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ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

तैत्तिरीय उपनिषत् *taittirīya upaniṣat*

Chapter 3

भृगु वल्ली *bṛgu vallī*

Lesson 1

Volume 28

हरिः ॐ

*harīh om*

सह नावतु सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यम् करवाव है ।

*saha nāvavatu saha nau bhunaktu / saha vīryam karavāva hai /*

तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषाव है ॥

*tejasvināvadhitamastu mā vidviṣāva hai ॥*

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

*om śāntih śāntih śāntih ॥*

भृगुर्वै वारुणिः । वरुणं पितरमुपससार ।

*bṛguvai vāruṇih / varuṇam pītarāmupasasāra /*

अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति । तस्मा एतत्प्रोवाच ।

*adhīhi bhagavo brahmeti / tasmā etatprovāca /*

अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचमिति ।

*annaṁ prāṇam cakṣuḥ śrotram mano vācamiti /*

तँ होवाच । यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।

*taṁ hovāca / yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante /*

येन जातानि जीवन्ति । यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति ।

*yena jātāni jīvanti / yatprayantyaabhisamviśanti /*

तत् विजिज्ञासस्य । तत् ब्रह्मेति ।

*tat vijijñāsasva / tat brahmeti /*

स तपोऽतप्यत । स तपस्तप्त्वा ।

*sa tapo'tapyata / sa tapastaptvā /*

इति प्रथमोऽनुवाकः

*iti prathamo'nuvākaḥ*



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

As we have learnt from Chapter 1 (Lesson 9), the तपस् *tapas* - 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

वाक् तपस् *vāk tapas*, काय तपस् *kāya tapas* and मानस तपस् *mānasa tapas* - total self-control with respect to actions involving speech, organs of perception and action, and mind and

वेद अध्ययनं *veda adhyayanam* and वेद अध्यापनं *veda adhyāpanam* - 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 *tapas* - self-discipline needed for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānaṁ*, recognizing ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, becoming a ब्रह्मवित् *brahmavit*- knower of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, enjoying ब्रह्मानन्द *brahmānand*.

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



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श्रद्धायान् लभते ज्ञानं, तत् परः संयतेन्द्रियः

*śraddhāvān labhate jñānaṁ, tat paraḥ saṁyatendriyaḥ*

श्रद्धा *śraddhā* is overriding commitment to the pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānaṁ*, and

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

How does one get श्रद्धा *śraddhā* and संयत इन्द्रिय *saṁyata indriya* with respect to ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānaṁ*? That is primarily a matter of one's own values in life. श्रद्धा *śraddhā* in ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānaṁ* arises from one's realization of the value of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānaṁ* 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 *kāthopaniṣat* in its entirety, Nachiketa ever shines in our mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* as the very embodiment of श्रद्धा *śraddhā* in ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānaṁ*. संयत इन्द्रिय *saṁyata indriya* - Complete control over one's sense organs and sense pursuits is possible only through अभ्यास - practice and वैराग्य *vairāgya*- dispassion, which means total objectivity in focusing one's mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* on the mission to be accomplished. In the pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānaṁ*, the mission is to become a ब्रह्मविद् *brahmavit* - knower of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, enjoying ब्रह्मानन्द *brahmānand*, through विचार - self-enquiry.

Such विचार *vicāra* and इन्द्रिय निग्रह *indriya nigraha* together constitute the तपस् *tapas* which is ब्रह्म ज्ञान साधनं *brahma jñāna sādhanam*, the key to the successful pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānaṁ*. To highlight the importance of such तपस् *tapas* for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānaṁ*, the उपासन *upāsana* 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 *bhṛgurvai vāruṇih*

वै *vai* - As it is well known भृगुः चारुणिः *bhṛguh vāruṇih* - Bhrigu is the son of वरुण देवता *varuṇ devatā*



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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 *tapas* of भृगु *bhṛgu* is a source of inspiration to all those who are in the pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*. About that Brigu, the Upanishad continues:

वरुणं पितरमुपससार, भृगुः पितरं वरुणं उपससार *varuṇam pitaramupasasāra, bhṛguḥ pitaram varuṇam upasasāra* - Brigu approached his father Varuna in the proper manner with this request (उपससार *upasasāra*) अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्मति *adhīhi bhagavo brahmati* - अधीहि भगवः ब्रह्म इति *adhīhi bhagavaḥ brahma iti*

भगवः *bhagavaḥ*, भगवन् *bhagavan* - Revered Sir

अधीहि ब्रह्म *adhīhi brahma* - Please teach me ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*. Please teach me how to become a ब्रह्मवित् *brahmavit*, how to know ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, reach ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, recognize ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, enjoy ब्रह्मानन्द *brahmānand*.

