

# Kena Upanishad.

Talks on Kena Upanishad

BY

Swami Parmarthananda Saraswati

## Contents

Talk 1:-General Introduction.....	3
Talk 2:-Shanthy Patha (Peace Invocation).....	11
Talk 3:- Shanti Patha and Khanda 1:Mantra 1.....	17
Talk 4:- Khanda 1: Mantras 1 to 3.....	26
Talk 5:- Khanda 1: Mantras 3 to 9.....	35
Talk 6:- Khanda 2: Mantras 1 to 3.....	43
Talk 7:- Khanda 2: Mantras 4 to 5.....	52
Talk 8:- Khanda 3: Mantras 1.....	60
Talk 9:- Khanda 3: Mantras 2 to 12.....	68
Talk 10:- Khanda 5: Mantras 1 to 4.....	74
Talk 11:- Khanda 5: Mantras 5 to 9.....	82
Talk 12:- Summary.....	91

## Talk 1:-General Introduction

Today I will give you a general introduction to the next Upanishad namely Kena Upanishad. While introducing the previous Upanishad (Mundaka), I had pointed out that our basic scriptures from which this knowledge is derived are known as the Vedas. The word Veda literally means a source of knowledge or a means of knowledge. It is derived from the root *vid* to know

*Vidanti anena iti Veda-* that through which people acquire knowledge is called Veda

Veda deals with the fulfillment of all the human goals.

*Vidanti chaturaha Purusharthaan tat prapti Upanishadyancha anena iti Vedaha* – that through which a person knows about the four types of human goals – Dharma, Artha, Kama , Moksha-- as well as the means of fulfilling those goals is known as Veda

This Veda is also known by another name i.e *Shruti* because it is supposed to be “heard” by the Rishis when they were in meditation; this knowledge was transmitted by or given out by the Lord himself. So the Lord is supposed to be the source of the Vedic wisdom and the Rishis served as the medium through whom we received this knowledge. The Rishis did not invent this wisdom; but they served as a pipeline to give wisdom to humanity. And since the Rishis heard this knowledge in their meditations through their *Tapas*(austerities), these Vedas are also known as *Shruti*.

*Shrutyate iti Shruti* :- The heard Wisdom is Shruti

These Vedas are broadly classified into two portions.

- The first portion is called Veda Purvaha.
- And the final portion is called Veda Antaha or Vedanta (when joined as one word)

### **Veda Purva (Initial Portion)**

The Veda Purva i.e the initial portion, deals with varieties of religious activities for the fulfillment of all human desires. The human being, right from birth is driven by desires. As a child I had a desire- a childish desire- for toys and other things. As I grew up, I did not get rid of the desire.

THAT I DESIRE... Continues. WHAT I DESIRE... varies.

So the objects of desires varied but the process of desire continues right from the cradle to the grave. And the Veda knows this need of the human being and the LORD through Veda wants to help the Human being in these pursuits. We find ourselves struggling to fulfill these desires and often we fail in the pursuit of the same. In this human pursuit, Veda wants to give us a supporting hand.

And so the Veda holds out a board and says- “Can I help you?” Veda does not impose anything. “If you are interested I am here to help you.”

For the purpose of fulfilling desires Veda prescribes a variety of activities in the *Purva Bhaga* (initial portion). The Vedic activities are called Karma and since the Veda Purva is full of Vedic Activities it is called Karma Kandam; Kanda means section and Karma Kanda means Ritualistic Section

---

These Vedic Karma can be broadly classified into three types based on the instrument that you use for doing the Karma.

- **Body Karma (*Kayika Karmani*)** :- Some of the Karmas are heavily body oriented physical activities. They may be backed by the mind but are mainly dominated by the body. Some of these are *Yaaga*, *Yagya* or *Pooja* etc. All such bodily karmas are called *Kayika Karmani*. Thousands of such karma are given in the Veda
- **Activity Using Speech (*Vachika Karmani*)** – The second class of activity that we can do is purely Verbal i.e we use our organ of speech for the performance of the Karma. These including chanting *Stotras* (Hymns) Or *Naam Japa* (Holy names of the Lord)

**For e.g** If you read the *Vishnu Sahasranama* (Thousand Names of Vishnu) we have a *phala Shruthi* (Fruit of the Activity performed) mentioned at the end.

