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4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G8

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

तैत्तिरीय उपनिषत्

Chapter 3

भृगु वल्ली

Lesson 1

Volume 28

हरिः ॐ

सह नावतु सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यम् करवाच है ।

तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषाव है ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

भृगुर्वै वारुणिः । वरुणं पितरमुपससार ।

अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति । तस्मा एतत्प्रोवाच ।

अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचमिति ।

तं होवाच । यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।

येन जातानि जीवन्ति । यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति ।

तत् विजिज्ञासस्य । तत् ब्रह्मेति ।

स तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा ।

इति प्रथमोऽनुवाकः

This final chapter in this Upanishad, entitled भृगु वल्ली is also presented here as an Upanishad in itself, with beginning and ending शान्ति mantras, already familiar to us. This chapter constitutes a mode of contemplation - उपासन, on the Veda-Upanishad teachings unfolded in the earlier two chapters. In particular, these उपासन (Upasana) mantras highlight the importance and efficacy of तपस् - self-discipline for the successful pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, ईश्वर ज्ञानं, आत्म ज्ञानं - Self-knowledge, Self-discovery, ब्रह्मानन्द - The Supreme Joy such Self-discovery is.

As we have learnt from Chapter 1 (Lesson 9), the तपस् - self discipline here involves the inseparable integration of three essential components in daily life, namely being truthful in thought word and deed at all times, and maintaining proper conduct, ethical behavior and good moral character at all times



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वाक् तपस्, काय तपस् and मानस तपस् – total self-control with respect to actions involving speech, organs of perception and action, and mind and  
वेद अध्ययनं and वेद अध्यापनं – learning and teaching the knowledge of the Vedas and the Upanishads, both for the good of one's own self, as well as the good of the entire society.

All the above three components together constitute the तपस् – self-discipline needed for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, recognizing ब्रह्मन्, becoming a ब्रह्मवित् – knower of ब्रह्मन्, enjoying ब्रह्मानन्द.

तपस् takes different forms at different times for different people. Whatever form it takes with respect to the pursuit of ब्रह्मज्ञानं, such तपस् involves two simultaneous requirements, namely: विचार – an enquiring bent of mind and बुद्धि rooted in श्रद्धा in ब्रह्मज्ञानं, and इन्द्रिय निग्रह – complete control over one's organs of perception and action, so that they are utilized totally for the pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. The Gita says (4 - 39):

श्रद्धावान् लभते ज्ञानं, तत् परः संयतेन्द्रियः

श्रद्धा is overriding commitment to the pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, and

संयत इन्द्रिय is complete mastery over one's sense organs and sense pursuits. The one who has both श्रद्धा and संयत इन्द्रिय, gains ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, assures Sri Krishna.

How does one get श्रद्धा and संयत इन्द्रिय with respect to ब्रह्म ज्ञानं? That is primarily a matter of one's own values in life. श्रद्धा in ब्रह्म ज्ञानं arises from one's realization of the value of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं for accomplishing one's overriding objective in life, namely gaining absolute freedom, peace and happiness. Such realization itself requires a level of spiritual maturity.

For us, who have already listened to कठोपनिषत् in its entirety, Nachiketa ever shines in our mind and बुद्धि as the very embodiment of श्रद्धा in ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. संयत इन्द्रिय – Complete control over one's sense organs and sense pursuits is possible only through अभ्यास – practice and वैराग्य – dispassion, which means total objectivity in focusing one's mind and बुद्धि on the mission to be accomplished. In the pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, the mission is to become a ब्रह्मवित् – knower of ब्रह्मन्, enjoying ब्रह्मानन्द, through विचार – self-enquiry.



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Such विचार and इन्द्रिय निग्रह together constitute the तपस् which is ब्रह्म ज्ञान साधनं, the key to the successful pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. To highlight the importance of such तपस् for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, the उपासन mantras in this chapter start with a short account of an extraordinary event that happened in the life of Brigu, long time ago. Who is Brigu? The Upanishad says:

भृगुर्वै चारुणिः

वै - As it is well known भृगु : चारुणिः - Brigu is the son of वरुण देवता

That means, what follows is not a mere story for illustration. It is a real event in the life of Brigu, the son of Varuna Devata, who is the presiding deity for water and all it signifies in this creation. From what follows, we will see that the तपस् of भृगु is a source of inspiration to all those who are in the pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. About that Brigu, the Upanishad continues:

वरुणं पितरमुपससार, भृगु : पितरं वरुणं उपससार - Brigu approached his father Varuna in the proper manner with this request (उपससार) अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मति - अधीहि भगवः ब्रह्म इति

भगवः, भगवन् - Revered Sir

अधीहि ब्रह्म - Please teach me ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. Please teach me how to become a ब्रह्मचित्, how to know ब्रह्मन्, reach ब्रह्मन्, recognize ब्रह्मन्, enjoy ब्रह्मानन्द.

