



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G8

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

तैत्तिरीय उपनिषत्

Chapter 2

ब्रह्मानन्द वल्ली

Lessons 3 and 4

Volume 18

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As the Upanishad says, यो वेद निहितं गुहायां परमे व्योमन् - for a person to be able to recognize परमेश्वर already in oneself, one's बुद्धि has to reach the temple of परमेश्वर already in one's own heart.

The doors leading to the temple of परमेश्वर are always open, but the बुद्धि must be able to recognize those doors and then cross those doors to reach the innermost sanctum of the temple. Recognition is always a matter of knowledge. Here, the required knowledge is Upanishad knowledge, and crossing the doors is a matter of appropriate and adequate efforts in terms of कर्म योग and भक्ति योग way of daily life.

The Upanishad has already identified the first two doors leading to the temple of परमेश्वर in oneself, and they are recognition of oneself as अन्नमय आत्मा and then प्राणमय आत्मा, sequentially, one after the other.

Once I recognize myself as अन्नमय आत्मा - the embodiment of अन्नम् - food, not simply the food that I have been eating every day, but the essence of food eaten by



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myself and all my ancestors, the essence of food by which I was born, through which I live, and into which I ultimately disappear.

The moment I realize that my gross physical body (which I generally recognize as myself) is only a transient appearance of food that existed before, that exists now, and that will continue to exist even after my physical body ceases to exist, I recognize myself as the very glory of अन्न देवता - which is nothing but the glory of ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर.

The moment I realize the above fact, I develop a deep reverence for food, far beyond, and far different from food as simply something that satisfies my immediate need. With that knowledge and recognition, I spontaneously develop an attitude of worship of food as the very manifestation of ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर.

Such worshipful attitude towards food is indeed अन्न ब्रह्म उपासन. When I gain such worshipful attitude for food expressed through अन्न ब्रह्म उपासन, I cross the अन्नमय door leading to the temple of परमेश्वर in my heart. This door is relatively easy to cross for all of us. Indeed, we do so all the time, because such worshipful attitude towards अन्नम् - food, is built into our Vedic culture, the temple culture.

For example, whenever one prepares food for distribution at the temple and serves food at the temple, one experiences within oneself an extraordinary sense of spiritual fulfillment, which is indeed an expression of अन्न ब्रह्म उपासन.

Having crossed the first door, one's बुद्धि now has to recognize, and then cross the second door. The Upanishad has already identified the second door as प्राणमय आत्मा - recognition of oneself as the very embodiment of प्राण - the vital air, the vital energy, the क्रिया शक्ति - the power to act, with which every living being is blessed with.

It is obvious that one's अन्नमय शरीर is alive as a जीव - as a person, only because of प्राण, which means that one's अन्नमय शरीर is just an उपाधि - physical body vehicle for प्राण. A physical body alone does not enjoy a self. One must have प्राण to enjoy self.

Further, while the physical body is unique to every person, the प्राण in the physical body is universal to all living beings, If ब्रह्मन् is universal, and if प्राण also is universal, it



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is clear that प्राण - the vital air, the क्रिया शक्ति is a direct and readily recognizable manifestation of ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर.

When we say नमो ब्रह्मणे, नमस्ते वायो, त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मासि, we simply recognize the fact that प्राण in all living beings is indeed a direct manifestation of ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर. Therefore, one can recognize परमेश्वर in all forms of life.

With the above knowledge and recognition, I spontaneously develop an attitude of reverential worship for प्राण as the very manifestation of ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर, already in myself. Such attitude of reverential worship is indeed प्राण ब्रह्म उपासन. When I gain such worshipful attitude for प्राण, expressed through प्राण ब्रह्म उपासन, I cross the प्राणमय door leading to the temple of परमेश्वर in my heart. This door also is relatively easy to cross for all of us. Indeed, we do so all the time, because, again, such worshipful attitude towards प्राण is built into our Vedic culture, the temple culture.

