



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

कठोपनिषत्  
**Katopanishad**  
Section 2  
Volume 9

अविद्यायां अन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितं मन्यमानाः ।

*avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ svayam dhīrāḥ paṇḍitaṁ manyamānāḥ ।*

दन्द्रम्यमाणाः परियन्ति मूढाः अन्धेनैव नीयमानाः यथान्धाः ॥

2 - 5

*dandramyamāṇāḥ pariyaṅti mūḍhāḥ andhenaiva nīyamānāḥ yathāndhāḥ ॥*

न साम्परायः प्रतिभाति बालं प्रमाद्यन्तं वित्तमोहेन मूढम् ।

*na sāmparāyaḥ pratibhāati bālaṁ pramādyantaṁ vattamohena mūḍhama ।*

अयं लोकः नास्ति परः इति मानि पुनः पुनः वशं आपद्यते मे ॥

2 - 6

*ayaṁ lokaḥ nāsti paraḥ iti māni punaḥ punaḥ vaśaṁ āpadyate me ॥*

श्रवणायापि बहुभिः यो न लभ्यः शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवः यं न विद्युः ।

*śravaṇāyāpi bahubhiḥ yo na labhyaḥ śṛṅvanto'pi bahavaḥ yaṁ na vidyuḥ ।*

आश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा आश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ॥

2 - 7

*āścaryo jñātā kuśalo'sya labdhā āścaryo jñātā kuśalānuśiṣṭaḥ ॥*

As we may recall, Lord यम *yama* identifies प्रेयस् *preyas* - pursuit of transient happiness such as exclusive pursuits of ephemeral wealth, power and pleasure as अविद्या *avidyā* - self-ignorance or spiritual blindness, and श्रेयस् *śreyas* -pursuit of मोक्ष *mokṣa* - total fulfillment in Life, pursuit of

आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ*- Self Knowledge as विद्या *vidyā* - spiritual illumination.

Therefore, प्रेयस् *preyas* is अविद्या *avidyā* and श्रेयस् *śreyas* is विद्या *vidyā*.

While अविद्या *avidyā* and विद्या *vidyā* are both open to every person at all times, most people in the world are exclusively governed by अविद्या *avidyā* only - spiritual ignorance only. Referring to such अविद्या *avidyā* and its effect on people, Lord यम *yama* says:

अविद्यायां अन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितं मन्यमानाः ।



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

## ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

*avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ svayam dhīrāḥ paṇḍitaḥ manyamānāḥ |*  
दन्द्रम्यमाणाः परियन्ति मूढाः अन्धेनैव नीयमानाः यथान्धाः ॥ 2 - 5  
*dandramyamāṇāḥ pariyaṅti mūḍhāḥ andhenaiva nīyamānāḥ yathāndhāḥ ||*

अविद्यायां अन्तरे वर्तमानाः *avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ*

अन्तरे *antare* means मध्ये *madhye* - in the midst of

अविद्यायां *avidyāyām* means अविद्या कार्यायां *avidyā kāryāyām* - the effects of अविद्या *avidyā* - the effects of spiritual blindness which are identifying oneself with one's body-mind-intellect complex and its attributes, and living a life governed by अहंकार *ahaṅkāra* - ego "I" and मम बुद्धि *mama buddhi* "My" notions.

Such people think "I am the कर्ता *kartā*, I am the भोक्ता *bhokta*- I am the doer, I am the enjoyer with notions such as My possessions, My power, My glory, etc. Therefore अविद्यायां अन्तरे वर्तमानाः *avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ* - means living in the midst of such spiritual ignorance, such अहंकार *ahaṅkāra*, मम कार बुद्धि *mama kāra buddhi*, a बुद्धि *buddhi* filled with egoistic "I" and मम *mama* My notions, covered by and encircled by-longings and cravings for various objects of desire and expectations in life

स्वयं धीराः पण्डितं मन्यमानाः *svayam dhīrāḥ paṇḍitaḥ manyamānāḥ* - They look upon themselves as पण्डिताः *paṇḍitāḥ* and hence धीराः *dhīrāḥ*. They think that they have expert knowledge and scholarship in their chosen fields of activities (पण्डिताः *paṇḍitāḥ*) and therefore, they are people of wisdom, and they are धीराः *dhīrāḥ*, they have all the wisdom there is.

