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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

मुण्डक उपनिषत्

Chapter 2

Section 2

Volume 19

41. हिरण्मये परे कोशे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलं
hiraṇmaye pare kośe virajaṁ brahma niṣkalam
तत् शुभ्रम् ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः तत् यत् आत्मविदो विदुः 2 - 2 - 9
tat śubhram jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ tat yat ātmavido viduḥ

42. न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्र तारकं
na tatra sūryo bhānti na candra tārakam
ने मा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः
ne mā vidyuto bhānti kuto'yamagniḥ
तमेव भान्तं अनुभाति सर्वम्
tameva bhāntaṁ anubhāti sarvam
तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥ 2 - 2 - 10
tasya bhāsā sarvamidaṁ vibhāti ॥

43. ब्रह्म एव इदं अमृतं पुरुस्तात् ब्रह्म
brahma eva idaṁ amṛtaṁ purustāt brahma
पश्चात् ब्रह्म दक्षिणतश्च उत्तरेण
paścāt brahma dakṣiṇataśca uttareṇa
अधश्च ऊर्ध्वम् च प्रसृतं
adhaśca ūrdhvam ca prasṛtaṁ
ब्रह्म एव इदं विश्वम् इदं वरिष्ठं ॥ 2 - 2 - 11
brahma eva idaṁ viśvam idaṁ varīṣṭhaṁ ॥

इति द्वितीय मुण्डके द्वितीय खण्डः ॥
iti dvitīya muṇḍake dvitīya khaṇḍaḥ ॥

Summing up briefly the nature of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, The आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I, already pointed out earlier in this section, the Upanishad says:



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तत् शुभ्रम् ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः तत् यत् आत्मविदो विदुः

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tat śubhram jyotiṣāṃ jyotiḥ tat yat ātmavidō viduḥ

तत् यत् आत्मविदो विदुः *tat yat ātmavidō viduḥ* - That which the knowers of आत्मा *ātmā*, knowers of ब्रह्मन् *brahman* do know, do see in all details, is this. An आत्मवित् *ātmavit* is ब्रह्मवित् *brahmavit* - a knower of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. As तैत्तिरीय *taittirīya* Upanishad says: ब्रह्मवित् आप्नोति परं *brahmavit āpnoti param*. A knower of ब्रह्मन् *brahman* gains ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, reaches ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, becomes ब्रह्मन् *brahman* itself. When one becomes ब्रह्मन् *brahman* itself, that person gains अपरोक्ष ज्ञानं *aparokṣa jñānam* - direct knowledge, immediate knowledge of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. That person sees ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, The आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I, directly and immediately. What exactly does that person see? That person sees तत् ब्रह्म *tat brahma*, That सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyaṃ jñānam anantaṃ brahma* in हिरण्मये परे कोशे *hiraṇmaye pare kośe* as विरजं *virajam*, निष्कलं *niṣkalam*, शुभ्रम् *śubhram*, ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः *jyotiṣāṃ jyotiḥ*

हिरण्मये परे कोशे *hiraṇmaye pare kośe*

हिरण्मये *hiraṇmaye* means ज्योतिर्मये *jyotirmaye*, in the place which is supremely bright everywhere, just like a flame without smoke, light without shadow.

परे कोशे *pare kośe* - in the उत्कृष्ट उपाधि *utkṛṣṭa upādhi* - in the most beautiful and the most sacred place in one's उपाधि *upādhi* - body vehicle, which means, in one's बुद्धि उपाधि *buddhi upādhi*, in व्योम्नि *vyomni* part of one's बुद्धि *buddhi*, where alone ब्रह्मन् *brahman* is available for direct and immediate recognition.

As an instrument for recognition, one's बुद्धि उपाधि *buddhi upādhi* is still a कोश *kośa* - a cover, just as one's entire body vehicle is a कोश *kośa* - is a cover for the person in the body, even though the person is everywhere in one's body. Similarly, even though ब्रह्मन् *brahman* is everywhere in one's body, it is available for recognition only in one's बुद्धिउपाधि *buddhi upādhi*, and there too, only in the ज्योतिर्मय व्योम्नि *jyotirmaya vyomni*, in the Self-effulgent, ever-bright, supremely beautiful and most



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sacred region of one's बुद्धि *buddhi* - the बुद्धि *buddhi*-हृदय *hrdaya*-आकाश *ākāśa*,
The ब्रह्मपुरि *brahmapuri*, as pointed out earlier.

