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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

कठोपनिषत्
Katopanishad
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यः पूर्वं तपसो जातं अद्भ्यः पूर्वं अजायत ।
yaḥ pūrvaṁ tapaso jātaṁ adbhyaḥ pūrvaṁ ajāyata ।
गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तं, यो भूतेभिः व्यपश्यत ।
guhāṁ praviśya tiṣṭhantaṁ, yo bhūtebhiḥ vyapaśyata ।
एतत् वै तत् ॥ 4 - 6
etat vai tat ॥

या प्राणेन संभवति, अदितिः देवतामयी ।
yā prāṇena sambhavati, aditih devatāmayī ।
गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तीं, यो भूतेभिः व्यजायत ।
guhāṁ praviśya tiṣṭhantīm, yo bhūtebhiḥ vyajāyata ।
एतत् वै तत् ॥ 4 - 7
etat vai tat ॥

अरण्योः निहितो जातवेदाः गर्भ इव सुभृतो गर्भिणीभिः ।
araṇyoḥ nihito jātavedāḥ garbha iva subhṛto garbhīṇībhiḥ ।
दिवेदिवे ईड्यो जागृवद्भिः हविष्मद्भिः मनुष्येभिः अग्निः ॥
divedive idyo jāgrvadbhiḥ haviṣmadbhiḥ manuṣyebhiḥ agnih ॥
एतत् वै तत् ॥ 4 - 8
etat vai tat ॥

Lord यम *yama* has been focusing Nachiketa's attention to the Nature of आत्मा *ātmā* – The आत्मा *ātmā* “I”, – already within oneself as ONESELF Itself. The Nature of That आत्मा *ātmā* – The SELF “I” already within oneself is:

शुद्ध विज्ञान स्वरूप चैतन्यं *śuddha vijñāna svarūp caitanyam* – Pure Consciousness, direct and clear, All Knowledge within oneself, because of whose presence and blessings alone one is able to recognize anything, any knowledge in this creation.



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That आत्मा *ātmā*, the Self “I”, already within oneself, is the same in all of one’s three states of existence – the waking state, the dream state and the deep-sleep state. That आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self “I”, already within oneself is Limitless, all-pervading, all-inclusive, ever-existent, unchanging and unchangeable. That आत्मा *ātmā* the Self “I”, already within oneself is the nourisher and enjoyer of all of one’s कर्मs *karmas* and कर्मफलs *karma phalas*, the sustainer of one’s प्राण *praāṇa*, and indeed The परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* Itself. Further, Lord यम *yama* says

यः पूर्वं तपसो जातं अद्भ्यः पूर्वं अजायत ।
yaḥ pūrvaṁ tapaso jātaṁ adbhyaḥ pūrvaṁ ajāyata ।
गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तं, यो भूतेभिः व्यपश्यत ।
guhāṁ praviśya tiṣṭhantaṁ, yo bhūtebhiḥ vyapaśyata ।
एतत् वै तत् ॥ 4 – 6
etata vai tat ॥

In the previous verse, the आत्मा *ātmā* – Self “I” was pointed out as ईशानं भूत भव्यः *īśānaṁ bhūta bhavyaḥ* – which means सर्वलोक महेश्वरः *sarvaloka maheśvaraḥ* – as परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* Itself, already within oneself. In the next few verses, through a series of pointer words, the आत्मा *ātmā* – the Self “I” in oneself is being pointed out as the same one परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* in every self, in every manifestation of परमेश्वर *parmeśvar*, the परब्रह्मन् *parbrahman* n Its अनन्त स्वरूपं *ananta svarūpaṁ* – limitless forms and names. By so doing, the isolation of आत्मा *ātmā* The Self “I” is negated.

Further, in the Vedas, कर्मकाण्ड *karmakāṇḍ* comes first, and then come the Upanishads. In the कर्मकाण्ड *karmakāṇḍ* part of Vedas, various forms of rituals, Havans and meditations involving ईश्वर उपासन कर्मs *īśvara upāsana karmas* – acts of worship of परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* in different forms and names are mentioned, mainly intended for those people in the pursuit of various objects of desire.