दन्द्रम्यमाणाः परियन्ति मूढाः *dandramyamāṇāḥ pariyaṅti mūḍhāḥ*

मूढाः *mūḍhāḥ* - Such people are really मूढाः *mūḍhāḥ* - deluded people

अविवेकिनः *avivekanaḥ* - Their delusion is caused by अविद्या *avidyā* - self-ignorance, together with their superimposed notions of scholarship and wisdom, which makes them really foolish. Being so, what do they do?

दन्द्रम्यमाणाः परियन्ति *dandramyamāṇāḥ pariyaṅti*

परियन्ति *pariyaṅti* - They go round and round in the world of their own perceptions.

दन्द्रम्यमाणाः *dandramyamāṇāḥ* - staggering to and fro in very many crooked steps. How?



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

## ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

यथा अन्धाः अन्धेन एव नीयमानाः *yathā andhāḥ andhena eva nīyamānāḥ* - Just as many blind people, being led by the blind, move on an uneven road

अविद्या *avidyā* or spiritual blindness is characterized by the absence of discrimination, with or without learning or scholarship. If it is with learning and/or scholarship, it becomes even more regrettable. Because, mere learning and/or scholarship without spiritual illumination only makes for greater pride and vanity, resulting in increased spiritual blindness. This is childish foolishness, says Lord यम *yama* in the next verse. It is only learned ignorance. Living in the midst of such ignorance, one yet considers oneself as wise

(धीरः *dhīrāḥ*). He is full of life and activity, but it is all दन्द्रभ्यमाणाः *dandramyamāṇāḥ* - faltering activity in unsteady steps with a clouded mind. Lord यम *yama* compares the activities of such a person to those of a blind man leading another blind man, with both falling into the ditch.

What does such मूढत्वं *mūḍhatvaṁ* born of अविद्या *avidyā* - foolishness born of spiritual blindness do to a person? Such a person progressively becomes so much infatuated by the lure of

वित्त मोह *vitta moha* - delusion caused by exclusive pursuits of transient, pleasure, profit and power in this world, that he soon loses his ability even to discriminate between धर्म *dharma* and अधर्म *adharma*- what is proper and what is improper, in one's worldly pursuits.

Formerly, because of अविद्या *avidyā*, he had no नित्य-अनित्य विवेक *nitya-anitya viveka*. Now his मूढत्वं *mūḍhatvaṁ* - his foolishness is so complete that he not only has no नित्य-अनित्य विवेक *nitya-anitya viveka*, he also has no धर्म-अधर्म विवेक *dharma-adharma viveka*, पाप-पुण्य विवेक *pāpa-puṇya viveka* consciousness also. He does not hesitate to do anything to satisfy his fancies in the pursuits of his never-ending objects of desire.

For a person who has no धर्म-अधर्म *dharma-adharma* consciousness, पुण्य-पाप *puṇya-pāpa* consciousness, there is no such thing as life after death. The very thought of following धर्म *dharma* - accumulating पुण्य *puṇya*, so that one can go to heaven (स्वर्ग लोकोरसांपराय *svarga lokorsāmparāya*) after death, never occurs in his mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*. He firmly believes that pursuits other than those of pleasure, profit and power in this world are simply illusory. Being so much absorbed in



## ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

such worldly pursuits, he cannot see anything beyond. Therefore, about such a मूढ *mūḍha* - such a foolish person, Lord यम *yama* says