For example, when a person imbued with ईश्वर भक्ति places a fruit in front of परमेश्वर in any form and name, as an act of worship, and says ॐ प्राणाय स्याहा, an immediate transformation takes place in the बुद्धि of that person. The fruit is no longer the fruit it was before. It is now ईश्वर प्रसाद - the very grace of परमेश्वर. The recognition of this transformation in one's own बुद्धि is an expression of प्राण ब्रह्म उपासन.

Having crossed the second door leading to the temple of परमेश्वर in one's own heart, one's बुद्धि now has to recognize and then cross the third door. This third door is neither easy to recognize nor easy to cross, because it requires more than ordinary knowledge and more than ordinary effort. The Upanishad identifies the third door as मनोमय आत्मा - one's mind - rooted, oriented and disciplined in a particular way.

Generally, मनस् - the mind is the instrument for thinking. Mind can think in many ways. That is its nature. Thoughts in the mind appear and disappear just like waves in the ocean. Mind does not decide anything. It is बुद्धि that decides on the basis of whatever forms of knowledge are fed to it by the mind and the other instruments of perception. All kinds of thoughts do not, and cannot, lead to the temple of परमेश्वर in one's heart. Only thoughts pervaded by, oriented towards, and disciplined through ब्रह्मज्ञानं - Upanishad knowledge, can lead to the temple of परमेश्वर. All other thoughts can only be misleading and obstructing.



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ब्रह्मज्ञानं is the content of all the four Vedas, because Veda, in its entirety, is ब्रह्मणो मुखः - the very expression of ब्रह्मन्. Being so, the Veda is the very manifestation of ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर. Consequently, मनस्, the mind, pervaded all over by वेद ज्ञानं - the mind in its वेद स्वरूपं, is the third door which one's बुद्धि has to recognize and then cross, in order to reach the temple of परमेश्वर in one's own heart.

After pointing out the glory of प्राण, the Upanishad introduces the मनोमय door leading to the temple of परमेश्वर in this manner:

तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा यः पूर्वस्य - The आत्मा - the self that fills one's शरीर - the physical body, is called शारीर. Therefore,

यः पूर्वस्य - यः पूर्वस्य अन्नमयस्य - with reference to the अन्नमय शरीर described earlier

तस्य (अन्नमयस्य) एषः (प्राणः) एव शारीर आत्मा - the शारीर आत्मा, The आत्मा - the self that fills and pervades the entire अन्नमय शरीर is प्राण whose glory has just been expressed by the Veda mantras quoted above (namely प्राणं देवा अनुप्राणन्ति etc. which we saw last time).

तस्माद्वा एतस्मात् प्राणमयात्

अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा मनोमयः

तस्मात् वा - Again, as it was said before

एतस्मात् प्राणमयात् - aside from what has been pointed out as प्राणमय आत्मा - प्राणमय self

अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा मनोमयः - there is another आत्मा - another self, which is interior to the

प्राणमय self, and that is called मनोमय आत्मा, the मनोमय self, the self whose very nature is मनस् - mind.

Thus, the प्राणमय as well as the अन्नमय now become the शरीर - the body for which the शरीर - that which fills the body, namely the आत्मा - The Self is मनोमय - the all-pervading mind.

तेनैष पूर्णः



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तेन (मनोमयेन) एषः (प्राणमयः) पूर्णः - By that मनोमय - the all-pervading mind, this प्राणमय शरीर is entirely filled up, which means there is no distance between प्राणमय आत्मा and मनोमय आत्मा.

There is only one आत्मा. The मनोमय आत्मा is interior to प्राणमय आत्मा only in terms of depth of knowledge and consequently clarity of recognition.

स वा एष पुरुषविध एव । तस्य पुरुषविधतां ।अन्वयं पुरुषविधः

Again, as before,

सः वा (वै) एषः (मनोमयः) पुरुषविधः (पुरुष आकारः) एव, तस्य (प्राणमयस्य) पुरुष विधतां, अनु अयं पुरुष विधः (पुरुष आकारः) - which simply means the form of मनोमय पुरुष - the मनोमय self, follows in every respect the form of प्राणमय (which is the same as the form of the अन्नमय शरीर) - the form of one's ordinary physical body which is now totally filled with the all-pervading mind.