In such उपासन कर्मs *upāsana karmas* – ritualistic acts of worship, परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* is indicated by words representing various forms and names such as हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha*, चिराद् *virāt* and also various individual देवताs *devatās*



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such as अग्नि *agni*, वायु *vāyu*, वरुण *varuṇa*, सूर्य *sūrya*, etc. These words naturally flow into the subsequent Upanishad teachings, only to show that the परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* indicated by different words in the कर्मकाण्ड *karma kāṇḍ* part of the Vedas is no different from the परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* indicated by the word ब्रह्मन् *br ahman* in the Upanishad part of the Vedas.

Every form and Name of परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* and every देवता *devatā* – whatever be its form and name, is only a particular manifestation of the glory of the same one परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* – the same one ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, the सत्य स्वरूप *satya svarūp*, ज्ञान स्वरूप *jñāna svarūp*, अनन्त स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् *ananta svarūp brahman*, just as any form and name arising from gold, is also gold.

In to-day's verses, Lord यम *yama* points out that any person who recognizes clearly and directly the same one परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* in all manifestations of परमेश्वर *parmeśvar*, in all glories of परमेश्वर *parmeśvar*, that person gains a clear, direct and immediate knowledge of आत्मा *ātmā* – the Self "I", as परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* itself, already in oneself. This is how Lord यम *yama* communicates the above message:

यः पूर्वं तपसो जातं अद्भ्यः पूर्वं अजायत ।
yaḥ pūrvam tapaso jātam adbhyaḥ pūrvam ajāyata ।
गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तं, यो भूतेभिः व्यपश्यत ।
guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantaṁ, yo bhūtebhiḥ vyapaśyata ।
एतत् वै तत् ॥
etat vai tat ॥

4 – 6

यो विपश्यत *yo vipaśyat* – Anyone who sees, who recognizes, directly, clearly and beyond doubt That हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇyagarbha*. What is that हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha*?

यः पूर्वं तपसो जातं *yaḥ pūrvam tapaso jātam* – The हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* which is the totality of all subtle elements constituting this entire creation, that हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* is पूर्वं जातं *pūrvam jātam* = प्रथमं जातं *prathamam jātam* – the first one, born of परब्रह्मन् *parbrahman*, the सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyam jñānam anantaṁ brahma*. How?



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तपसः जातं *tapasaḥ jātam* – by ज्ञान दृष्टि *jñāna dṛṣṭi* – vision of the all-knowledge nature सर्वज्ञत्व *sarvajñatvam* of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, as ब्रह्मकाम *brahma kāma* – as the very thought desire of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. That ब्रह्मकाम *brahma kāma* – the thought-desire of ब्रह्मन् *brahman* has ब्रह्म लक्षणं *brahma lakṣaṇam* – has ब्रह्मन् *brahman* in it (just as when you think of something, you are already in your thoughts, even though you are independent of your thoughts). Consequently, हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha*, being the very thought of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, is ब्रह्ममयं *brahma mayam*– is all ब्रह्मन् *brahman* itself.

That is the Vedantic vision of the cycle of creation as we have seen already in Taittiriya Upanishad. Briefly recalling the Upanishad words on the cycle of creation:

सोऽकामयत । बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति । स तपोऽतप्यत
so'kāmayata | bahu syāṁ prajāyeyeti | sa tapo'tapyata
स तपस्तप्त्वा । इदं सर्वम् असृजत । यदिदं किञ्च
sa tapastaptvā | idaṁ sarvam asṛjata | yadidaṁ kiñca
तत् सृष्ट्वा तदेवानु प्राविशत् ॥
tat sṛṣṭvāṁ tadevānu prāviśat ||

This is the famous अनुप्रवेश श्रुति *anupraveśa śruti* in Taittiriya Upanishad. In each cycle of creation, from ब्रह्मन् *brahman* first comes हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* – the totality of this entire creation in its subtle form (समस्त सूक्ष्म प्रपञ्च *samasta sūkṣma prapañca*), and then later, from that हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* comes विराट् *viraṭ*, which is the totality of all gross elements which make up this entire physical universe (समस्त स्थूल प्रपञ्च *samasta sūkṣma prapañca*). Thus both हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* and विराट् *viraṭ* arise from ब्रह्मन् *brahman* only, which means they are effects for which the cause is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. In the Upanishad verse here, we are talking about हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha*. Therefore, and

