if a cave is filled with darkness, it simply means that something is obstructing the sunlight from entering into the cave. When the obstruction is removed, darkness immediately disappears, and now one can see everything that is already there. So is the nature of one's बुद्धि - vision - one's faculty of recognition of knowledge.

For the time being, most of one's बुद्धि is a गुह - a cave filled with darkness. Even though ब्रह्मज्ञानं is already in one's बुद्धि, it is hidden to one's बुद्धि-eyes, because of some obstructions to ब्रह्मज्ञानं. What those obstructions are, we will see later. Once all the obstructions are removed through a way of life governed by सत्यं वद, धर्मम् चर, स्वाध्यायात् मा प्रमदः, कर्म योग, ध्यान योग, ज्ञान योग and भक्ति योग, the darkness disappears, one's entire बुद्धि is enlightened, and recognition of ब्रह्मन् takes place,



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spontaneously in one's बुद्धि by the very grace of That ब्रह्मन्, by the very grace of परमेश्वर already in oneself.

ब्रह्मज्ञानं - knowledge of ब्रह्मन् can take place only in one's विवेक बुद्धि. The विवेक here is नित्य-अनित्य विवेक - ability to discriminate between what is eternal and what is transient, what is सत्यं and what is मिथ्या. The ब्रह्मज्ञानं arising from that kind of विवेक बुद्धि is बुद्धि ग्राह्यं - it can be grasped, it can be recognized and appreciated, only in one's बुद्धि and that ब्रह्मज्ञानं is अति इन्द्रियम् - it is beyond the reach of one's sense organs, including the mind, because, as the केनोपनिषत् says, " The nature of ब्रह्मन् is यन् मनसा न मनुते, येन आहुः मनो मतं । - That which is not known by the mind, but that because of which the mind is capable of knowing."

Reaching that ब्रह्मन् is बुद्धि योग, which is the overriding पुरुषार्थ - the ultimate goal of life for every human being. That is why Sri Krishna advises Arjuna even from the very beginning (G2-49)

बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ।

बुद्धौ शरणं अन्विच्छ - Surrender to विवेक बुद्धि in yourself. That is बुद्धि योग, and, such surrender to विवेक बुद्धि is पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति - total surrender to परमेश्वर, already in yourself, already manifested in your हृदय आकाश - heart space, and that is भक्ति योग. When such पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति - total surrender to परमेश्वर takes place, one is naturally blessed by the very grace of That परमेश्वर, and the बुद्धि naturally recognizes That परमेश्वर already in one's own heart space - परमे व्योमन्

व्योम is आकाश - space. परमे व्योमन् means in the supreme space, in the holiest space in one's body architecture, and that is the heart space. In one's body vehicle, the temple for परमेश्वर is in one's heart space, and, to whatever extent one can recognize That परमेश्वर, that recognition takes place in one's बुद्धि. That is why, in all the Upanishads, the words बुद्धि and हृदय are identical in meaning and interchangeable in usage.

When one worships परमेश्वर anywhere in any form, one is really worshipping the परमेश्वर in one's heart space, and when one surrenders to परमेश्वर, it is only to That परमेश्वर in one's heart space that one surrenders, because, as Sri Krishna says (G 18-61/62)



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ईश्वर : सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽजुन तिष्ठति - परमेश्वर is in the heart space of all beings

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत - Reverentially seek पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति -
surrender to that परमेश्वर through all your faculties - thought , word and deed.