In terms of पक्षिकल्पना - the bird imagery, the मनोमय आत्मा - the मनोमय self, also has a head, a right wing, a left wing, a center body - the self, and a foundation on which the entire मनोमय self stands. Identifying such मनोमय आत्मा, the Upanishad says:

तस्य यजुरेव शिरः ।

ऋग्दक्षिणः पक्षः । सामोत्तर पक्षः ।

आदेश आत्मा । अथर्वाङ्गिरसः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा

For the मनोमय आत्मा, in terms of पक्षिकल्पना

तस्य यजुरेव शिरः - the Yajur Veda is its head

ऋग्दक्षिणः पक्षः - the Rig Veda is the right wing

सामोत्तर पक्षः - the sama Veda is the left wing

आदेश आत्मा - All the वेद mantras, all the Vedic instructions and Vedic command words together constitute the center body, indicating The Self of oneself, and

अथर्वाङ्गिरसः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा - the hymns of Atharva Veda constitute the foundation on which the entire मनोमय आत्मा - the मनोमय self, The Mind as oneself stands.



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Thus, the मनस् - The Mind pervading all over oneself as the content of all the four Vedas is the मनोमय आत्मा - the मनोमय self, and That Mind is the third door, the मनोमय door, leading to the temple of परमेश्वर already in oneself in one's own heart.

We have to clearly understand what the Upanishad says about मनस् - The Mind, and मनोमय आत्मा - the all-pervading Mind oneself is. Ordinarily, one recognizes one's mind only as संकल्प-विकल्प मनः - a mind of oscillating, conflicting, indefinite and ever-changing thoughts and thought forms.

Every thought-form is called a वृत्ति. Various वृत्ति s - thoughts and thought forms arise in one's mind, just like waves arise in the ocean. One's mind appears to be just an ever-changing bundle of वृत्ति s. One cannot comprehend the mind itself. One comprehends only the वृत्ति s arising in one's mind. In the mind, one ordinarily entertains the notion of "I" - the self of oneself. There is this notion, namely "my mind is myself" and at the same time, my mind sees no conflict between my mind being myself and the same mind being an object, belonging to myself.

The Upanishad says: "The mind you have is distinct from The Mind you are. The mind you have is कर्म born, and hence its nature is संकल्प-विकल्प मनः - a mind of vacillating and ever changing nature. On the other hand, The Mind you are is वेद स्वरूपः-ज्ञान स्वरूपः - a mind which is a manifestation of the very content of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, ईश्वर ज्ञानं, आत्मज्ञानं - Self-knowledge.

The वेद स्वरूपः mind gives rise to the वेद ज्ञान स्वरूपः thoughts and thought forms . That is how वेद becomes a प्रमाण - a means of definite knowledge about the nature of all existence. The Vedic thoughts are in the form of sounds, they have शब्द रूपं. The Vedic sounds are mantras, which means they have the power to unfold the true nature of all existence, including oneself. That is why the Vedic sounds are to be heard (श्रवणं) with श्रद्धा, and when so heard, they have the power to communicate ईश्वर ज्ञानं by their very sounds. If you hear the Vedic sounds with proper attitude, with श्रद्धा, diligently every day, they have the power to enlighten you and uplift you to a higher plane of existence. Such upliftment comes through मनोवृत्ति - the incidence of spiritually uplifting thoughts in your mind.

When your mind is filled with such spiritually uplifting thoughts, your mind is वेद स्वरूपः. All Vedas are already in your mind in the unmanifest incipient state. That



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Mind is हिरण्यगर्भ, The परमेश्वर in yourself in the unmanifest implicit state. That Mind is मनोमय आत्मा - "That is The Mind you are" says the Upanishad.

Does it mean one has two minds, a संकल्प-विकल्प - ever-changing mind, and another वेद स्वरूपः mind? No. In fact, one does not, and one cannot comprehend The Mind one is. One comprehends only the वृत्ति s - the thoughts and thought forms arising in one's mind. One's बुद्धि has to learn to distinguish between the कर्म born thoughts and thought forms, and those rooted in Vedic knowledge, expressed through Vedic sounds, which serve as प्रमाण - the means for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, ईश्वर ज्ञानं, आत्मज्ञान - Self-knowledge.