यः पूर्वं तपसो जातं *yaḥ pūrvam tapaso jātam* – That हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* which is the first-born of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, as ब्रह्मकाम *brahma kāma* as ज्ञानमय ब्रह्मन् *jñāna maya brahman* whose स्वरूप *svarūp* is ब्रह्मन् *brahman* itself, and also



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अद्भ्यः पूर्वं अजायत *adbhyaḥ pūrvam ajāyata* – That हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* was born before अद्भ्यः *adbhyaḥ* – water, etc. Here अद्भ्यः *adbhyaḥ* stands for all the पञ्चमहाभूताः *pañca mahā bhūtās* – the five great elements आकाश *ākāśa*, वायु *vāyu*, अग्नि *agni*, आपः *āpaḥ* and पृथिवी *pṛthivī*, which subsequently give rise to the entire creation made up of an infinite number of सूक्ष्म स्थूल शरीरः *sūkṣma sthūla śarīras* – bodies made up of subtle and gross elements.

गुहां प्रविश्य *guhām praviśya* – The same हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* as ज्ञानमय ब्रह्मन् *jñāna maya brahman*, having entered into the entire creation, even before its gross manifestation as indicated in the अनुप्रवेश श्रुति *anupraveśa śruti* cited above.

Just as, when you think of something, you have already entered into what you think, similarly, as the ज्ञानमय ब्रह्मन् *jñāna maya brahman* thinks about, envisions the सूक्ष्म स्थूल शरीरः *sūkṣma sthūla śarīras* in the forthcoming cycle of creation, That ब्रह्मन् *brahman* has already entered into everything in the entire creation, including the creation itself, even before its gross appearance. That is what is indicated in the अनुप्रवेश श्रुति *anupraveśa śruti* cited above. Therefore,

यो भूतेभिः तिष्ठन्तं व्यपश्यत *yo bhūtebhiḥ tiṣṭhantaṁ vyapaśyata* – The one who sees, who recognizes clearly, directly and immediately, That हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* as ब्रह्मस्वरूपं *brahma svarūpaṁ*, as ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself, as परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* Itself in the सूक्ष्म स्थूल शरीर *sūkṣma sthūla śarīr* – in the subtle and gross body of every जीव *jīva* in this creation

एतत् वै तत् *etat vai tat* – what that person sees is indeed the आत्मा *ātmā* – the Self “I” you asked about, so says Lord यम *yama* to Nachiketa. Thus Lord यम *yama* points out that आत्मा *ātmā* – the Self “I” exists already in every self in this creation, as ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself, as परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* Itself.

Further, the Upanishad continues

या प्राणेन संभवति, अदितिः देवतामयी ।
yā prāṇena sambhavati, aditih devatā mayī ।
गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्ती, यो भूतेभिः व्यजायत ।



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guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantīm, yo bhūtebhih vyajāyata ।

एतत् वै तत् ॥

4 – 7

etat vai tat ॥

Here again the message is the same. The same हिरण्यगर्भ स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् *hiraṇya garbha svarūp brahman* is referred here as प्राण *prāṇa* and अदिति *aditi*. प्राण *prāṇa* means प्राणस्य प्राणः *prāṇasya prāṇah* – That by which प्राण *prāṇa* – one's individual breath is sustained, and That is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. Again, अदितिः *aditih* means the one who is the true sole enjoyer of all sense objects, and that is ब्रह्मन् *brahman* itself. Therefore,

या प्राणेन संभवति *yā prāṇena sambhavati* - That हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* born of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

अदितिः *aditih* – That हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* who is the sole enjoyer of all sense objects - शब्द *śabda*, स्पर्श *sparsā*, रूप *rūpa*, रस *rasa* and of गन्ध *gandha*, which are themselves manifestations of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*.

देवतामयी *devatāmayī* meaning सर्व देवता रूपा *sarva devatā rūpā* – that हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* who is in the form of all देवताs *devatās*, such as the presiding deities of sense objects, namely आकाश *ākāśa*, वायु *vāyu*, सूर्य *sūrya*, वरुण *varuṇa* and अश्विनि देवताs *aśvini devatās*, etc

गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्ती *guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantīm* - That हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* who, having entered into the individual सूक्ष्म स्थूल शरीरs *sūkṣma sthūla śarīras* of all beings in this creation, exists in all of them

या भूतेभिः *yā bhūtebhih* (कार्य-कारण लक्षणैः सह *kārya-kāraṇa lakṣṇaiḥ saha*) – That हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* from which all beings in this creation were created, along with their individual effect-cause characterizes.