इति - so Brigu requested Varuna

Brigu approached his father Varuna in the proper manner with the proper attitude, and requested him to teach him the means to reach ब्रह्मन्, recognize ब्रह्मन्, enjoy ब्रह्मानन्द. This opening sentence tells us something about Brigu, Varuna, and the auspicious nature of this extraordinary event in the Vedic age.

When does a person approach a teacher seeking ब्रह्मज्ञानं ? Only when the person is ready for such knowledge. Hence, we may understand that Brigu was one who was already knowledgeable enough to seek ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. He was ready for such knowledge, and he was also mature enough to recognize in his father Varuna, the appropriate teacher for his purpose.

वरुण being an अधिष्ठान देवता - a presiding deity in this creation, is Himself fit to be worshipped as परमेश्वर Itself. Hence by approaching Varuna as the teacher, Brigu



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was actually seeking the very grace of परमेश्वर for the fulfillment of his purpose, namely gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, becoming a ब्रह्मचित्, enjoying ब्रह्मानन्द. By addressing his father as भगवन्, it is clear that भृगु approached Varuna as teacher for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. Brigu's request "अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्म " is itself a Veda mantra, which is the formal way a committed student seeks ब्रह्म ज्ञानं from a revered teacher. Such seeking is called विधिवत् गुरु उपासनम् - approaching a revered teacher in person in the proper manner with proper attitude.

The best a father can give to a son is ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, because it is the only thing that can give lasting happiness to any person. Therefore, Varuna was happy to accept Brigu as a शिष्य - as a disciple-student to teach the means of reaching ब्रह्मन्. It is not often that a father-son relationship coincides with the teacher-student relationship with respect to ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. When that happens, it is indeed an auspicious event, fit to be remembered and glorified. That is what the Upanishad does here.

Thus Brigu approached his father Varuna, and requested him, in proper manner to teach Brigu the knowledge about the means of reaching ब्रह्मन्, recognizing ब्रह्मन्. Then what happened?

तस्मा एतत् प्रोवाच

तस्मा - तस्मै To him, to Brigu

एतत् - as follows

प्रोवाच - commenced his teaching

In this chapter, the Upanishad statements are cryptic. Only the essential words are given. Details have to be filled up.

तस्मा एतत् प्रोवाच - Lord Varuna accepted Brigu as student, disciple for ब्रह्म ज्ञानं and commenced his teachings as follows:

अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचम् इति - Lord Varuna first points out the instruments by which ब्रह्म ज्ञानं can be gained, ब्रह्मन् can be reached, ब्रह्मन् can be recognized. These instruments are:

अन्नं - Food. It also means शरीर - the physical body. In this Upanishad, both the meanings are applicable.



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**प्राणं** – Here **प्राणं** stands for the sacred fire already in one's physical body, making all body-functions possible

**चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचम्** – the organs of perception and action, such as sight, hearing, mind, speech, etc.

Lord Varuna's method of teaching here is different from what we saw in the last chapter. Lord Varuna does not tell directly what **ब्रह्मन्** is. He wants Brigu to recognize **ब्रह्मन्** by himself in himself, through his own process of enquiry. He, however, helps Brigu with some pointers. Therefore he says:

"In order to reach **ब्रह्मन्**, recognize **ब्रह्मन्**, you do not have to go anywhere outside of your own physical body and organs of perception and action you are already blessed with. Direct your mind and **बुद्धिः**, already in yourself, through your body instruments of perception and action, because, **अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचम्** etc. are **ब्रह्म ज्ञान साधनानि** – they are the means for gaining **ब्रह्म ज्ञानं**. They are **ब्रह्मउपलभ्यधाराणि**. They are the doors through which you can enter into yourself, you can reach **ब्रह्मन्**, you can recognize **ब्रह्मन्**, already in yourself.