तत् प्रसादात् परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् - By the very grace of that
परमेश्वर, you will gain the supreme peace - परां शान्तिं, whose very nature is ब्रह्म
ज्ञानं, शाश्वतं स्थानं, the eternal immortal वैष्णवं परमं पदं - the abode of the all-
pervading परमेश्वर. Therefore,

यो वेद निहितं गुहायां परमे व्योमन् means the one who knows That ब्रह्मन् hidden in
one's बुद्धि.गुह, हृदय आकाश, the one who reaches That ब्रह्मन् both intellectually and
emotionally together, through a way of life governed totally by सत्यं वद, धर्मम् चर,
स्वाध्यायात् मा प्रमदः, कर्म योग, ध्यान योग, ज्ञान योग and भक्ति योग, by the blessings
of the very grace of That ब्रह्मन्, such a person

सोऽश्नुते सर्वान् कामान् सह – सः अश्नुते - that person gains, experiences, enjoys
सर्वान् कामान् - all desires, the fulfillment of all desires
सह - simultaneously, at the same time

An ordinary person can enjoy only one kind of pleasure at a given time. The
enlightened person gains and enjoys all the pleasures there are, all at the same time.
There is nothing more left for him to seek. How does that happen? Through ज्ञान योग
and भक्ति योग, and by the very grace of That ब्रह्मन्, when जीव ब्रह्म ऐक्यम् - the
intellectual and emotional merger of जीव and ब्रह्मन् takes place, the जीव - the person,
becomes the very embodiment of That ब्रह्मन्, which means the person is now ब्रह्मन्
Itself in human form. As ब्रह्मन्, the person simultaneously enjoys सर्वान् कामान् - all
desires without exception, because ब्रह्मन् is everything, and all the desires are
inseparable from ब्रह्मन् Itself, just as all the rays of the sun are inseparable from the
sun itself.

Such simultaneous enjoyment of all desires, arising from reaching ब्रह्मन् is indeed
ब्रह्मानन्दं - a joy and happiness which is beyond description. More about ब्रह्मानन्दं we



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will see later. Now, when the जीव - the enlightened person is enjoying such ब्रह्मानन्दं what is ब्रह्मन् doing?

ब्रह्मणा विपश्चिता - while such enjoyment is being witnessed by ब्रह्मन्, ब्रह्मन् remains as a witness to the ब्रह्मानन्दं of the जीव. Absolute Consciousness is the witness to all that a person is conscious of. The actionless ब्रह्मन् is the witness to the glories of the same ब्रह्मन् appearing as they do in infinite names, forms and actions.

इति - so says the Veda mantra quoted above.

Such is the nature of that सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म, and such is also the content of the opening statement " ब्रह्मवित् आपनोति परम् " - the person who knows That ब्रह्मन् as It is, as सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म - that person recognizes That ब्रह्मन्, reaches That ब्रह्मन्, becomes That ब्रह्मन् Itself.

The rest of this Upanishad is only an elaboration of what has already been said. In particular, the elaboration is with respect to the contents of the two words अनन्तं as ब्रह्म लक्षणं - limitless as the glory of That ब्रह्मन् and ब्रह्मवित् - the knower of That ब्रह्मन्.

As we saw earlier, the word अनन्तं indicates the स्वरूप of ब्रह्मन् - the beginningless, infinite, all-inclusive nature of ब्रह्मन्. It is practically impossible to comprehend the depth of this concept. Therefore, the Upanishad helps us to gain a hold on अनन्तं as ब्रह्म लक्षणं - limitlessness as a pointer to the glory of ब्रह्मन्

ब्रह्मवित् is one who recognizes That ब्रह्मन् by reaching That ब्रह्मन्. The Upanishad tells us what such recognition or reaching involves. Just as, for example, even though one may already be in the temple premises, still one has to cross a few doors to reach the innermost sanctum of the temple, similarly, even though the physical body of a human being is already a क्षेत्रं - a holy place, because ब्रह्मन् is already there as the Innermost Consciousness of the person, still, one's बुद्धि - one's faculty of discrimination has to cross a few apparent barriers before one recognizes That ब्रह्मन्, before one reaches That ब्रह्मन् in the subtlety of one's own heart space. These apparent barriers are in the forms of अन्नमय, प्राणमय, मनोमय, विज्ञानमय and आनन्दमय, one being more subtle than the former. The Upanishad tells us about the nature of these apparent barriers, so



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that, when one understands their nature, they are no longer barriers, they are just five doors to be crossed before one recognizes ब्रह्मन्, reaches ब्रह्मन् already in oneself.

