

- Mundaka Upanishad Vol 11

“Just as from a very well burning fire, thousands of sparks of fire arise and come out...”

All these sparks of fire are identical with the nature of the blazing fire itself, which means, in terms of their inherent nature, each spark of fire is fire itself.

From blazing fire arise and come out thousands of sparks of fire, all of which have the same essential nature as fire itself. They are therefore self-effulgent and have identical characteristics and potentialities as fire itself.

That all sparks of fire are of the nature of fire Itself is True, a Truth that is never subject to change.

If each spark of fire is fire itself, then why call it spark?

The spark is so called because of its difference in form, limited by time and space. But differences born of one's form and name, do not and cannot change the true nature, the inherent nature of the spark of fire being fire itself.

Now, suppose, just imagine, the spark says: "I am only a miserable tiny spark. I exist only for a few seconds. I am mortal, etc."

The Upanishad now wakes up the spark and teaches: " O! spark, you are not spark at all. Spark is only your name and form. You are in fact fire itself. You are indeed hot, self-effulgent, sparkling fire, with all the characteristics and potentialities of fire itself. Please recognize your true nature. You are indeed fire itself".

Contemplating on the above teachings of the Upanishads, suppose the spark is able to recognize its true nature as fire itself.

Now, let us understand what the Upanishad actually did.

The Upanishad did not make "spark" into fire.

The spark was already fire, and it has been so all along.

The spark was only ignorant of its own true nature all along, ever since its birth, until it was awakened by the Upanishad by its teaching:

"You are indeed fire itself". That Upanishad teaching removed self-ignorance in spark. When self-ignorance was removed, the spark gained immediate knowledge of its own true nature, as It is.

That is exactly what the Upanishad teaching does. Upanishad teaching removes self-ignorance, and gives a person immediate knowledge of oneself, as one really is, provided the person is both emotionally and intellectually ready for such awakening.

The Upanishad says:

“Just as , from a blazing fire, thousands of sparks, all having the same essential nature as fire itself, arise and come out; in a similar manner from THAT Eternal Source all the different varieties and multitudes of beings in this entire creation, all having different forms, names and distinguishing characteristics, still all of them having the same essential nature as the Source arise and come out, manifesting themselves as they are. That means, the true nature of every Being in this creation is the Source Itself.

The true nature of myself, yourself, everyone else, and everything else in this creation is that Source Itself.

All the differences among us are only with respect to differences in name, form, time, space and related consequences, which do not, and cannot change the true nature of every Being in this creation, including the creation itself.

By the above statement, the Upanishad unfolds immediate knowledge of the true nature of every Being in this creation, including the creation itself as:

-The "Self I" in oneself, and indeed, in every self -

Further, the Upanishad states:

"All Beings in this creation, with their varieties and multitude of body limitations,

on the dissolution of their transient existence also merge into That Same ONE Itself,

- That from which, all that exists in this creation are born

- That by which, those which are born, live and grow, and

- That, into which, all those which live and grow, ultimately go back into, giving up their forms and names, and become ONE with That from which they came.

Thus, in this opening verse the Upanishad communicates three distinct messages:

1. The Upanishad removes Self-ignorance, and unfolds immediate knowledge on the true nature of oneself as The One Source Itself.

2. The Upanishad calls attention to the eternal fact that the true nature of every Being in this creation, including the creation itself, is the One Source.

3. Every Being in this creation, including the creation itself, arises from, is sustained by and ultimately resolves into That One Source Itself.

This means that the One Source, while Itself being causeless, is both the efficient instrumental cause as well as the material cause for every Being in this creation, including the creation itself.

All this knowledge is Absolute truth, never subject to change.

This is the content of the opening verse.

While it is easy enough for any one to recognize that "the true nature of a spark of fire is fire itself", it is not that easy to recognize that "the true nature of oneself is The One Source Itself."