न साम्परायः प्रतिभाति बालं, प्रमाद्यन्तं वित्तमोहेन मूढम् ।

*na sāmparāyaḥ pratibhāti bālaṁ, pramādyantaṁ vittamohena mūḍham ।*

अयं लोकः नास्ति परः इति मानी, पुनः पुनः वशं आपद्यते मे ॥

2 - 6

*ayaṁ lokaḥ nāsti paraḥ iti mānī, punaḥ punaḥ vaśaṁ āpadyate me ॥*

Being a ज्ञानी *jñānī* himself, Lord यम *yama* calls a मूढ *mūḍha* - an utterly foolish person described above as a बाल *bāla*, a person of childish maturity, because nobody needs to be a मूढ *mūḍha* for ever, since the path of श्रेयस् *śreyas* - the path of विद्या *vidyā* - the path of spiritual enlightenment is open to every person at all times. In the present context, however, Lord यम *yama* continues his description of a मूढ *mūḍha*, who is utterly foolish, who does not have even धर्म-अधर्म *dharma-adharma* or पुण्य-पाप *puṇya-pāpa* consciousness. Lord यम *yama* says:

बालं मूढं *bālaṁ mūḍhaṁ* - To such a person of childish maturity

वित्त मोहेन मूढं *vitta mohena mūḍhaṁ* - To such a spiritually ignorant person who is so much infatuated by the lure of transient pleasures, profits and powers available in this world

प्रमाद्यन्तं मूढं *pramādyantaṁ mūḍhaṁ* - who is completely indifferent to his life after death, because of his incapacity to distinguish between पुण्य कर्म *puṇya karmas* and पाप कर्म *pāpa karmas*

साम्परायः न प्रतिभाति *sāmparāyaḥ na pratibhāti* - even the thought of following धर्म *dharma* and accumulating पुण्य *puṇya* for going to heaven - स्वर्ग लोक *svarga loka* a better world after death, even such a thought does not occur in the mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* of such a मूढ *mūḍha*.

सांपरायः *sāmparāyaḥ* means स्वर्ग लोक *svarga loka* - reaching heaven as a result of पुण्य कर्म *puṇya karmas*

What does a मूढ *mūḍha* think?

अयं लोकः *ayaṁ lokaḥ* meaning अयं एव लोकः अस्ति *ayaṁ eva lokaḥ asti*. This world alone exists. This world, which is perceptible to one's senses and which is



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

## ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

endowed with varieties of enjoyments and opportunities for enjoyments, such world alone exists

नास्ति परः *nāsti paraḥ* - परः लोकः न अस्ति *paraḥ lokaḥ na asti* Other than this world, another world does not exist. There is no अदृष्ट लोक *adr̥ṣṭa loka* - invisible world such as heaven, etc. anywhere

इति मानी *iti mānī* - The one who thinks like that, which means a मूढः *mūḍhah*

पुनः पुनः मे वशं आपद्यते *punaḥ punaḥ me vaśam āpadyate* - falls into my control, falls into the clutches of death again and again, which means that that person is born again and again, only to die again and again. Such is the lot of most people in the world.

Let us briefly recall here the words of Sri Krishna on मूढाः *mūḍhāḥ* - those who cannot even distinguish between धर्म *dharma* and अधर्म *adharma* - what is proper and what is improper in their daily activities.

आसुरीं योनिमापन्नाः मूढाः जन्मनि जन्मनि ।

*āsurīm̐ṁ m̐yonimāpannāḥ mūḍhāḥ janmani janmani ।*

मां अप्राप्य कौन्तेय ततो यान्ति अधमां गतिम् ॥

G 16-20

*mām̐ aprāpya kauntaeya tato yānti adhamām̐ gatim ॥*

आसुरीं योनिं आपन्नाः *āsurīm̐ yonim̐ āpannāḥ* - Having been born and brought up in the society and company of people governed by personal qualities which are totally detrimental to one's spiritual awareness

मूढाः जन्मनि जन्मनि *mūḍhāḥ janmani janmani* - they remain मूढाः *mūḍhāḥ* - they remain foolish, infatuated, confused and spiritually ignorant without ever cultivating their faculty of discrimination and proper judgment. They remain as such मूढाः *mūḍhāḥ*, birth after birth, life after life.

Having not gained सन् मार्गं विवेकं *san mārg̐ viveka* - the good sense, life after life, they accumulate पापं *pāpa* and दुःखं *duḥkha* for themselves. Consequently तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* remains dominating their mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* - life after life. Finally what happens to them? कौन्तेय *kaunteya* - O! Arjuna, please listen.