We must note here that व्यष्टि *vyāṣṭi* is resolved into the समष्टि *samaṣṭi* – the individual beings are resolved into the totality of all beings, namely हिरण्यगर्भ *hiraṇya garbha* – where the effect is resolved in the cause. The person who recognizes That हिरण्यगर्भ स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् *hiraṇya garbha svarūp brahman* – the cause of all effects



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– एतत् वै तत् *etat vai tat* what that person sees is indeed the आत्मा *ātmā* – the Self “I” you asked about, says Lord यम *yama*.

In the next two verses, the nature of आत्मा *ātmā* – the Self “I” is unfolded in terms of विराट् *virāt*, which is the समष्टि स्थूल प्रपञ्च *samaṣṭi sthūla prapañca* – the totality of the entire gross physical universe. Being born of ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself, विराट् *virāt* also is ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself in the form of विराट् *virāt*. The Upanishad says:

अरण्योः निहितो जातवेदाः गर्भ इव सुभृतो गर्भिणीभिः ।

araṇyoḥ nihito jātavedāḥ garbha iva subhṛto garbhīṇībhīḥ ।

दिवेदिवे ईड्यो जागृवद्भिः हविष्मद्भिः मनुष्येभिः अग्निः ॥

divedive īdyo jāgṛvadbhīḥ haviṣmadbhīḥ manuṣyebhīḥ agniḥ ॥

एतत् वै तत् ॥

4 – 8

etat vai tat ॥

The people who do विराट् उपासन *virāt upāsana* – worship of ब्रह्मन् *brahman* – परमेश्वर *parmeśvar* in the form of विराट् *virāt* – समष्टि स्थूल प्रपञ्च *samaṣṭi sthūla prapañca* – the totality of entire gross physical universe, through some kind of a fire-ritual हवन् कर्म *havan karma* – invoke that विराट् रूप परब्रह्मन् *virāt rūpa para brahman* in the अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* the divine fire, in the Havan Kund. In such a Havan ritual, the अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* – the fire in the Havan Kund stands for विराट् *virāt*, the entire स्थूल प्रपञ्च *sthūla prapañca* – the entire gross physical universe.

For example, Lord यम *yama* has already taught Nachiketa the अग्नि विद्या *agni vidyā* – now known as नाचिकेताग्नि *nācaketāgni* wherein विराट् रूप पर ब्रह्मन् *virāt rūpa para brahman* is प्रतिष्ठां *pratiṣṭhām* – invoked in the अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* of हवन् *havan* Kund. Therefore the अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* in यज्ञ कर्म *yajña karmas*, such as नाचिकेताग्नि *nācaketāgni* is only पर ब्रह्मन् *para brahman*.

Calling attention to that अग्नि *agni* – which अग्नि *agni*? विराट् रूप पर ब्रह्म प्रतिष्ठ अग्नि देवता *virāt rūpa para brahma pratiṣṭha agni devatā* – The अग्नि *agni* – the fire as अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* – in which पर ब्रह्मन् *para brahman* in the form of विराट्



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virāt is invoked that अग्नि *agni* - एतत् वै तत् *etat vai tat* - That अग्नि *agni* is indeed the आत्मा *ātmā* - the Self "I" you asked about, says Lord यम *yama*, which simply means,

अयं आत्मा ब्रह्म *ayaṁ ātmā brahma* - This आत्मा *ātmā*, the self in oneself is सत्य स्वरूप *satya svarūp*, ज्ञान स्वरूप *jñān svarūp*, अनन्त स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् *anant svarūp brahman*.

This is how Lord यम *yama* gives this message:

अरण्योः निहितो जातवेदाः गर्भ इव सुभृतो गर्भिणीभिः ।
araṇyoḥ nihito jāta vedāḥ garbha iva subhṛto garbhīṇībhiḥ ।
दिवेदिवे ईड्यो जागृवद्भिः हविष्मद्भिः मनुष्येभिः अग्निः ॥
dive dive īdyo jāgrvadbhiḥ haviṣmadbhiḥ manuṣyebhiḥ agniḥ ॥
एतत् वै तत् ॥
etat vai tat ॥

अग्निः *agnih*, एतत् वै तत् *etat vai tat* - That अग्नि *agni* is indeed the आत्मा *ātmā* the Self "I" you asked about, says Lord यम *yama*.

