



तैत्तिरीय उपनिषत्

Chapter 2

ब्रह्मानन्द वल्ली

Lesson 6 (continued)

Volume 21

अथातोऽनुप्रश्नाः । उताविद्वानमुं लोकं प्रेत्य ।
कश्चन गच्छती (३) । आहो विद्वानमुं लोकं प्रेत्य ।
कश्चित्समश्नुता (३) उ ।

The Upanishad has been talking about अन्नमय, प्राणमय, मनोमय, विज्ञानमय and आनन्दमय as the means for the successive modes of upliftment in one's recognition of the true nature of oneself. Reaching the state of आनन्दमय, one finds oneself in the state of भक्ति योग. What is भक्ति योग ? As we may recall the words of Sri Krishna (G 9-34),

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।

- ❖ मन्मना भव is being in a perpetual state of ध्यान योग
- ❖ मद्भक्तो भव is cultivating absolute love and devotion to परमेश्वर, rooted in Upanishad knowledge, realizing that परमेश्वर is वासुदेवः, one's own प्रत्यग आत्मा - one's own innermost SELF.
- ❖ मद्याजी भव is being one for whom all rituals, prayers, bhajans, etc. are only for gaining अन्तः करण शुद्धि - purification of one's mind and Buddhi - आत्मशुद्धि - self purification and nothing else. And
- ❖ मां नमस्कुरु is cultivating the attitude of पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति - total surrender to परमेश्वर already in oneself.

That is भक्ति योग. Being in भक्ति योग, one is still in आनन्दमय. One's Buddhi has not yet crossed the आनन्दमय door leading to the temple of परमेश्वर in one's own heart, which means one has not yet reached ब्रह्मन्, and one has not yet become a ब्रह्मचित् - a knower of ब्रह्मन्. When one crosses the आनन्दमय door, one reaches ब्रह्मन्



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spontaneously. That happens only when one's अन्तःकरण - mind and Buddhi become absolutely pure. That has not yet happened to the person here. Until that happens, one continues to be in आनन्दमय, in भक्ति योग, enjoying the vision of परमेश्वर (प्रिय), the contact of परमेश्वर (मोद) and the closeness to परमेश्वर (प्रमोद) in oneself, all such enjoyments arising from one's understanding and appreciation of Upanishad knowledge. If you are in such a state of भक्ति योग at all times, what follows is for you, says the Upanishad:

अथातोऽनुप्रश्नाः - अथ अतः अनुप्रश्नाः

अथ - Then (thereafter)

अतः - Therefore

अनुप्रश्नाः - certain questions follow

These questions, and the Upanishad's response to these questions constitute a further deliberation on the nature of ब्रह्मन्. Before we go to the questions, let us try to grasp the significance of the Upanishad word अथातो, meaning अथ - then, अतः - therefore.

अथ means then or thereafter, in the same sense of natural sequence, which means there are definite pre-required qualifications needed for a person to undertake a further deliberation on Brahman. When I have the pre-required qualifications, अथ - then, only then, I become fit to undertake a further deliberation on Brahman.

In the context of this Upanishad, the obvious pre-required qualifications are, that I have understood all that has been said thus far in this Upanishad, and I have the necessary श्रद्धा - interest and discipline, to undertake a further deliberation on ब्रह्मन्.

Again, simply because I have the above qualifications, I do not become fit to undertake a further deliberation on ब्रह्मन्. In addition, I must also have a well-realized valid cause to undertake a further deliberation on ब्रह्मन्, so that such deliberation can be really useful to me for gaining my overriding objective in life.

Thus, the word अतः - therefore, implies causality. In the context of this Upanishad, the valid cause is that I am now in भक्ति योग, and as such, I am a ब्रह्म जिज्ञासु. जिज्ञासु means one who has a wish to know. The wish is for knowledge, and the knowledge is on ब्रह्मन्. Therefore, "I am a ब्रह्म जिज्ञासु" means that I have a spontaneous wish to gain knowledge on ब्रह्मन्.