मां अप्राप्य एव *mām̐ aprāpya eva* - Never gaining ME, never reaching ME - The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* - never recognizing the Divine SELF in themselves



## ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

ततः यान्ति अधमां गतिं *tataḥ yānti adhamām gatiṁ* - they, then, go to take up lower and lower births. They never get an opportunity to uplift themselves. Having not gained सन् मार्ग विवेक *san mārg viveka* – the good sense – the common sense to follow the path of धर्म *dharma* and God-Consciousness, they push themselves downward, into lower and lower wombs, births and lives. So says Sri Krishna.

That is also the content of Lord यम's *yama's* message in the last two verses. Lord यम *yama* tells Nachiketa: "While most people in the world seem pushed into the pursuit of प्रेयस् *preyas* – seeking only transient pleasures of worldly life, among the many thousands of such people, only a few like you have the wisdom to choose the pursuit of श्रेयस् *śreyas* – seeking आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-Knowledge, which is Total Fulfillment in Life. Further:

श्रवणायापिबहुभिः यो न लभ्यः  
*śravaṇāyāpibahubhiḥ yo na labhyaḥ*  
शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवः यं न विध्युः ।  
*śṛṅvanto'pi bahavaḥ yaṁ na vidhyuḥ ।*  
आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा  
*āścaryo vakta kuśalo'sya labdhā*  
आश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानु शिष्टः ॥ 2 - 7  
*āścaryo jñātā kuśalānu śiṣṭaḥ ॥*

श्रवणाय अपि बहुभिः यः न लभ्यः  
*śravaṇāya api bahubhiḥ yaḥ na labhyaḥ*

श्रवणाय अपि *śravaṇāya api* – Even for listening

बहुभिः *bahubhi* – for many people

यः (श्रेयः) न लभ्यः *yaḥ (śreyah) na labhyaḥ* - That which is श्रेयस् *śreyas* – आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-Knowledge, is not available. Many people do not even get an opportunity to listen about श्रेयस् *śreyas* – about आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam*.

Even to get an exposure to Self-Knowledge – even to listen to a discourse on आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* is very difficult for many people, because they are not yet ready for that kind of knowledge, and therefore they have no inclination to listen to such knowledge.





Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

## ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

We must recall Sri Krishna's words here:

मनुष्यानां सहस्रैषु कश्चित् यतति सिद्धये ।  
*manuṣyānāṃ sahasraīṣu kaścit yatati siddhaye ।*  
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चित् मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥  
*yatatāmapi siddhānāṃ kaścit mām veti tattvataḥ ॥*

Among the many thousands of people, only some one person makes the necessary efforts for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṃ*; and even among the thousands of people who make the necessary efforts to gain आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṃ*, only some one person succeeds in gaining knowledge about ME – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

Here also, Lord यम *yama* says the same thing:

शृण्वन्तः अपि बहवः यं न विद्ध्युः *śṛṅvantaḥ api bahavaḥ yaṃ na vadhyuḥ*  
शृण्वन्तः अपि *śṛṅvantaḥ api* – Even among those who have had the opportunity to listen to a Discourse on आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṃ* – Self-Knowledge,  
बहवः यं (आत्म ज्ञानं) न विद्ध्युः (न विदन्ति) *bahavaḥ yaṃ (ātma jñānaṃ) na vidhyuḥ (na vidanti)* – many people do not understand that knowledge about आत्मा *ātmā* because they do not have संस्कृत बुद्धि *saṃskṛta buddhi*, which means they do not have prior discipline of enquiring and analysis leading to clarity of understanding and vision. Their अंतःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* – mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* – is not mature and purified enough to grasp आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṃ* – Knowledge of आत्मा *ātmā* – The SELF. They would never know what आत्मा *ātmā* is, because, आत्मा *ātmā* is not available as an object of knowledge.