Thus the आत्मवित् *ātmavit* - the knower of आत्मा *ātmā*, the knower of Self I, sees
ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, the सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ brahma*, in
one's हिरण्मये परे कोशे *hiraṇmaye pare kośe*, in one's ज्योतिर्मय बुद्धि उपाधि
jyotirmaya buddhi upādhi, in ब्रह्मपुरि *brahmapuri* region of one's बुद्धि *buddhi*,
as ONESELF Itself, as अयं आत्मा ब्रह्म *ayaṁ ātmā brahma*, as ब्रह्मैवाहं अस्मि
brahmaivāhaṁ asmi; आत्मा *ātmā* is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, The Self I is ब्रह्मन्
brahman, I am indeed ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself. Further, That आत्मा *ātmā*, That ब्रह्मन्
brahman, That Self I, is

विरजं *virajaṁ*, रजस् रहितं *rajas rahitaṁ* - Here रजस् *rajas* stands for all personal
qualities arising from Self-ignorance. Therefore विरजं *virajaṁ* means ONE totally free
from the limitations of all personal qualities, all स्वभाव गुणः *svabhāva guṇas*,
including अहंकार *ahaṁkar* - ego, born of self-ignorance.

निष्कलं *niṣkalaṁ*, निर्गताः कलाः यस्य *nirgatāḥ kalāḥ yasya* - ONE free from all
limbs, all इन्द्रियः *indriyas*, all body components. The ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, The आत्मा
ātmā, The Self I is in all limbs of the body, but Itself has no limbs. As Sri Krishna says:
(G 13-14)

सर्वेन्द्रिय गुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रिय विवर्जितं *sarvendriya guṇābhāsaṁ sarvendriya
vivarjitaṁ* - without any इन्द्रिय *indriya* whatsoever, The आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I
shines through all इन्द्रियः *indriyas* and all their गुणः *guṇas* in all beings in this
creation.

शुभ्रं शुद्धं *śubhraṁ śuddhaṁ* - ONE that is absolutely pure, because It is विरजं
virajaṁ - निर्गुणं *nirguṇaṁ* - totally free from the limitations of all qualities

ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः *jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ* - ONE that is the light for all lights, It is That Light
because of which alone all other lights shine as they do. That ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, The



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आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I being ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः *jyotiṣāṃ jyotiḥ* - The Light for all lights, is explained further in the next verse.

42. न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्र तारकं
na tatra sūryo bhānti na candra tārakam
ने मा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः
ne mā vidyuto bhānti kuto'yamagniḥ
तमेव भान्तं अनुभाति सर्वम्
tameva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam
तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥ 2 - 2 - 10
tasya bhāsā sarvamidaṃ vibhāti ॥

As we may recall, we saw this verse already in कठोपनिषत् *kāthopaniṣat* (5 - 15)

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति *na tatra sūryo bhāti*

तत्र *tatra* - There

तस्मिन् ब्रह्मणि *tasmin brahmaṇi* - In That ब्रह्मन् *brahman* which is आत्म स्वरूपं *ātma svarūpaṃ*, which is identical with आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I

सूर्यः न भाति *sūryo na bhānti* - the sun does not shine, which means even though the sun lights up every object on earth, it does not light up आत्मा *ātmā*, The ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. Similarly

न चन्द्र तारकं *na candra tārakam* - neither the moon, nor the stars light up आत्मा *ātmā*, the ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

न इमाः विद्युतः भान्ति *ne imā vidyutah bhānti* - even these flashy lightnings do not light up the आत्मा *ātmā*. When that is so

कुतः अयं अग्निः *kutah ayam agniḥ* - How can this fire light up आत्मा *ātmā*. Surely fire also does not light up आत्मा *ātmā*

तमेव भान्तं अनुभाति सर्वम् *tameva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam* - सर्वम् अनुभाति *sarvam anubhāti* all of them, the sun, the moon, the stars, the fire, etc., all of them shine after



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तं भान्तं एव *taṁ bhāntaṁ eva* - The self-shining आत्मा *ātmā* alone, which means, आत्मा *ātmā* alone shines, and everything else shines after the shine of आत्मा *ātmā*, which is indeed ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः *jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ* - the light for all other lights.

