



मुण्डक उपनिषत्

Chapter 2

Section 1

Volume 12

24. दिव्यो हि अमूर्तः पुरुषः सबाह्य अभ्यन्तरो हि अजः
divyo hi amūrtaḥ puruṣaḥ sabāhya abhyantaro hi ajaḥ
अप्राणो हि अमनाः शुभ्रो हि अक्षरात् परतः परः ॥
aprāṇo hi amanāḥ śubhro hi akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ ॥ 2 - 1 - 2
25. एतस्मात् जायते प्राणः मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च
etasmāt jāyate prāṇaḥ manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca
खं वायुः ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥
khaṁ vāyuḥ jyotirāpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī ॥ 2 - 1 - 3
26. अग्निः मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्र सूर्यौ
agniḥ mūrdhā cakṣuṣī candra sūryau
दिशः श्रोत्रे वाक् विवृताश्च वेदाः
diśaḥ śrotre vāk vivṛtāśca vedāḥ
वायुः प्राणः हृदयं विश्वमस्य
vāyuḥ prāṇaḥ hṛdayaṁ viśvamasya
पद्भ्यां पृथिवी हि एष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ॥
padbhyāṁ pṛthivī hi eṣa sarva bhūtāntarātmā ॥ 2 - 1 - 4

The Upanishad is in the process of unfolding the nature of अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman*, the सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ brahma*, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa* - The all-inclusive, all-pervasive परमात्मा *paramātmā* - The Universal Self I in every self.

24. दिव्यो हि अमूर्तः पुरुषः सबाह्य अभ्यन्तरो हि अजः
divyo hi amūrtaḥ puruṣaḥ sabāhya abhyantaro hi ajaḥ
अप्राणो हि अमनाः शुभ्रो हि अक्षरात् परतः परः ॥
aprāṇo hi amanāḥ śubhro hi akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ ॥ 2 - 1 - 2



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We saw this verse, in part, last time. Briefly recalling, the Upanishad says: The nature of That पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa*, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, The परमात्मा *paramātmā*, The Universal Self I in every self is

दिव्यः *divyah* - all-inclusive, all pervasive, Self-Effulgence

अमूर्तः *amūrtaḥ* - Itself Formless

सबाह्य अभ्यन्तरः *sabāhya abhyantarāḥ* - abiding both inside and outside of every form and name, every object, in this entire creation

अजः *ajāḥ* - Itself Unborn, and hence ever existent, and never subject to change

अप्राणः *aprāṇah* - Itself independent of प्राण *prāṇa*, while sustaining प्राण *prāṇa* in every living Being in this creation.

अमनाः *amanāḥ* - Itself independent of mind, while sustaining the entire अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* - inner instrument of perception in every conscious Being, and

शुभ्रः *śubhrah* - Itself absolutely Pure, being ONE without a second. All this we saw last time. Further

अक्षरात् परतः परः *akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ* - The nature of That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman*, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, The परमात्मा *paramātmā* is even beyond अक्षरं *akṣaram*, which means It is even independent of अक्षरं *akṣaram*. What does that mean? Here the pointer word अक्षरं *akṣaram* indicates the unmanifested माया *māyā* - the unmanifest part of the inherent power of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, the unmanifest ईश्वर शक्ति *īśvara śakti*.

Let us understand clearly what is being communicated here by the expression अक्षरात् परतः परः *akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ*. अक्षरं *akṣaram* is That which is ever-existent and never subject to decay or disappearance. That is indeed the स्वरूप *svarūpa* - the very nature of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. माया *māyā* is ईश्वर शक्ति *īśvara śakti* - the inherent power of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* and it is ever inseparable from परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself. Consequently माया *māyā* also is अक्षरं *akṣaram*. While माया *māyā* is dependent on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself is ever independent of माया *māyā*, just as every person is ever independent of one's own powers.



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In the विभूति योग *vibhūta yoga* of भगवत् गीता *bhagavat gītā* Sri Krishna says (G 10-42)

विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नं एकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ।
viṣṭabhyāhamidaṁ kṛtsnaṁ ekāṁśena sthito jagat ।

That means, only a minute part of माया *māyā*, the ईश्वर शक्ति *īśvara śakti* manifests itself as इदं जगत् *idaṁ jagat* - this entire creation, revealing परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. The rest of माया *māyā*, the rest of ईश्वर शक्ति *īśvara śakti* remains unmanifest. That unmanifest माया *māyā* also reveals परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, since माया *māyā* is ever inseparable from परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. At the same time, परमेश्वर *parameśvar* itself remains independent of both the unmanifest माया *māyā* and जगत् *jagat*, while being the cause for both. Further, परमेश्वर *parameśvar* reveals itself also by its own ज्योति स्वरूप *jyoti svarūpa* - Self-effulgence, independent of both माया *māyā* and जगत् *jagat*.