Thus, for any person, the means of recognition of मनोमय आत्मा is to recognize oneself as The Mind whose very nature is वेद स्वरूपः - the Veda in its entirety. Does that mean that one has to learn all the four Vedas, the Veda in its entirety, in order to be able to recognize मनोमय आत्मा ? No, not necessarily. Because, just as if anything touches even my little finger, I am touched, similarly, even if one hears the sounds of only a minute part of each of the four Vedas, with श्रद्धा, understanding and appreciation, one touches the entire Veda through one's बुद्धि, by which one immediately recognizes oneself as मनोमय आत्मा - The Mind one is.

Each week at this time, we hear at this temple one शान्ति mantra from each one of the four Vedas, together with वेद उपदेश mantras सत्यं वद, धर्मम् चर, स्वाध्यात् मा प्रमदः etc. The contents, the meaning of these mantras is also readily available for any interested person. Hearing these Veda mantras regularly, again and again, with श्रद्धा, understanding and appreciation, enables every person to recognize oneself as मनोमय आत्मा - the मनोमय door leading to the temple of परमेश्वर already in oneself.

By so hearing the above Veda mantras again and again, what does a person get out of them? Sri Krishna says:(G 2 - 40)

स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् - Even a minute part of this Veda धर्म, Sanatana धर्म, when heard, understood, appreciated and practiced, protects one from great fears of life. The more one hears those Veda mantras with श्रद्धा, the more one is free from fears of all kinds. Such is the power and significance of hearing and listening to Veda mantras.



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Unfolding the nature of **मनोमय आत्मा** – the वेद स्वरूप Self, in terms of **पक्षिकल्पना** – the bird imagery, the Upanishad says:

यजुरेव शिरः – The Yajur Veda is the head. No particular superiority for Yajur Veda over the other Vedas is implied here. Head alone does not constitute a body. For a body to function as a body, all parts of the body are equally important. In terms of **पक्षिकल्पना**, let Yajur Veda be the head. Why? Because the Upanishad says so, that is all. So is the justification with respect to the other Vedas, with reference to **पक्षिकल्पना**.

With respect to Vedic knowledge, there is, in fact, no head or tail. All Veda is one. The mention of head, tail, etc. in terms of **पक्षिकल्पना** is only for **सम्यक् आत्म दर्शनं** – gaining a clarity of vision of oneself.

Further, we must understand that Yajur is a common name for all the Vedas. **यजुर** as an Upanishad word indicates **आत्मचैतन्यं**, **आत्मविज्ञानं** and **अनादिनिधनं**. **आत्मचैतन्यं** means Pure Consciousness because of which cognition of anything is possible. **आत्मविज्ञानं** means **तत्त्व ज्ञानार्थ दर्शनं** – a clarity of vision of the essential content of all the Vedas, and **अनादिनिधनं** means That, whose subject matter has neither a beginning nor an end. So is the nature of all Vedic knowledge.

Therefore **यजुरेव शिरः** means when all my instruments of perception become the very means for gaining Vedic knowledge, then I recognize myself as **मनोमय आत्मा** – The Mind that I am. Similarly,

ऋग्दक्षिणः पक्षः – means when all my instruments of action, source of inspiration and power for greatness in action arise from the teachings of the Vedas, then, I recognize myself as **मनोमय आत्मा** – The Mind that I am.

आदेश आत्मा – **आदेश** refers to **वेद आदेशः** – the Vedic commands, the Vedic instructions and the Vedic values, such as **सत्यं वद, धर्मम् चर, स्वाध्यात् मा प्रमदः**, etc. Therefore, **आदेश आत्मा** means when every one of my actions, in thought, word and deed is inseparably and harmoniously connected to and consistent with the Vedic commands, the Vedic instructions and the Vedic values, then I recognize myself as **मनोमय आत्मा** – The Mind that I am.