Now, if I cannot understand श्रवणं *śravaṇaṃ* even after listening to a Discourse on आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṃ*, then what is the use of listening, what is the use of श्रवणं *śravaṇaṃ*? The answer is, even if a person listens to a Discourse on श्रेयस् *śreyas* – श्रवणं *śravaṇaṃ* – ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* – just once, even that is good for the person; because, even though such listening may not result in recognition of आत्मा *ātmā* in oneself immediately, it does create in him a संस्कार *saṃskār* – a वृत्ति *vṛtti* – a disposition, towards such knowledge. Why? Because, it is knowledge about one's own self - which will make that person love to go for such listening again and again.



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

## ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

Every such संस्कार *saṁskār* – mental disposition for such listening – leads to further inquiry on the subject, by one's own self, which serves to protect oneself from further dissipation in life. That is why Sri Krishna says:

न हि कल्याणकृत् कश्चित् दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥ (G 6 – 40)  
*na hi kalyāṇakṛt kaścit durgatiṁ tāta gacchati ॥*

Any person who has taken a small step, in the direction of listening to a discourse on ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* – आत्म ज्ञान *ātma jñānaṁ*– Self Knowledge, that person is a कल्याणकृत् *kalyāṇakṛt* – that person has taken the most *auspicious first step* – the highest service one can do to oneself, to uplift oneself from any further degradation in life. Even if that person does not gain आत्म ज्ञान *ātma jñānaṁ*, does not reach the goal of मोक्ष *mokṣa* in one's present life time, even after listening to ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* Knowledge again and again, still that person stands to gain enormously in his future lives, because, Sri Krishna assures:

प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकान् उषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः  
*prāpya puṇyakṛtām lokān uṣitvā śāśvatīḥ samāḥ*  
शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥ (G 6 – 42)  
*śucinām śrīmatām gehe yoga bhraṣṭo'bhijāyate ॥*

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमतां ।  
*athavā yogi nāmeva kule bhavati dhīmatām ।*  
त्र तं बुद्धि संयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम् ॥ (G 6 – 43)  
*tatra taṁ buddhi saṁyogaṁ labhate paurvadehikam ॥*

He will be born in a family where there is prosperity and culture with plenty of opportunities for listening and learning ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā*, or, he will be born to parents who are already enlightened. In his new life, he gains connection with whatever he had gained in his past births, and with such head-start, he makes a renewed effort for gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa*.

There is never any bad lot, or degradation for such a person, which means that श्रवणं *śravaṇaṁ* – listening to ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* Knowledge Itself is a great blessing in life. It is itself a पुण्य कर्म *puṇya karma*, and it is the starting point for continued happiness, born of material and spiritual progress. Sri Krishna says that also in ch.18 of भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gītā*.





Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

## ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

To listen to ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* – knowledge, one needs a Teacher (a वक्ता *vakta*) to listen to. There are teachers for various kinds of knowledge, but all of them cannot teach ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā*. The मुण्डक उपनिषत् *muṇḍaka upaniṣat* says that the Teacher for ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* should be both श्रोत्रियं *śrotrayaṁ* and ब्रह्मनिष्ठं *brahma niṣṭhaṁ* – he should be both learned in Upanishad Knowledge and well qualified to teach, and he must also already be a Realized knower of ब्रह्मन् *br ahman* – he must already be a ज्ञानी *jñānī* himself. Such teachers are rare, and the availability of such a teacher at any particular time and place is always a Wonder. Likewise, not all students of Knowledge of various kinds are also students of ब्रह्मविद्या *brahma vidyā* Knowledge.

To be successful as a Student of ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* Knowledge, one must have all the four-fold qualifications (साधनचतुष्टयं *sādhana catuṣṭayaṁ*) that we talked about earlier. Such students of ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* Knowledge are rare, and to find such a qualified student seeking आत्मज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ* – Self – Knowledge at any particular time and place is always a wonder.