इति *iti* - 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 *brahman*, recognize ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, enjoy ब्रह्मानन्द *brahmānand*. 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 *brahma jñānam*? 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 *brahma jñānam*. 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 *varuṇa* being an अधिष्ठान देवता *adhiṣṭhān devatā* - a presiding deity in this creation, is Himself fit to be worshipped as परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Himself. Hence by approaching Varuna as the teacher, Brigu was actually seeking the very grace of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* for the fulfillment of his purpose, namely gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*, becoming a ब्रह्मवित् *brahmavit*, enjoying ब्रह्मानन्द *brahmānand*. By addressing his father as भगवन् *bhagavan*, it is clear that भृगु *bhṛgu* approached Varuna as teacher for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*.



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Brigu's request "अधीहि भगवो ब्रह्म *adhihi bhagavo brahma*" is itself a Veda mantra, which is the formal way a committed student seeks ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam* from a revered teacher. Such seeking is called विधिवत् गुरु उपासनम् *vidhivat guru upāsanam* – 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 *brahma jñānam*, because it is the only thing that can give lasting happiness to any person. Therefore, Varuna was happy to accept Brigu as a शिष्य *śiṣya*– as a disciple-student to teach the means of reaching ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. It is not often that a father-son relationship coincides with the teacher-student relationship with respect to ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*. 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 *brahman*, recognizing ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. Then what happened?

तस्मा एतत् प्रोवाच *tasmā etat provāca*  
तस्मा *tasmā* – तस्मै *tasmai* To him, to Brigu  
एतत् *etat* – as follows  
प्रोवाच *provāca* – 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 *tasmā etat provāca* – Lord Varuna accepted Brigu as student, disciple for ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam* and commenced his teachings as follows:

अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचम् इति *annam prāṇam cakṣuḥ śrotram mano vācam iti* – Lord Varuna first points out the instruments by which ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam* can be gained, ब्रह्मन् *brahman* can be reached, ब्रह्मन् *brahman* can be recognized. These instruments are:

अन्नं *annam* – Food. It also means शरीर *śarīra* – the physical body. In this Upanishad, both the meanings are applicable.



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

चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचम् *caṅṣuḥ śrotraṁ mano vācam* - 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 *brahman* is. He wants Brigu to recognize ब्रह्मन् *brahman* 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 *brahman*, recognize ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, 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 बुद्धि *buddhi*, already in yourself, through your body instruments of perception and action, because, अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचम् *annaṁ prāṇam caṅṣuḥ śrotraṁ mano vācam* etc. are ब्रह्म ज्ञान साधनानि *brahma jñāna sādhanāni* - they are the means for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*. They are ब्रह्मउपलभ्यध्वाराणि *brahma upalabhya dhvārāṇi*. They are the doors through which you can enter into yourself, you can reach ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, you can recognize ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, already in yourself.

अन्नं *annaṁ* here means शरीर *śarīra* - the physical body, the entire कारण *kāraṇa*, कार्य *kārya*, संगत *saṅgāta* - the cause-effect assembly within the body one is already blessed with. प्राणं *prāṇam* here means अत्तारं *attāraṁ* - the one who eats, the eater. Now, who is the eater in one's physical body? ब्रह्मन् *brahman* is the eater. Sri Krishna says: (G .15-4)

अहं वैश्वनरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।

*ahaṁ vaiśvanaro bhūtvā praṇināṁ dehamāśritaḥ ।*

प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥

*praṇāpāna samāyuktaḥ pacāmyannaṁ caturvidham ॥*

Bhagwan is the very वैश्वनर *vaiśvanara* - the sacred fire in the body. Whatever food we eat, that is again cooked by वैश्वनर *vaiśvanara* - the sacred fire already existing in the physical body of all living beings. This वैश्वनर *vaiśvanara* fire - the digestive fire, is linked to प्राण *prāṇa*, अपान *apaana*, व्यान *vyaana*, उदान *udāna* and समान