One's चित्तवृत्ति बुद्धि crossing these five doors and recognizing ब्रह्मन्, reaching ब्रह्मन् in one's own heart space is Self-realization. Thus, the rest of this Upanishad brings enlightenment on the process and the ultimate event of Self-realization.

With this introduction, let us continue with the text.

तस्मात् वा एतस्मात् आत्मनः आकाशः संभूतः

तस्मात् means तस्मात् ब्रह्मणः. From That ब्रह्मन्, which ब्रह्मन् ? From That ब्रह्मन् indicated in the opening word ब्रह्मवित् - the knower of ब्रह्मन्, from That ब्रह्मन्

वा एतस्मात् (ब्रह्मणः) आत्मनः - namely, from The ब्रह्मन् that has just been pointed out by the Veda mantra सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म, from That ब्रह्मन्, which is identical with आत्मा - the Self "I". The identity between ब्रह्मन् and आत्मा has already been established by saying that ब्रह्मन् is ज्ञान स्वरूपं - Pure Consciousness. The source of my consciousness is only myself, The आत्मा - The Self, the content of the word "I".

Thus ब्रह्मन् is सर्वस्य आत्मा - ब्रह्मन् is truly the "I" of every conscious being, every person indeed. As we have already seen, all the Veda *maha vakyas* point out the identity of ब्रह्मन् and आत्मा. As we may recall,

प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म, तत् त्वं असि, अयं आत्मा ब्रह्म, ब्रह्मैवाहं अस्मि - all these words reveal the identity of ब्रह्मन् and आत्मा. From That आत्मा - the Self "I"

आकाशः संभूतः - आकाशः - the space, as the primordial matter, is born naturally, which means, by the very nature of That ब्रह्मन्

Thus the Upanishad switches from ब्रह्मन् to आत्मा, and also introduces the subject of जगत् - the creation, आकाश being part of जगत् - the creation. The reason for introducing आत्मा - The Self, is to establish the connection between जीव - the individual person and ब्रह्मन् - The Supreme Being. The reason for introducing जगत् - the creation, is again to establish the connection between the जीव - the individual and जगत् - the creation on the one hand and thereby the connection between जीव and



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ब्रह्मन् because it is जीव ब्रह्म एक्यम् that makes a person a ब्रह्मवित् - the knower of ब्रह्मन्.

आत्मनः आकाशः संभूतः - From That ब्रह्मन् - from That SELF of all beings, from That original Self, the original material namely आकाश - the space, संभूतः is born naturally, through a natural process. What is that natural process is not mentioned here, because, in this brief overview, that is not the main focus of attention. Briefly, that natural process is the following:

ब्रह्माश्रया, सत्त्व रजस् तमोगुणात्मिका, माया अस्ति - Associated with ब्रह्मन् there is माया in the form of three गुण s - attributes, three qualities, namely सत्त्व - the ability to gain knowledge, रजस् - the ability to act, and तमस् - the ability to remain inert. That is the natural माया power ever associated with ब्रह्मन्.

As pointed out already, अनन्त - limitlessness is the very nature of ब्रह्मन्. That limitlessness of ब्रह्मन् includes the infinite माया power of ब्रह्मन्. We must understand that ब्रह्मन् is not doing any कर्म either to create, maintain or to exercise that माया power. Just as fragrance is naturally associated with flower, just as light is naturally associated with sun, the माया power is naturally associated with ब्रह्मन् at all times. ब्रह्माश्रया माया, माया depends on ब्रह्मन्, and thus माया always remains under the total control of ब्रह्मन्.

From that माया, and by that माया, the पञ्चमहाभूत s - the five primordial elements namely आकाश, वायु, अग्नि, आप and पृथिवी - the space, the air, the fire the water and the earth were born, in the above order, one from the previous one, each in a subtle invisible form, and also each with its own स्वगुण - characteristic attribute. The स्वगुण of आकाश - space is शब्द - sound, that of air is स्पर्श - touch, that of fire is रूप - form, that of water is रस - taste, and that of earth is गन्ध - smell. After these पञ्चमहाभूत s were born, the सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस् qualities of माया naturally interacted with the स्वगुण of the primordial elements, still in their subtle forms. This natural interaction is called पञ्चीकरण - the process of grossification. As a result of this पञ्चीकरण, the subtle invisible पञ्चमहाभूत s precipitated into grossified forms of space, air, fire, water and earth, just as we see them in this creation. In their grossified states, their गुण s also got mixed up, even though each still retains its original स्वगुण predominantly.