**अन्नं** here means **शरीर** – the physical body, the entire **कारण, कार्य संगत** – the cause-effect assembly within the body one is already blessed with. **प्राणं** here means **अन्तरं** – the one who eats, the eater. Now, who is the eater in one's physical body? **ब्रह्मन्** is the eater. Sri Krishna says: (G .15-4)

अहं वैश्वनरो भूत्वा प्रणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।

प्रणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥

Bhagwan is the very **वैश्वनर** – the sacred fire in the body. Whatever food we eat, that is again cooked by **वैश्वनर** – the sacred fire already existing in the physical body of all living beings. This **वैश्वनर** fire - the digestive fire, is linked to **प्राण, अपान, व्यान, उदान** and **समान**, and indeed to all physiological functions. Therefore, in this Upanishad, **प्राण** stands for **वैश्वनर**, which includes all of one's physiological functions, **चक्षुः** and **श्रोत्रं** – organs of sight and hearing stand for all **ज्ञानेन्द्रिय** s - organs of perception, **वाक्** – organ of speech stands for all **कर्मेन्द्रिय** s - organs of action, and **मनः** – the mind stands for the entire **अन्तःकरण** – the internal organs of perception namely **मनस्, बुद्धिः, अहंकार** and **चित्त** (mind, intellect, ego, and the faculty of recollection). Naturally,



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therefore, मनः stands for विज्ञानं also - the faculty by which one ultimately recognizes ब्रह्मन् already in oneself. All the above components of the physical body are ब्रह्मउपलभ्यध्वारs. They are doors by crossing which the unseen ब्रह्मन् can be seen, can be recognized in oneself. That is what Lord Varuna points out by saying:

अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचम् इति (प्रोवाच) - Having said that, Lord Varuna continues

तँ होवाच - तँ (भृगुं), (वरुणः) उवाच ह

तँ भृगुं to the student-disciple Brigu, the तँ कार here indicates that Brigu is not an ordinary student. He is already a well-informed जिज्ञासु, one totally committed to the successful pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. To that Brigu

वरुणः उवाच ह - Lord Varuna told the following also. The word ह here indicates that the Upanishad is reporting the event just as it happened. Having told Brigu that अन्नं प्राणं etc. are the doors, by crossing which he can reach ब्रह्मन्, already in himself, Lord Varuna tells him also three ब्रह्मलक्षणs, three distinguishing marks, all of which together can help him in recognizing ब्रह्मन् already in himself, beyond any doubt. What are those ब्रह्मलक्षणs? Lord Varuna says:

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते

यतः - यस्मात् - That from which

वा - indeed

इमानि भूतानि - इदं सर्वम् - all that exist in this creation

जायन्ते - are born

येन जातानि जीवन्ति

येन - That by which, That because of which

जातानि - those which are born

जीवन्ति - live and grow, and

यत् प्रयन्ति अभिसंविशन्ति

यत् - That into which, all those which live and grow



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प्रयन्ति - on departing from life

अभिसंविशन्ति - go back, enter into entirely.

Therefore, the three ब्रह्मलक्षण s given to Brigu are:

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते - That from which all that exist in this creation are born

येन जातानि जीवन्ति - That by which , those which are born live and grow, and

यत् प्रयन्ति अभिसंविशन्ति - That into which all those which live and grow , on departing from life, go back, enter into entirely, giving up their forms and names, and become ONE with That from which they came. After giving the above three लक्षण s of ब्रह्मन्, Lord Varuna tells Brigu:

तत् विजिज्ञासस्य - तत् विशेषेण ज्ञातुं इच्छस्य - May you desire to know, and find out for yourself, clearly, without any doubt, That which satisfies all the three लक्षण s - characteristics given above. When you do that

तत् ब्रह्मेति - तत् ब्रह्म इति

तत् ब्रह्म - That is ब्रह्मन्

इति - so said Lord Varuna.

Let us understand the ब्रह्मलक्षण s given by Lord Varuna. I am like a wave in the ocean. Before I was born, I was in ब्रह्मन् in the unmanifest state. After I was born, and while I am alive, I am in ब्रह्मन् in the manifest state. And, after the death of my body, I will still be in ब्रह्मन् in the unmanifest state. Thus, in all my three states of existence, before birth, during lifetime, and after death, I retain my state of existence in ब्रह्मन्.

Therefore, Lord Varuna says: "That in which all living beings retain their state of being in all the three states of existence, That is ब्रह्मन्. May you recognize That ब्रह्मन् in yourself with the help of अन्नं, प्राणं, etc. and also the three ब्रह्मलक्षण s given to you." So saying, Lord Varuna left his son Brigu to himself, to proceed on his own.

Keeping in mind his father's instructions

स तपोऽतप्यत - सः (भृगुः) तपः अतप्यत - Brigu did तपस्, contemplating on ब्रह्मन्.

Brigu resorted to तपस् for knowing ब्रह्मन् on his own accord, at his own initiative, because he was sufficiently well informed to realize that तपस् was the only surest and



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the most efficient means for accomplishing any desired objective. His commitment to the pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं was so absolute that he naturally resorted to तपस् to gain ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, reach ब्रह्मन्, already in himself.

स तपस्तप्त्वा - सः तपः तप्त्वा - Brigu, having performed his तपस्. . .

Here ends Lesson 1 of this chapter. What happened then, we will see next time.