Only when contact is established between a qualified teacher and a qualified student, **spiritual Illumination** takes place – which is Itself a wonder. Therefore, Lord यम *yama* says:

आश्चर्या वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा  
*āścaryo vakta kuśalo'sya labdha*  
आश्चर्या ज्ञाता कुशलानु शिष्टः ॥  
*āścaryo jñātā kuśalānu śiṣṭaḥ ॥*

अस्य *asya* (आत्मज्ञानस्य *ātma jñānasya*) वक्ता आश्चर्यः *vakta āścaryaḥ* – **wonder** – **extraordinary** – **rare**, indeed is a वक्ता *vakta* – teacher of ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* – आत्मज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ* – Self Knowledge. Likewise,

अस्य *asya* (आत्मज्ञानस्य *ātma jñānasya*) लब्धा कुशलः *labdha kuśalam* – the gainer of आत्मज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ* is indeed a कुशलः *kuśalah*, meaning निपुणः *nipuṇaḥ* – one who is extraordinarily capable in मननं *mananaṁ* and निदिध्यासनं *nididhyāsanam* – reflection, analysis and absorption of Upanishadic Knowledge. Similarly,



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

## ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

आश्चर्यः ज्ञाता कुशलानु शिष्टः *āścaryaḥ jñātā kuśalānu śiṣṭaḥ* - **wonder – extraordinary – rare**, indeed is a ज्ञाता *jñātā* – the one who becomes the Knower of ब्रह्मन् *brahman* – who becomes a ज्ञानी *jñānī* – कुशलानु शिष्टः *kuśalānu śiṣṭaḥ* – being instructed by a qualified teacher who is Himself a ज्ञानी *jñānī*.

Wonderful and extraordinary are the teacher of ब्रह्मविद्या *brahma vidyā*, the student of ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā*, and the result of such teacher-student contact, says Lord यम *yama*.

In the next verse, Lord यम *yama* emphasizes the need for a competent teacher for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-Knowledge which we will see next time.



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

## ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

### Bhagvat Gita references

A question has been raised as to why we refer to भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta* verses frequently while reading the कठोपनिषत् *kāthopaniṣat* verses. The primary reason is simply to call attention to the identity of the messages involved. In all the Upanishads, including the भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta*, the source and content of the messages involved are one and the same, namely, परमेश्वर *paramesvar* Itself. The source is परमेश्वर *paramesvar* and the content is परमेश्वर *paramesvar*.

All words of all the Upanishads are ब्रह्मणो मुखं *brahmaṇo mukhaṁ* – they arise from परमेश्वर *paramesvar* only. That परमेश्वर *paramesvar* is already in oneself. The only way for anyone to be able to recognize That परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in oneself is through the content of the words of the Upanishads and the भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta*. This fact needs to be recognized.

In terms of the methods of communication of the messages involved, the Upanishads and the भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta* are both complementary as well as supplementary to every one seeking ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īshvara jñānaṁ* – Self Knowledge. Our overriding mission here is to bring the message of the भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta* in its entirety within the reach of every interested person in our Temple community. The six Upanishads included in our current ब्रह्म विद्या *brahma vidyā* program, namely ईशावास्य उपनिषत् *īśavasya upaniṣat*, केनो उपनिषत् *keno upaniṣat*, कठोपनिषत् *kāthopaniṣat*, तैत्तिरीय उपनिषत् *taittiriya upaniṣat*, मुण्डक उपनिषत् *munḍaka upaniṣat* and कैवल्य उपनिषत् *kaivalya upaniṣat* will help enormously in gaining a fuller understanding of the entire message of the भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta*.

Among the six Upanishads mentioned above, कठोपनिषत् *kāthopaniṣat* is particularly amenable to bringing the message of the भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta* into sharper focus, deeper appreciation and more relevance to the life of every person in the context of one's own life. It is for this reason, it is our own संप्रदाय *saṁpradaya* – our own tradition, to teach कठोपनिषत् *kāthopaniṣat*, calling attention to the relevant गीता *gīta* verses as often as possible.



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.  
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

## ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

Every time one completes reading the entire भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta* together with the five Upanishads included in our ब्रह्मविद्या *brahma vidyā* program, all with some degree of understanding and appreciation, one naturally experiences an extraordinary sense of spiritual strength, enlightenment and joy within. For these reasons, it is both proper and necessary to continue to call attention to the relevant Gita verses throughout our studies on कठोपनिषत् *kāthopaniṣat*, and indeed every other Upanishad as well, as much as possible. Thus, in our current readings on कठोपनिषत् *kāthopaniṣat*, we simply follow this tradition.