Therefore, in terms of सर्वात्म स्वरूप *sarvātma svarūpa* - the all-inclusive nature of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, इदं जगत् *idaṁ jagat* - this entire manifested creation available for perception gives a vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. The unmanifested माया *māyā*, the unmanifested ईश्वर शक्ति *īśvara śakti* gives another vision of the Same ONE परमेश्वर *parameśvar* and That which is other than माया *māyā* and जगत् *jagat*, The ज्योति स्वरूप *jyoti svarūpa* of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, the cause for both माया *māyā* and जगत् *jagat*, also provides yet another vision of the same ONE परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

Thus, all the above three distinct visions of the Same ONE परमेश्वर *parameśvar* are involved in one's Total Vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa*. Revealing That Total Vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in पुरुषोत्तम योग, Sri Krishna says (G.15 -16, 17, 18):

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरचाक्षर एव च ।
dvāvimau puruṣau loke kṣaracākṣara eva ca ।
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥ 15-16
kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭastho'kṣara ucyate ॥



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उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मा इति उदाहृतः ।

uttamaḥ puruṣastvanyaḥ paramātmā iti udāhṛtaḥ ।

यो लोकत्रयं आविश्य विभर्ति अव्यय ईश्वरः ॥

15-17

yo loka trayam āviśya vibharti avyaya īśvaraḥ ॥

यस्मात् क्षरम् अतीतोऽहं अक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।

yasmāt kṣaram atīto'haṁ akṣarādapi cottamaḥ ।

अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥

15-18

ato'smi loke vede ca prathitaḥ puruṣottamaḥ ॥

We have seen these verses in detail already

- The Vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* revealed by a minute part of माया *māyā*, the ईश्वर शक्ति *īśvara śakti*, the inherent infinite power of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, manifested as objects in this ever-changing creation, including the creation itself, That Vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is called क्षर पुरुष *kṣara puruṣa*, meaning, परमेश्वर *parameśvar* manifested as the ever-changing objects in this creation
- The Vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* revealed by the vast still unmanifested part of माया *māyā* - the infinite inherent power of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, is called अक्षर पुरुष *akṣara puruṣa*, and
- The Vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* revealed by Itself, by Its own ज्योति स्वरूपं *jyoti svarūpaṁ* - Self-effulgent nature, is called उत्तम पुरुष *uttama puruṣa* - The परमात्मा *paramātmā*, The पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottama*.

Only when one recognizes the Same ONE परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as क्षर पुरुष *kṣara puruṣa*, अक्षर पुरुष *akṣara puruṣa* and उत्तम पुरुष *uttama puruṣa*, all at the same time, one truly recognizes परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in Its entirety - The पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa*, The पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottama*.

Focusing one's attention on such recognition of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, Sri Krishna says:

यस्मात् अहं क्षरं अतीतः अक्षरात् अपि च

yasmāt ahaṁ kṣaram atītaḥ akṣarāt api ca

अतीतः अहं उत्तमः । अतः लोके च वेदे च

atītaḥ ahaṁ uttamaḥ । ataḥ loke ca vede ca



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अहं पुरुषोत्तमः इति प्रतिथः ॥

ahaṁ puruṣottamaḥ iti pratithaḥ ॥

Because I remain transcending both क्षर *kṣara* and अक्षर *akṣara* - transcending both जगत् *jagat* and माया *māyā*, I, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, remain naturally independent of both. Being so, I am पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa*, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in its entirety. It is for this reason, I, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* am well known as पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottama* both in popular language and also in all the scriptures, says Sri Krishna.