अग्नि *agni* means fire, in order to recognize आत्मा *ātmā* - The Self "I" in fire, a certain mental disposition is necessary and that mental disposition is brought about by all the other words in the above verse.

The अग्नि *agni* - the fire that is pointed out here is not any fire. It is अधियज्ञ अग्नि *adhiyajña agni*. It is the fire that is created for and sustained in every यज्ञ कर्म *yajña karma*, in every Havan ritual. That अग्नि *agni* is called अधियज्ञ अग्नि *adhiyajña agni*. Now what is अधियज्ञ *adhiyajña*? Sri Krishna says: अधियज्ञः अहं एव *adhiyajñah ahaṁ eva* (G.8 - 4). I am indeed अधियज्ञ *adhiyajña*? Therefore, the fire that is created for and sustained in the Havan Kund throughout the Havan ritual is indeed पर ब्रह्मन् परमेश्वर *para brahman parmeśvar*, recognizable through contemplation on ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, by the means shown in कैवल्य उपनिषत् *kaivalya upaniṣat*, which we will see later. First, how is fire created for performing a Havan ritual?



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अरण्योः निहितो जातवेदाः *araṇyoḥ nihito jātavedāḥ* – जातवेद *jātaveda* is Upanishad expression indicating the fire that is created for and sustained in the हवन् *havan* Kund throughout the Havan कर्म *karma*. जातवेद *jātaveda* means The “All-knower, The Omniscient, which is indeed परमेश्वर *parmeśvar*. निहितः *nihitaḥ* means स्थितः *sthitaḥ*, abiding in अरण्योः *araṇyoḥ* in the two अरणिस *araṇis*, blocks of wood. Therefore,

अरण्योः निहितो जातवेदाः *araṇyoḥ nihito jātavedāḥ* means the जातवेदाः *jātavedāḥ*, the अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* abiding in the two अरणिस *araṇis*, the two blocks of wood. What are the two अरणिस *araṇis*? We must recall here what we have talked about in कैवल्य *kaivalya* Upanishad. In the Vedic age, every time people perform a Havan कर्म *karma*, they freshly create the fire to light up the fuel pile in the Havan Kund. The process of creating this fire is itself a sacred ritual.

This is how they do it. Two small circular flat blocks of wood are held, one above the other with the flat surfaces in contact. Each block of wood is called अरणि *araṇi*. Thus there is a lower अरणि *araṇi* and an upper अरणि *araṇis*. These are the two अरणिस *araṇis*. Each block of wood has a hole scooped at the center to accommodate a perpendicular wooden rod which is firmly fixed into the hole of the lower अरणि *araṇi*, and the rod passes snugly through the hole of the upper अरणि *araṇi*.

A length of rope is wound a few times around the rod. One ब्रह्मचारि *brahma cāri* – a Vedic student, firmly holds the upper अरणि *araṇi* by hand, and another ब्रह्मचारि *brahma cāri* rotates the lower अरणि *araṇi*, and rubs the upper अरणि *araṇi* by pulling the rope around the rod, back and forth, exactly like we do in churning butter in a milk pot. Both the ब्रह्मचारिस *brahma cāris* chant the मन्त्र ॐ ॐ ॐ *mantra om om om* repeatedly as the rod turns back and forth, during this churning process.

Sparks of fire are generated by the friction caused by rubbing the two अरणिस *araṇi*. That fire is caught by a piece of cotton, which is then transformed into fuel piles in the Havan Kund. The sparks of fire so created from the two अरणिस *araṇi* are recognized as the sacred fire of wisdom, and the churning process itself is called मथन अभ्यास *mathana abhyāsa* – a process of contemplation on ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. For such



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contemplation on ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, one just has to recall the above process and then, as the Kaivalya Upanishad says:

आत्मानं अरणिं कृत्वा, प्रणवं च उत्तरारणीं ।

ātmānaṁ araṇiṁ kṛtvā, praṇavaṁ ca uttarāraṇiṁ ।

ज्ञान निर्मथन - अभ्यासात्, पाशं दहति पण्डितः ॥

कै *kai* - 11

jñāna nirmathana - abhyāsāt, pāśaṁ dahati paṇḍitaḥ ॥

Simulating mentally the above process of creating The अग्नि *agni*– The Sacred Fire of Wisdom for performing a Havan कर्म *karma*, the process of contemplation on ब्रह्मन् *brahman* is indicated here.