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अतः - Therefore, I have a valid cause to undertake a further deliberation on ब्रह्मन्.
How does that become a valid cause? It is so because, being in भक्ति योग, I realize that ब्रह्मन् is ज्ञानं, ज्ञेयं and ज्ञानगम्यम्. ब्रह्मन् is ज्ञान वस्तु - The Knowledge Itself. The overriding objective of life is to gain That Knowledge, and the means of getting That Knowledge is also That Knowledge. I have not yet gained that knowledge. अतः - Therefore, I have a valid cause to undertake a further deliberation on ब्रह्मन्. Thus

अथातो - after I have acquired the pre-required qualifications

अथ - then, and because I am now in भक्ति योग, seeking the grace of ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर, in order to reach That ब्रह्मन् seated in my own heart, I have a valid reason to continue my pursuits on ब्रह्मज्ञानं.

अतः - therefore

अनुप्रश्नाः - certain questions related to ब्रह्मन् follow:

The word प्रश्नाः is plural, which, in Sanskrit indicates more than two. What follow the above statement are two sentences, in which there are more than two questions involved. The questions are:

उताविद्वानमुं लोकं प्रेत्य, कश्चन गच्छती (३) ।

आहो विद्वानमुं लोकं प्रेत्य, कश्चित्समश्नुता (३) उ ।

As you might have noticed, there is a स्वर for these two sentences. The स्वर is in the form of indwelling on the vowels ई, आ and उ.

कश्चन गच्छती (३) - कश्चित्समश्नुता (३) उ

In Vedic recitations, such स्वर (mode of recitation) has a particular significance. It represents either a state of ecstasy, or a state of profound reflection, or both. A state of ecstasy means an expression of awe inspiring experience, or spontaneous enthusiasm arising from an extraordinary self-discovery, which is most often the case in Sama Veda recitations.

A state of profound reflection means an expression of a "whether or not" question in Vedanta, a question that involves a doubt which requires to be dealt with as a necessary step in the sequence of one's spiritual progress, which is the case in our present context.

That means that the questions put forth here are not questions for a debate. They are not questions for scoring a point. They are questions for intense reflection and



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deliberation (careful consideration) within oneself. They are questions leading to the removal of some obstacles in the absorption of Upanishad knowledge.

The questions raised here are of such a nature. The questions here are about विद्वान् and अविद्वान्. विद्वान् is one who is a knowledgeable person, and अविद्वान् is one who is not a knowledgeable person. In a Vedic society, one who is a वेद वित् is a विद्वान्. One who knows the words of the Vedas and their meaning is generally considered to be a विद्वान्. Obviously, the one who does not have that knowledge is not a विद्वान्, and consequently, an अविद्वान्.

These questions about विद्वान् and अविद्वान् arise from the following considerations. From what has already been said in this Upanishad, one understands that the overriding purpose of life is to reach ब्रह्मन् already in oneself. But to reach That ब्रह्मन्, one has to cross the अन्नमय, प्राणमय, मनोमय, विज्ञानमय and आनन्दमय doors. If one goes up to the state of आनन्दमय or भक्ति योग, then there is no problem. Sri Krishna will take care of the rest. But to reach the state of भक्ति योग, one has to cross the अन्नमय, प्राणमय, मनोमय and विज्ञानमय doors. The real difficulty appears to be in crossing the मनोमय and विज्ञानमय doors, because the Upanishad describes मनोमय as वेद स्वरूपं and विज्ञानमय as absorption of the content of Upanishad knowledge through श्रद्धा, ऋतं, सत्यं, कर्म योग and ध्यान योग.

To gain knowledge of all the Vedas is impossible, and to absorb the content of all Upanishad knowledge is even more impossible, for most people. Therefore, it is obvious that ब्रह्मन् is out of reach for most people. Is that so? Is that what the Upanishad says? I am not sure. I must get a clarification on that. In any case, I am not a विद्वान्. I am only an अविद्वान्, in the usual sense of the term. If only a विद्वान् can reach ब्रह्मन् and an अविद्वान् cannot reach ब्रह्मन्, I want to know wherein lies the hope for me to reach ब्रह्मन्. Therefore, the following questions arise.