It is That पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa*, The पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottama*, the Upanishad points out here by the expression अक्षरात् परतः परः *akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ*. Therefore the nature of That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* is indeed पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottama*. Further, the Upanishad continues:

25. एतस्मात् जायते प्राणः मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च

etasmāt jāyate prāṇaḥ manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca

खं वायुः ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥

2 - 1 - 3

khaṁ vāyuḥ jyotirāpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī ॥

एतस्मात् *etasmāt* - From That पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa*, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*

From That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman*

From That सत्यं-ज्ञानं-अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyaṁ-jñānaṁ-anantaṁ brahma*

From That परमात्मा *paramātmā*, The Universal Self

From That पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottama*

जायते *jāyate* - are born

प्राणः *prāṇaḥ* - all forms of life

मनः *manaḥ* - Mind, the entire अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa*

सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च *sarvendriyāṇi ca* - and also all organs of perception and action

खं वायुः ज्योतिः आपः पृथिवी *khaṁ vāyuḥ jyotiḥ āpaḥ pṛthivī* - all the

पञ्चमहाभूताः *pañca mahābhūtās* - all the five great elements, namely Akasa, Vayu, Agni, Water and Earth



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विश्वस्य धारिणी *viśvasya dhāriṇī* - which support the entire creation.

Thus the Upanishad points out That पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa* as the cause for the entire creation, both subtle and gross.

Therefore That पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa*, even though It is formless, is the cause for all forms and qualities manifested in this entire creation, including the creation itself. Since only an All-conscious, All-knowledge Being can be the cause for the entire creation, including the creation itself. Since only an All-conscious, All-knowledge Being can be the cause for the entire creation, That पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa* is Omniscient - चित्स्वरूपं *citsvarūpaṁ* and ज्ञानस्वरूपं *jñānasvarūpaṁ*, and consequently It is the निमित्त कारणं *nimitta kāraṇaṁ* - the efficient cause, the instrumental cause for this entire creation.

Then, what is the material cause for this entire creation? When the Upanishad says एतस्मात् जायते *etasmāt jāyate* - from That पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa* alone, from That परमेश्वर *parameśvar* alone, this entire creation is born, that means That परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is also the material cause for this entire creation, that becomes clear and beyond doubt, from the verses which follow.

ईशावास्यम् इदं सर्वम्, वासुदेवः सर्वम् इति ज्ञानं *īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvam, vāsudevaḥ saravam iti jñānaṁ*

Everything in this creation is born of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. Everything in this creation is परमेश्वर *parameśvar* itself. That is the knowledge that needs to be understood, appreciated, realized and recognized by every discerning person. Only then, by knowing the true nature of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, the true nature of everything in this creation becomes self-evident.

That परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is both the निमित्त कारणं *nimitta* as well as the उपादान कारणं *upādāna kāraṇaṁ* - the efficient cause as well as the material cause for all forms of existence, is the overriding theme of this Upanishad. This Upanishad communicates that knowledge through a variety of pointer words. In the next verse, the Upanishad says:

26. अग्निः मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्र सूर्यौ
agniḥ mūrdhā cakṣuṣī candra sūryau
दिशः श्रोत्रे वाक् विवृताश्च वेदाः



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diśaḥ śrotre vāk vivṛtāśca vedāḥ

वायुः प्राणः हृदयं विश्वमस्य

vāyuh prāṇaḥ hṛdayaṁ viśvamasya

पद्भ्यां पृथिवी हि एष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ॥ 2 - 1 - 4

padbhyāṁ pṛthivī hi eṣa sarva bhūtāntarātmā ॥

In this verse "अस्य *asya*" stands for "यस्य *yasya*", meaning "whose". We will use this word in a few minutes. In this verse अग्निः मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्र सूर्यौ *agniḥ mūrdhā cakṣuṣī candra sūryau*, the cause is pointed out in terms of its effects. The cause is Formless and hence cannot be seen, but its effects are formful and hence can be seen.

By seeing the effects, one recognizes the cause. Knowing the true identity of the effects as the cause itself, one recognizes the unseen formless cause, by seeing its formful effects. By so doing, the formless unseen cause is recognized as the material cause, the उपादान कारणं *upādāna kāraṇaṁ* for all the formful effects seen in this entire universe.

परमेश्वर *parameśvar* has already been pointed out as Formless (अमूर्तः *amūrtaḥ*). I come to the temple and see The same ONE परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in so many different forms. How can I do that? By naturally identifying all the different forms with That same ONE परमेश्वर *parameśvar* itself. I recognize that the material cause for all forms I see, and also every part of each form I see, both individually and collectively, are nothing but That ONE Formless परमेश्वर *parameśvar* itself.

It is just like this: Talking in relative terms, a molding clay, by itself, is formless. Out of that molding clay, one makes different forms, according to one's own imagination. It is obvious then, that all these forms and every part of every form, both individually and collectively, are nothing but that molding clay as the material cause for all the forms arising from that clay.

Similarly, in this verse, The Upanishad gives an imaginary Form to That परमेश्वर *parameśvar* with reference to this creation as a whole.