अथर्वाङ्गिरसः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा – The Atharva Veda is attributed to two Rishis, **अथर्व** and **आङ्गिरस**. A distinguishing feature of **अथर्व वेद** is that its teachings are concerned with



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health sciences, the means for cultivating and maintaining sound mental and physical health, which is the foundation for all spiritual progress. Therefore, अथर्वाङ्गिरसः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा means when my entire physical being is rooted in sound mental and physical health, peace of mind and healthy body, then I recognize myself as मनोमय आत्मा - The Mind that I am.

Thus मनोमय आत्मा means that I am वेद स्वरूपः, that my entire physical being is inseparable from all Vedic knowledge. All the Vedas are in me, inseparable and indistinguishable from The Mind that I am. When I so recognize myself, I also cross the मनोमय door leading to the temple of परमेश्वर already in my heart. Then what happens?

तदप्येष श्लोको भवति - on this matter there is this Veda mantra. So saying ends Lesson 3.

Lesson 4

Lesson 4 now opens with the Veda mantras on what happens to one when one crosses the मनोमय door.

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।
आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् । न बिभेति कदाचनेति ॥

न बिभेति कदाचनेति - Never do I have to entertain any fear about anything. I am fear-free. That is what one discovers when one crosses the मनोमय door.

On crossing the मनोमय door, one finds oneself fear-free, but one has not yet reached ब्रह्मन्. One has not yet reached the temple of परमेश्वर in one's heart. However, ब्रह्मन् - The Destination, the temple of परमेश्वर in one's heart, is now in sight, as a result of मनोमय आत्मा - the वेद स्वरूप मनोवृत्ति - the thoughts and thought forms arising in one's mind.

Indicating that sight of ब्रह्मन्, which still seems some distance away, the Veda says

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते

यतः यस्मात् ब्रह्मणः वाचः निवर्तन्ते - From that ब्रह्मन्, words of the Vedas simply return मनसा सह - along with the mind



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ब्रह्मणः आनन्दं अप्राप्य - not having gained ब्रह्मानन्दं - the exalted happiness which is the nature of ब्रह्मन्, which means not having reached ब्रह्मन्, not having reached the temple of परमेश्वर in oneself

विद्वान् - so recognizes the विद्वान् - the knowledgeable person.

Having crossed the मनोमय door, the विद्वान् - the knowledgeable person now recognizes that simply the words of the Vedas alone cannot take one to ब्रह्मन्, and one's mind also cannot reach ब्रह्मन्, which means one's बुद्धि does not and cannot reach the temple of परमेश्वर in one's heart, by simply hearing or reciting Vedic mantras, or simply being full of Vedic thoughts and thought forms. This realization however does not frighten or discourage a knowledgeable person, because

न बिभेति कदाचनेति - that person, being a विद्वान् - a knowledgeable person, is now fear-free, since he already has ब्रह्मन् in sight. He now recognizes more clearly the nature of ब्रह्मन्. Recalling the words of केनोपनिषत्

यत् वाचा अनभ्युदितं, येन वाक् अब्युध्यते तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि - That which is not revealed by words as their meaning, but by which words reveal their meaning, That is ब्रह्मन्. Again

यन् मनसा न मनुते, येन आहुः मनो मतं तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि - That which is not known by the mind, but by which the mind is capable of knowing, That is ब्रह्मन्. Naturally, therefore

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह - the words and the mind return back without reaching ब्रह्मन्.

Therefore, something more is necessary to reach ब्रह्मन्. A greater effort is necessary to overcome whatever obstacles still there are in oneself to reach ब्रह्मन्, the परमेश्वर in oneself.

Having crossed the मनोमय door, one is now fear free, one is no longer disturbed by the कर्म-born thoughts and thought forms which frequently arise and disappear in one's mind. One is now ready to put forth the greater efforts necessary to reach the temple of परमेश्वर in oneself. That means, one is now ready to recognize and then cross the next door to move closer to ब्रह्मन्, the परमेश्वर in one's heart.



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

The Upanishad identifies that next door leading to the temple of परमेश्वर in oneself as विज्ञानमय आत्मा - which we will see next time.