The sun, the moon, the stars, the mind, the बुद्धि *buddhi*, etc. shine because The आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I shines, just as hot water is hot because of its contact with the fire underneath and not because of its own nature. Similarly, आत्मवस्तु भाति *ātmavastu bhāti*, सर्वम् अनुभाति आत्मा *sarvam anubhāti ātmā* - आत्मा *ātmā* shines by Itself, and everything else shines after आत्मा *ātmā*.

All, because of ONE light of आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I, there are the light of sun, the light of moon, the light of stars, the light of fire, etc., which means, each one of these things, namely the sun, the moon, the stars, the fire, etc. shine distinctly as they do, only because of ONE Being, namely the ज्योति स्वरूप शुद्ध चैतन्य आत्मा *jyoti svarūpa śuddha caitanya ātmā* - Self-effulgent Pure Consciousness, which is the स्वरूप *svarūpa* of आत्मा *ātmā* - the true nature of Self I, already in oneself. Therefore, the Upanishad says:

तस्य भासा सर्वम् इदं विभाति *tasya bhāsā sarvam idaṁ vibhāti* - Because of the shine of आत्मा *ātmā*, all that exist in this creation shine as they do. The light of आत्मा *ātmā* lights up everything else in this creation. Thus

आत्मा भाति *ātmā bhāti*, विभाति च *vibhāti ca* - आत्मा *ātmā* shines by Itself, and It also shines variously in different forms, such as the sun, the moon, the stars, the fire, etc.

आत्मा भाति *ātmā bhāti* - आत्मा *ātmā* shines without any distinction. आत्मा *ātmā* is self-effulgent, self shining

आत्मा विभाति च *ātmā vibhāti ca* - आत्मा *ātmā* shines with all distinctions also; and indeed every object in this creation shines after आत्मा *ātmā* only.

Thus आत्मा स्वयं भाति *ātmā svayaṁ bhāti*, विशेषेण भाति च *viśeṣeṇa bhāti ca* - आत्मा *ātmā* shines by Itself, and It also shines as various objects of knowledge, such as sun knowledge, moon knowledge, and indeed any object knowledge. Therefore, what is



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it that I need to do to recognize That शुद्ध चैतन्य स्वरूप आत्मा *śuddha caitanya svarūpa ātmā*? Indeed nothing. The self-fulgence of आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I is recognizable by simply recognizing the Pure Consciousness because of which alone I see, I recognize any object anywhere at any time. Thus whatever I see, anywhere, at any time, I only see

तं एव भान्तं अनुभाति सर्वम् *tam eva bhāntaṁ anubhāti sarvam*, तस्य भासा सर्वम् इदं विभाति *tasya bhāsā sarvam idaṁ vibhāti* - आत्मा *ātmā* The Self I, shines as everything one sees. आत्मा *ātmā* The ब्रह्मन् *brahman* being as It is, the Upanishad says:

43. ब्रह्म एव इदं अमृतं पुरुस्तात् ब्रह्म
brahma eva idaṁ amṛtaṁ purustāt brahma
पश्चात् ब्रह्म दक्षिणतश्च उत्तरेण
paścāt brahma dakṣiṇataśca uttarena
अधश्च ऊर्ध्वम् च प्रसृतं
adhaśca ūrdhvam ca prasṛtaṁ
ब्रह्म एव इदं विश्वम् इदं वरिष्ठं ॥ 2 - 2 - 11
brahma eva idaṁ viśvam idaṁ variṣṭhaṁ ॥

The content of this verse is:

ईशावास्यं इदं सर्वम् *īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvam* - वासुदेवः सर्वम् इति ज्ञानं *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti jñānaṁ* - All this creation, including everything, without exception, in this everchanging creation is ईशावास्यं *īśāvāsyam* - indwelt by ईश्वर *īśvara*, enveloped by ईश्वर *īśvara*, and in and out permeated by ईश्वर *īśvara*, which means परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is All. That is knowledge, That is Absolute Reality of all existence. The Upanishad here communicates the same message in these words:

ब्रह्म एव इदं *brahma eva idaṁ* - इदं *idaṁ* - Anything that is subject to objectification in this creation is ब्रह्म एव *brahma eva*, is, in fact, ब्रह्मन् *brahman* only. ब्रह्मन् *brahman* being the निमित्त कारणं *nimitta kāraṇam* - the efficient cause as well as the material cause for all objects in this creation, and the cause always exists in all its effects, ब्रह्मन् *brahman* is the अधिष्ठान *adhiṣṭhana* - the basis for all forms of



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existence. Consequently, the absolute reality of all existence is only ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. All forms and names are only transient superimpositions on That ब्रह्मन् *brahman*.

ब्रह्म एव अमृतं *brahma eva amṛtaṁ* - ब्रह्मन् *brahman* - The आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I alone is limitless, eternal and never subject to change.

ब्रह्मन् *brahman* being आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I Itself, ब्रह्मन् *brahman* being The ONE never subject to change, and at the same time being the very basis for all objects in this everchanging creation, it is clear that I am ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, and

पुरुस्तात् ब्रह्म *purustāt brahma* - whatever I see in front of me is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

पश्चात् ब्रह्म *paścāt brahma* - whatever is behind me is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

दक्षिणतः च ब्रह्म *dakṣiṇataḥ ca brahma* - whatever is on my right is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

उत्तरेण च ब्रह्म *uttareṇa ca brahma* - whatever is on my left is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

अधः च ब्रह्म *adhah ca brahma* - whatever is below me is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

ऊर्ध्वम् च ब्रह्म *ūrdhvam ca brahma* - whatever is above me is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

प्रसृतं ब्रह्म *prasṛtaṁ brahma* - ब्रह्मन् *brahman* is all-pervasive and all-inclusive

ब्रह्म एव इदं विश्वम् *brahma eva idaṁ viśvam* - This entire creation is only ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. Nothing in this creation is independent of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, is away from ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

इदं ब्रह्म एव वरिष्ठं *idaṁ brahma eva variṣṭhaṁ* - This ब्रह्मन् *brahman* alone is the most supreme, the most sacred, and the most worshipful Being there is.

Thus concludes section 2 of Chapter 2 of मुण्डक उपनिषत् *muṇḍaka upaniṣat*

ब्रह्म एव इदं विश्वम् *brahma eva idaṁ viśvam* - Every objectifiable entity in this creation, every name and form in this creation, including the creation as a whole, is indeed ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself.

The above statement is the final and complete answer to Saunaka's original question, namely



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"कस्मिन्नु भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वम् इदं विज्ञातं भवति *kasminnu bhagavo vijñāte sarvam idam vijñātam bhavati* Recognizing the true nature of which alone, the true nature of every object in this creation becomes as well recognized?"

The answer is, if one recognizes the identity of ONESELF, The आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I as ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself, as परमेश्वर *parameśvar* already in one's बुद्धि *buddhi*-हृदय *hr̥daya*-आकाश *ākāśa*, Itself, as one's self-effulgent all-inclusive Pure Consciousness Itself, then one naturally recognizes the true nature of every object in this creation as That ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself, as ONESELF, the आत्मा *ātmā* I Itself.

What is That ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, That आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I and how the identity of ONESELF as That ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself, That आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I Itself can be recognized by the diligent pursuit of Upanishad knowledge and ओं मन्त्र उपासन *ōm̐ mantra upāsana* - contemplation on the content of the ओं मन्त्र *ōm̐ mantra* - The word ओं *ōm̐* as unfolded by the Upanishads have already been told in the first two chapters of this Upanishad.

Therefore, with the concluding statement ब्रह्म एव इदं विश्वं *brahma eva idam viśvam̐* - the purpose, with which the Upanishad started, is already fulfilled.

But the Upanishad is not yet over, because, it is clear that there are people, like most of us, who are not able to identify with ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, The आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I, in spite of one's understanding and appreciation of the knowledge communicated in the first four sections constituting the two chapters of this Upanishad.

Hence, this Upanishad has a third chapter involving two sections, which talk about the preredquired ethical values and personal qualities one must first cultivate in full measure in order to become fit for self-recognition as unfolded earlier in the Upanishad.

We will start with section 1 of Chapter 3 next time.