Regarding the questions, the first sentence says:

उत अविद्वान्, अमुं लोकं प्रेत्य, कश्चन गच्छती

उत - Whether or not (expressing doubt)

अविद्वान् - one who is not a विद्वान्

अमुं लोकं प्रेत्य - after leaving this world of plurality



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It does not mean that one should die to leave this world of plurality. Every one of us is living in different worlds at different times of our daily life. At one time, I live in the world of my professional life. At another time, I live in the world of my family life, and at another time, I live in my own world of trivialities. Thus, I seem to go from one world of plurality to another easily, every day of my life. Suppose I am able to leave all these worlds of plurality, I must then naturally be able to be in the world of सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म. Can I reach that world of ब्रह्मन् ? That is the question.

कश्चन गच्छती - Does one reach, or does one not reach ब्रह्मन् ?

Therefore, the question is, does an अविद्वान् - one who has no वेद ज्ञानं, after leaving this world of plurality, does he also reach ब्रह्मन् or not? Here, there are two questions in one sentence.

किं वा गच्छति, किं वा न गच्छति - Does he reach or does he not reach. If so, why so, and if not why not? These questions arise because, whether one is a विद्वान् or अविद्वान्, the true nature of any person is ब्रह्मन्, so says the Upanishad.

Thus, ब्रह्मन् being the same in both विद्वान् and अविद्वान्, does an अविद्वान् also reach ब्रह्मन् just like a विद्वान्, once he is able to uplift himself from this world of plurality? If not, why not? These are the two questions in the first sentence.

The second sentence is with reference to विद्वान्

आहो विद्वान् अमुं लोकं प्रेत्यं, कश्चित् समश्नुता (३) उ

उ stands for उत. The word आहो उ means उत आहो.

आहो -The word आहो added to उत expresses the meaning of उत more forcefully. Therefore

उत आहो - more emphatically, whether or not, which means, is it not conceivable that अमुं लोकं प्रेत्यं - after leaving this world of plurality

विद्वान् - the Vidwan also

कश्चित् समश्नुत, किं वा समश्नुत, किं वा न समश्नुत - does he enjoy, or does he not enjoy, does he reach or does he not reach ब्रह्मन् ?

Therefore, the question is: Brahman being the same for both विद्वान् and अविद्वान्, if one who is not a विद्वान् cannot reach ब्रह्मन्, is it not conceivable that the one who is a



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विद्वान् also does not reach ब्रह्मन् ? That is the third question. Ultimately, these questions simply reduce to "Who is a विद्वान्? And "What is the nature of ब्रह्मन् ? The Upanishad responds to these questions in its own style, in this, and the next three lessons, which we will see as we progress.

Before we proceed with the Upanishad further, let us briefly review these questions ourselves for today. Regarding the first set of questions, whether or not one who is not a विद्वान् reaches ब्रह्मन् the answer is simple. ब्रह्मन् being everything everywhere, at all times, everyone has already reached ब्रह्मन्, because, everyone is non-separate from ब्रह्मन् already. जीव and ब्रह्मन् are forever inseparable. That being so, such identity is only a matter of recognition. The one who recognizes the जीव ब्रह्म identity is a विद्वान्. The one who does not recognize that identity is not a विद्वान्.

That is all the difference between a person who is a विद्वान् and the one who is not a विद्वान्. Regarding the question whether it is conceivable that a विद्वान् also does not reach ब्रह्मन् the answer is already given - that depends on whether or not the person involved recognizes जीव ब्रह्म identity.

Ordinarily, विद्वान् is a title given to a person either by some institution or organization, or by oneself, to indicate a certain level of educational literary or professional accomplishment. Thus, we have विद्वान् s in language and literature, music and arts, वेद and वेदान्त, etc. Such titles serve certain social purposes in the business of life. However, the title विद्वान् has no necessary correlation with the person's spiritual maturity.