What Form one can give to परमेश्वर *parameśvar* ? Any Form, one may choose to worship as परमेश्वर *parameśvar* itself, is appropriate for the purpose here. Because, Sri Krishna says:

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तान् तथैव भजाम्यहं

G 4 - 11



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ye yathā mām prapadyante tān tathaiva bhajāmyaham

"In whatever manner, in whatever form, with whatever motive, and to whatever extent people worship Me, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, I bless them exactly in the same manner, and precisely to the same extent".

Accordingly, the Upanishad chooses here to describe परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in a particular imaginary form, whose purpose is only to communicate the knowledge that परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is the material cause - उपादान कारणं *upādāna kāraṇam*, for all forms and names in this entire creation, including the creation itself. Presenting that imaginary form, the Upanishad indicates परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as ONE

यस्य मूर्धा अग्निः *yasya mūrdhā agniḥ* - whose Head is Agni (fire) - (Heaven)

यस्य चक्षुषी चन्द्र सूर्यौ *yasya cakṣuṣī candra sūryau* - Whose eyes are the moon and the sun

यस्य श्रोत्रे दिशः *yasya śrotre diśaḥ* - whose ears are the various directions

यस्य विवृताश्च वेदाः वाक् *yasya vivṛtāśca vedaḥ vāk* - whose organs of speech are the well-known Vedas revealed by परमेश्वर *parameśvar* itself

यस्य प्राणः वायुः *yasya prāṇaḥ vāyuḥ* - Whose प्राण *prāṇa* is Air

यस्य हृदयं विश्वम् *yasya hṛdayam viśvam* - Whose heart, whose अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* - whose internal organs of perception in the entire creation, is the entire world of knowledge.

यस्य पद्भ्यां पृथिवी *yasya padbhyām pṛthivī* - whose feet are earth

एषः हि सर्वभूत अन्तरात्मा *eṣa hi sarvabhuta antarātmā* - That परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is indeed The पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa* indwelling as The Innermost Self in all Beings, in all forms and names, as the Seer, Hearer, Thinker, Knower, etc., as सर्वकारण आत्मा *sarva kāraṇa ātmā* - as The Cause of all causes, as The Self in every self.

Thus, That पूर्ण पुरुष *pūrṇa puruṣa* is The material cause for all that exists in this entire creation. One may choose to use the above imaginary form of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* (or any other Form) one may like) for the purposes of ईश्वर उपासन



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īśvara upāśana - Worship of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, or meditation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

In Chandogya Upanishad, a particular Form of meditation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar* called पञ्चाग्नि विद्या *pañcāgni vidyā*, is described, wherein the word अग्नि *agni* is used to indicate असौ लोकः *asau lokaḥ* - The world beyond earth, the heaven.

We may recall here, briefly, the व्याहृति उपासन *vyāhṛti upāśana* in Taittiriya Upanishad, where the व्याहृति *vyāhṛti* mantra सुवः *suvaḥ* is identified with असौ लोकः *asau lokaḥ* (सुवरित्यसौ लोक *suvarityasau lokaḥ*), असौ लोकः *asau lokaḥ* is the world of all planets in the sky beyond earth. That असौ लोकः *asau lokaḥ* is द्यु लोकः *dyu lokaḥ* - the abode of all celestial beings, which we call Heaven.

In the पञ्चाग्नि *pañcāgni* form of meditation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, अग्नि *agni* - the fire (the first of the five fires involved in the meditation) is identified with the entire world of celestial Beings - the Heaven. The Upanishad here calls attention to the पञ्चाग्नि *pañcāgni* form of meditation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in the next verse.

Therefore, in the context here, by the words

यस्य मूर्धा अग्निः *yasya mūrdhā agnih* - The head of the imaginary form of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is indicated here as अग्नि *agni*, meaning द्यु लोकः *dyu lokaḥ* - The Heaven, the abode of all celestial beings.

Let us always remember this: The discussion here is not about पञ्चाग्नि विद्या *pañcāgni vidyā*. It is brought in here to focus attention on an essential message, namely:

Whatever form one gives to परमेश्वर *parameśvar* for purposes of worship or meditation, वासुदेवः सर्वम् इति ज्ञानं *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti jñānam*.

परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is ALL, परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is both the efficient cause as well as the material cause for all that exist in this creation. That is the knowledge that needs to be understood, appreciated, realized and recognized by every person. This knowledge is being communicated repeatedly through different pointer words in the rest of this Upanishad.

We will continue with the Upanishad next time.