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Therefore, the आकाश - the space as we see it today, is not the original आकाश that descended directly from the माया of ब्रह्मन्. What we see is the result of the natural process of grossification. It is this natural process that the Upanishad indicates here by the word संभूतः. The Upanishad here refers only to the grossified states of matter. Therefore

आत्मनः आकाशः संभूतः - From the limitless ब्रह्मन् - by its limitless माया power, the limitless आकाशः - the space is born with शब्द - the sound, as its स्वगुण - characteristic attribute. With the above knowledge, the moment I see आकाशः, I immediately recognize the आकाश रूप ब्रह्मन् - ब्रह्मन् in the form of आकाशः, because the cause is already in the effect. Further, the Upanishad continues:

आकाशात् वायु (संभूतः) - From that आकाश रूप ब्रह्मन्, वायु - the air is naturally born. For that वायु, the inherited गुण is शब्द, and its स्वगुण is स्पर्श. Therefore, the गुण of air is both sound and touch.

वायोः अग्निः (संभूतः) - From that आकाश-वायु रूप ब्रह्मन्, अग्निः - the fire is naturally born. Therefore the गुण s of अग्निः includes sound, touch and form (शब्द, स्पर्श and रूप).

अग्नेः आपः (संभूतः) - From that आकाश-वायु-अग्नि रूप ब्रह्मन्, आपः the water is naturally born with sound, touch, form and taste as its गुण s - natural attributes.

अद्भ्यः पृथिवी संभूतः - From that आकाश-वायु-अग्नि-आप रूप ब्रह्मन्, the पृथिवी - the earth is naturally born with sound, touch, form, taste and smell (शब्द, स्पर्श रूप रस गन्ध) as its गुण s - natural attributes.

Thus the पञ्चमहाभूत s - the five great primordial elements are born with their natural qualities interacting with each other, at all times, in infinite ways giving rise to this entire creation as it is. ब्रह्मन् is the आत्मा for this entire creation.

पृथिव्या औषधयः (संभूतः) - From the earth, with all its natural qualities, the entire plant kingdom is naturally born. Medicine is called औषधम् - something born of औषधयः - the entire plant kingdom. In the language of the Upanishads, any vegetarian food good for health is औषधम् - medicine.



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ओषधीव्यः अन्नं (संभूतः) - Food, good for health, is naturally born of the vegetable kingdom

अन्नात् पुरुषः (संभूतः) - From food, the human being with one's body-mind-intellect complex is born. It is true that all living beings are born of food only. The Upanishad refers to पुरुषः - the human being because, Upanishads are meant only for human beings.

स चा एष पुरुषः अन्नरसमयः - Therefore, it is clear that this physical body of a human being (with all its qualities, capabilities and limitations) is only a modified form of अन्नरस - the very essence of the food the person came from.

Thus the Upanishad traces the origin of a human being, and indeed the entire जगत् - the creation, ultimately to ब्रह्मन्. In so doing, the Upanishad also communicates the extraordinary message That ब्रह्मन्, indicated by the expression सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म, That ब्रह्मन् is both the निमित्त कारणं as well as the उपादान कारणं - the efficient cause (the instrumental cause) as well as the material cause for all that exist in this creation, including the creation itself, which includes oneself as a जीव - as a person.

Now, referring to oneself as a जीव - as a person, the Upanishad continues:

तस्येदमेव शिरः । अयं दक्षिणः पक्षः ।
अयमुत्तरः पक्षः । अयं आत्मा ।
इदं पुच्छं प्रातिष्ठा । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ॥

We will see these words next time.