In the Upanishad sense, विद्वान् is not a title. Upanishad gives no titles. In the Upanishad, विद्वान् is a pointer word indicating absolute spiritual maturity. Being a विद्वान् is a matter of knowledge, a matter of recognition of ब्रह्मन् already in oneself, a recognition born of absolute spiritual maturity, which means absolute purity of one's mind and बुद्धि, absolute purity in thought, word and deed. When such purity is there, one's mind is वेदस्वरूपं, one's बुद्धि is ज्ञानस्वरूपं, and one is ब्रह्म स्वरूपं. So long as I find myself separate from ब्रह्मन्, different from ब्रह्मन् or away from ब्रह्मन्, I have not reached ब्रह्मन्, and I am not a विद्वान्. Then, who is a विद्वान् in terms of Upanishad? This is how the पुरुषसूक्तम् in Rig Veda describes a विद्वान्



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वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तम् आदित्यवर्णम् तमसः परस्तात् ।
तमेवं विद्वानमृत इह भवति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥

तं एयं विद्वान् - The one who sees Him in this manner, that person is a *Vidwan*. Now, who is the one, sees whom, in what manner, that is told in the first line.

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तम् आदित्यवर्णम् तमसः परस्तात् - The one about whom the Veda is talking about, is the person, who is able to say

वेदाहं, अहं वेद - I know, I recognize. You suddenly see somebody before your eyes. You immediately recognize the person, and you declare spontaneously, to yourself

वेदाहं एतं पुरुषं - I know this person. That "I" is अहं. In the context here, अहं is the one whose बुद्धि has just crossed all the five doors - the अन्नमय, प्राणमय, मनोमय, विज्ञानमय and आनन्दमय doors, leading to the temple of परमेश्वर already in one's own heart, and on so crossing, all the barriers for reaching ब्रह्मन् in oneself have disappeared, and one discovers oneself as ब्रह्मन् Itself, as परमेश्वर Itself.

On discovering that परमेश्वर in oneself, the person spontaneously declares within oneself:

वेदाहं एतं पुरुषं - I know, I see, I recognize This पुरुष, This परम पुरुष, This ब्रह्मन्, This परमेश्वर, amazingly, in myself, not simply through the words of the Upanishads, nor simply through my faculty of perception for forms and names, but by recognition through my बुद्धि,

- as the Absolute Reality of all existence
- as महान्तम्
- as महात्मानं सत्यपराक्रमम् - as the highest Self, as The Self of all beings in this creation, including the creation itself
- as सर्व व्यापी महाविष्णु - as the all-pervading महाविष्णु Itself, whose very nature is सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म and whose very manifestation is सत्यपराक्रमः, सर्व कल्याणगुण संपन्नः
- as the abode of all glory, all power, all heroism, all virtues, all of which is सत्यं नित्यं - eternal and never subject to change



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- as आदित्य वर्ण, कोटिसूर्यसमप्रभम् - as self-effulgent, countless millions of times brighter than all the suns and stars put together, as divine brightness beyond all description
- as ज्योतिषामपि तत् ज्योतिः - as The Light of all lights
- as तमसः परस्तात् - as Light beyond all darkness, as Knowledge beyond all ignorance

वेदाहं एतं पुरुषं - That is how I see, I recognize

एतं पुरुषं - this परम पुरुष, this ब्रह्मन्, this परमेश्वर in me, in you, in every being everywhere.

तं एवं विद्वान् - That person who is able to say about oneself - one's recognition of oneself in the above manner, that person alone is a विद्वान् - a knowledgeable person. Such a विद्वान्

अमृत इह भवति - is Immortal, even while living in one's form and name in this world of transient existence. Such a person is already a ज्ञानी, a ब्रह्मवित् - a knower of ब्रह्मन्, one who recognizes ब्रह्मन्, in everyone and everything, including oneself.

नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय

अयनाय, अन्यः पन्था न विद्यते - For gaining मोक्ष, for becoming a ब्रह्मवित्, for becoming a ज्ञानी, there is no other way. To become a ब्रह्मवित्, is the only way to gain मोक्ष, there is no other way. That is how Rig Veda describes a विद्वान्.

While we are on the subject of वेदाहं एतं पुरुषं, let us meditate on Sri Rama for a few moments, and then, recall a few lines from Valmiki Ramayana. The sage Viswamitra comes to the court of King Dasaratha and tells him:

अहं नियमम् आतिष्ठे, सिद्धयर्थम् पुरुषर्षभ । (वा. रा. बा. - 19 - 4)

O! King, I am in the process of doing a यज्ञ कर्म - a Havan कर्म for the good of all humanity. Continuing, Viswamitra says:

I have finished most of this यज्ञ कर्म. I am now in the final stages. Every time I engage myself in the last part of this यज्ञ, two राक्षसs called मारीच and सुबाहु come and spoil my endeavour by pouring blood and flesh on the यज्ञ alter, and prevent me from completing the यज्ञ. These राक्षसs are not ordinary people. They are चीर्यवन्तौ, सुशिक्षितौ - they are very powerful and properly trained in the art of warfare. Because



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of the nature of this यज्ञ, I cannot get angry with them, or curse them, because if I do so, the very purpose of the यज्ञ will be nullified. Therefore, I have come here to seek your help in completing my यज्ञ.

स्वपुत्रं राजशार्दूल, रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ।
काकपक्षधरं वीरं, ज्येष्ठं मे दानुमर्हसि ॥ (वा. रा. बा. 19 - 9)

What I need from you, is your eldest and the most powerful son Rama. The यज्ञ will be over in 10 days, and the राक्षस s will be destroyed by Rama - that I can assure you, because

अहं वेद्मि महात्मानं, रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ।
वसिष्ठोऽपि महातजा, ये चेमे तपसि स्थिताः ॥ (वा. रा. बा. 19 - 16)

(This is the verse to remember)

अहं वेद्मि महात्मानं , रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् । - that is exactly what the Upanishad says here

वेदाहं, एतं पुरुषं महान्तं
वेदाहं means अहं वेद्मि - I know, I recognize
एतं पुरुषं - This परम पुरुष, This परमेश्वर, रामं - Sri Rama
महान्तं means महात्मानं
सत्यपराक्रमम् - as सर्व व्यापी महाविष्णु - as the all-pervading महाविष्णु, the परमेश्वर
Itself, who is सत्यपराक्रमः - one of boundless power, heroism and glory eternally.

Sage Viswamitra being a ज्ञानी himself, knows the truth about Sri Rama, as परमेश्वर, as महात्मा, as सत्यपराक्रमः, which means as the very manifestation of सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म. There are also others who know the truth about Sri Rama. They are वसिष्ठोऽपि - The enlightened Vasishtha, who is also a ब्रह्मऋषि

ये इमे तपसि स्थिताः महातेजाः - and all the enlightened ones who are well established in तपस्, which means ज्ञानं, ब्रह्मज्ञानं, ज्ञाननिष्ठा - which again means all those who have crossed all the barriers and have already reached ब्रह्मन् already in themselves.

Only such people can say for sure



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अहं वेद्मि महात्मानं , रामं सत्यपराक्रमम्

वेदाहं , एतं पुरुषं महान्तं - Any person who can say so in that manner, such a person, and such a person alone, is a विद्वान्. Such a विद्वान् is a ब्रह्मवित् - one who knows ब्रह्मन्, having reached ब्रह्मन् already in oneself.

That answers the question "Who is a विद्वान् ?"

If one wants to build a temple for Sri Rama, the best place to do so is in one's own heart. Better still is to take immediate steps to learn to recognize Sri Rama already in one's own heart.

Let us always remember these words

वेदाहं, एतं पुरुषं महान्तं आदित्यवर्णम्, तमसः परस्तात् ।

अहं वेद्मि महात्मानं, रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ॥

That is Self-discovery. We will continue with the Upanishad next time.