आत्मानं अरणिं कृत्वा *ātmānaṁ araṇiṁ kṛtvā* - Make your बुद्धि *buddhi*, with all its notions about yourself, your body, mind, intellect, and you entire personality as the Lower अरणि *araṇi*, then

प्रणवं च उत्तरारणिं *praṇavaṁ ca uttarāraṇiṁ* - Make your knowledge about प्रणव मन्त्र ॐ *praṇava mantra om* gained from ब्रह्मविद्या *brahma vidyā* education as the Upper अरणि *araṇi*.

From your ब्रह्मविद्या *brahmavidyā* education, you understand that ॐ *om* is शब्द रूप प्रत्यक्ष ब्रह्मन् *śabda rūpa pratyakṣa brahman*, ॐ *om* is सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप आत्मा *sata cit ānanda svarūp ātmā* – The परात् पर पुरुष *parāt para puruṣa* – The पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottama* – The परमेश्वर *parmeśvar*. Let that knowledge of ॐ *om* be the Upper अरणि *araṇi*. Now, contemplate upon That ॐ *om*-knowledge. How?

ज्ञान *jñāna* - निर्मथन अभ्यासात् *nirmithana abhyāsāt* - By the repeated practice of churning That knowledge on ॐ *om*, by your बुद्धि *buddhi*. How to do that? All your bondages constitute the rope – the पाश *pāśa*, for the churning process. By pulling the पाश *pāśa* back and forth, which means by repeatedly uttering the word ॐ *om*, ॐ *om*, ॐ *om*, contact your बुद्धि *buddhi* back and forth, repeatedly on the content of the knowledge on ॐ *om*. That is the process of contemplation.

By the repeated practice of such contemplation, sparks of Fire of Wisdom will arise, and they will progressively burn the entire rope, which means, all bondages with कर्म *karma*



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and कर्मफल *karma phala* will ultimately disappear naturally. That is how पाशं दहति पण्डितः *pāśam dahati paṇḍitaḥ* – a wise person burns up all bondages with कर्म *karma* and कर्मफल *karma phala*, making the बुद्धि *buddhi* totally free to reach, to recognize clearly, directly and immediately The आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self “I”, The ब्रह्मन् *brahman* – The परमेश्वर *parmeśvar*, already in oneself, naturally and spontaneously. That is how one recognizes the आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self “I” in अग्नि *agni* – The Sacred Fire of Wisdom.

Whenever we do a Havan कर्म *karma* of any kind, we must remember the content of this Upanishad verse:

आत्मानं अरणिं कृत्वा, प्रणवं च उत्तराणी ।
ātmānam araṇim kṛtvā, praṇavam ca uttarāṇim ।
ज्ञान निर्मथन – अभ्यासात्, पाशं दहति पण्डितः ॥
jñāna nimarthana – abhyāsāt, pāśam dahati paṇḍitaḥ ॥

With the foregoing background knowledge, let us now return to our present कठोपनिषत् *kāthopanīṣat* verse:

अग्निः *agnih* – That अग्नि *agni*, That Fire, freshly created for the sole purpose of performing effectively a यज्ञकर्म *yajña karma* – a Havan ritual
अरण्योः निहतः जातवेदाः *araṇyoḥ nihataḥ jāta vedāḥ* – That अग्नि *agni*, That अग्निदेवता *agni devatā*, potentially abiding in, and subsequently appearing from the two अरण्योः *araṇyoḥ* – by the repeated contacts of the Upper अरण्योः *araṇyoḥ* and the Lower अरण्योः *araṇyoḥ*
गर्भ इव सुभृतः गर्भिणीभिः *garbha iva subhṛtaḥ garbhīṇībhiḥ* – That अग्नि *agni*, after having been generated from the two अरण्योः *araṇyoḥ*, and used in lighting up the fuel pile in the Havan Kund, That अग्नि *agni* which is, सुभृतः *subhṛtaḥ* – well protected, well nourished and well maintained, continuously, carefully with श्रद्धा *śraddhā*, भक्ति *bhakti* and happy mental disposition, by the performers of यज्ञकर्म *yajña karma* – Haven ritual (मनुष्येभिः *manuṣyebhiḥ*)

How well is That अग्नि *agni* protected?