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*samāna*, and indeed to all physiological functions. Therefore, in this Upanishad, प्राण *prāṇa* stands for वैश्वनर *vaiśvanara*, which includes all of one's physiological functions, चक्षुः *cakṣuḥ* and श्रोत्रं *śrotram* - organs of sight and hearing stand for all ज्ञानेन्द्रिय *jñānendriyas* - organs of perception, वाक् *vāk* - organ of speech stands for all कर्मेन्द्रिय *karmendriyas* - organs of action, and मनः *manaḥ* - the mind stands for the entire अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* - the internal organs of perception namely मनस् *manas*, बुद्धि *buddhi*, अहंकार *ahaṁkāra* and चित्त *citta* (mind, intellect, ego, and the faculty of recollection). Naturally, therefore, मनः *manaḥ* stands for विज्ञानं also - the faculty by which one ultimately recognizes ब्रह्मन् *brahman* already in oneself. All the above components of the physical body are ब्रह्म उपलभ्यध्वार *brahma upalabhya dhvāras*. They are doors by crossing which the unseen ब्रह्मन् *brahman* can be seen, can be recognized in oneself. That is what Lord Varuna points out by saying:

अन्नं प्राणं चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाचम् इति *annaṁ prāṇaṁ cakṣuḥ śrotram mano vācam iti* (प्रोवाच *provāca*) - Having said that, Lord Varuna continues तै होवाच *taim hovāca* - तै *taim* (भृगुं *bhṛguṁ*), (वरुणः *varuṇaḥ*) उवाच ह *uvāca ha*

तै भृगुं *taim bhṛguṁ* - to the student-disciple Brigu, the कार *m kāra* here indicates that Brigu is not an ordinary student. He is already a well-informed जिज्ञासु *jiḥāsū*, one totally committed to the successful pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma*. To that Brigu

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

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते *yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante*  
यतः *yataḥ* - यस्मात् *yasmāt* - That from which



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वा *vā* - indeed

इमानि भूतानि *imāni bhūtāni* - इदं सर्वम् *idaṁ sarvam* - all that exist in this creation

जायन्ते *jāyante* - are born

येन जातानि जीवन्ति *yena jātāni jīvanti*

येन *yena* - That by which, That because of which

जातानि *jātāni* - those which are born

जीवन्ति *jīvanti* - live and grow, and

यत् प्रयन्ति अभिसंविशन्ति *yat pryanti abhisamviśanti*

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

प्रयन्ति *pryanti* - on departing from life

अभिसंविशन्ति *abhisamviśanti* - go back, enter into entirely.

Therefore, the three ब्रह्मलक्षणस *brahma lakṣaṇas* given to Brigu are:

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते *yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante* - That from which all that exist in this creation are born

येन जातानि जीवन्ति *yena jātāna jīvanti* - That by which , those which are born live and grow, and

यत् प्रयन्ति अभिसंविशन्ति *yat pryanti abhisamviśanti* - 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 लक्षणस *lakṣaṇas* of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, Lord Varuna tells Brigu:

तत् विजिज्ञासस्व *tat vijijñāsasva* - तत् विशेषेण ज्ञातुं इच्छस्व *tat viśeṣeṇa jñātum icchasva* - May you desire to know, and find out for yourself, clearly, without any doubt, That which satisfies all the three लक्षणस *lakṣaṇas* - characteristics given above. When you do that

तत् ब्रह्मेति *tat brahmeti* - तत् ब्रह्म इति *tat brahma iti*

तत् ब्रह्म *brahma* - That is ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

इति *iti* - so said Lord Varuna.



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Let us understand the ब्रह्मलक्षणसु *brahma lakṣaṇas* given by Lord Varuna. I am like a wave in the ocean. Before I was born, I was in ब्रह्मन् *brahman* in the unmanifest state. After I was born, and while I am alive, I am in ब्रह्मन् *brahman* in the manifest state. And, after the death of my body, I will still be in ब्रह्मन् *brahman* 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 *brahman*.

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 *brahman*. May you recognize That ब्रह्मन् *brahman* in yourself with the help of अन्नं *annam*, प्राणं *prāṇam*, etc. and also the three ब्रह्म लक्षणसु *brahma lakṣaṇas* 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 *sa tapo'tapyata* - सः *saḥ* (भृगुः *bhṛguḥ*) तपः अतप्यत - *tapaḥ atapyata* - Brigu did तपस् *tapas*, contemplating on ब्रह्मन् *brahman*. Brigu resorted to तपस् *tapas* for knowing ब्रह्मन् *brahman* on his own accord, at his own initiative, because he was sufficiently well informed to realize that तपस् *tapas* was the only surest and the most efficient means for accomplishing any desired objective. His commitment to the pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam* was so absolute that he naturally resorted to तपस् *tapas* to gain ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*, reach ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, already in himself. -

स तपस्तप्त्या *sa tapastaptvā* - सः तपः तप्त्या *saḥ tapaḥ taptvā* - Brigu, having performed his तपस् *tapas*...

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