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गर्भिणीभिः गर्भः सुभृतः इव *garbhaṇībhi garbhaḥ subhṛtaḥ iva* – just as fetus are well protected, well nourished and well maintained continuously, carefully, with श्रद्धा *śraddhā*, devotion, and happy mental disposition by the pregnant women – that is how well, the performers of Havan कर्म *karma* and Meditators on ब्रह्मन् *brahman* protect The चिराट् अग्नि *virāt agni* in their hearts.

The कर्म ज्ञान सुमुच्चय *karma jñāna sumuccaya* – the total integration, the total fulfillment of the combination of यज्ञकर्म *yajña karma* and ईश्वर ज्ञान *īśvara jñānaṁ* is possible only when there is pure, sustained and unbroken श्रद्धा *śraddhā* and भक्ति *bhakti* both in the performance of the यज्ञकर्म *yajña karma* and in the pursuit of ईश्वर ज्ञान *īśvara jñānaṁ*. That is the Upanishad content of the illustration here.

“गर्भ इव सुभृतः गर्भिणीभिः *garbhaḥ iva subhṛtaḥ garbhiṇībhi* – Just as the baby in the womb is always held well protected and nourished by the pregnant mother”. Further,

दिवे दिवे ईड्यो जागृवद्भिः हविष्मद्भिः मनुष्येभिः, अग्निः

dive dive idyo jāgrvadbhih haviṣmadbhih manuṣyebhih, agniḥ

अग्नि *agni* – That अग्नि *agni* – That अग्नि देवता *agni devatā*, which is दिवे दिवे *dive dive* day after day – everyday glorified and worshipped by जागृवद्भिः हविष्मद्भिः मनुष्येभिः *jāgrvadbhih haviṣmadbhih manuṣyebhih*

जागृवद्भिः मनुष्येभिः *jāgrvadbhih manuṣyebhih* – by people who are awake to आत्म ज्ञान *ātma jñānaṁ* – Self-Knowledge, which means by people who are not careless or indifferent to what they are doing with respect to both the यज्ञकर्म *yajña karma* and the worship of the चिराट्-प्रतिष्ठ अग्नि देवता *virāt-pratiṣṭha agni devatā* in the Havan Kund, and also

हविष्मद्भिः *haviṣmadbhih* meaning आज्यादिमद्भिः *ājyādimadbhih* and ध्यान भावनामद्भिः *dhyāna bhāvanāmadbhih* – with respect to the oblations they do to the अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* in the Havan Kund, and the श्रद्धा *śraddha*, भक्ति *bhakti* and ध्यानभाव *dhyāna bhāva* – meditative and contemplative mental disposition in performing the Havan कर्म *karma* and the worship of ब्रह्मन् *brahman* in the form of चिराट् *virāt* involved in the अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* in the Havan Kund.



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Therefore दिवे दिवे ईड्यो जागृवद्भिः मनुष्येभिः अग्निः *dive dive idyo jāgrvadbhih - agniḥ* means That अग्नि *agni* – That अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* which is invoked and worshipped daily by the performers of यज्ञ कर्म *yajña karma* – The Havan ritual, who are never indifferent or careless in their performance, particularly with respect to their oblation to the अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* in the Havan Kund, and their श्रद्धा *śraddha*, भक्ति *bhakti* and ध्यानभाव *dhyāna bhāva* – their meditative and contemplative mental disposition in performing the हवन् कर्म *havan karma* and the worship of ब्रह्मन् *brahman* in the form and name of चिराट् *virāt* invoked in the अग्नि देवता *agni devatā* in the Havan Kund,

एतत् वै तत् *etat vai tat* – That अग्नि *agni* is indeed The आत्मा *ātmā* - The Self “I” you wanted to know about, so says Lord यम *yama* to Nachiketa.

Thus, we see in the above verses how beautifully the contents of the कर्मकाण्ड *karma kāṇḍ* of the Vedas flow into the contents of the ज्ञानकाण्ड *jñāna kāṇḍ* of the Vedas.

We will continue next time.