*Dharmarthi prapnuyaat Dharma....etc (Refer Vishnu Sahasranama)*

Now for what particular action are you getting these Benefits? You have not done anything physically... these are just benefits of chanting the *Vishnu Sahasranama*. All such karmas are called *Vachika KARmani* or Activity using the Organs of Speech. Not only are general results prescribed for the Entire *Vishnu Sahasranama* but also each verse is selected for a specific benefit. So if you have an eye problem you are supposed to chant such and such verse. Similarly if you are economically weak, you can chant the verse *Shridhas...etc. (Refer Vishnu Sahasranama)*.

I can hear all of you saying...let us learn Kena Upanishad later... we need the money now. ☺ .

Anyway, Similar verses are there for leg problems, family problem, marriage problems etc. Some verses are selected from *Vishnu Sahasranama* , or some *Riks* are selected from the *Rudram* or some *mantras* from the *Shri Suktam*, or some *Shlokas* from the *Saundarya Lahari* etc. Each has its own result. All of this will come under *Vachika karmani*- verbal activity

- **Mental Activity (*Manasa Karmani*)**:- Finally the activity purely done through your mental equipment known as *Manasa karmani* or *Upasanani* wherein we use the mind alone for activity.

These Mental Activities are themselves are of many types. In fact you can do an entire Puja mentally; this is called *Manasa Pujaja* (mental ritual). Whatever you do physically, you can do the same mentally.

People often come to me and ask me what they should do when they are travelling by air or train and they cannot do their regular puja or *Sandhyavandhanam* or temple visits etc.

Here is a wonderful method. You can do your whole puja in the train also!! Go to the bathroom, wash your feet and hands and face and apply some *Vibhooti* (holy Ash) and close your eyes. Now do everything that you do physically, in your mind. It will come under *Manasa Karma*.

Is it efficacious? Scripture says that it is MORE efficacious than physical puja! Similarly the entire *Sandhyavandhanam* can be mentally done.

And not only can puja be mentally done; even Japa when done mentally will come under *Upasana*. *Manasa puja (mental ritual)*, *Manasa parayanam* (mental repetition of holy names) and *Manasa japa* (mental chanting) comes under *Upasana*. Whatever you do mentally comes under *Manasa Karma*.

In addition to all these things there is also the visualization of the deity which is called *Dhyanam*

For e.g *Shirodhanva....( Verse describing Vishnu Refer Vishnu Sahasranama)*

Here the description of the Lord is given. You can invoke the lord mentally and the scriptures point out that whatever is the predominant quality of that deity that benefit or feature will accrue to the worshipper

*Yatha yatha Upasthe tadeva bhavathi – What you think, so you become*

- So one who meditates on a deity with beauty gets a beautiful form. Whoever wants to become Miss Universe can do this; *Tripura Sundari Upasana!!!* ☺
- If u want money meditate on Lakshmi Devi with a lot of money around. ☺ ☺
- If you want knowledge, there is Saraswati Devi.

So we have *Kayika*, *Vachika* and *Manasa karma* in the Veda Purva (Not Vedanta mind you!!)

---

For these three types of karmas the scriptures promise three types of results also depending upon the nature of your desire. All human desire falls into only one of these three categories

- 1) **Improvement of the *Upaadhi* or equipment** – Either I want to improve the efficacy of the body or if there are any sicknesses I want to get rid of that. When I say improvement of the body, I am also including the subtle body. This is because a human being knows that any enjoyment requires a healthy body- mind complex.

Imagine a wonderful music program on the radio and you are deaf! Where is the question of enjoyment? The best musician in the world cannot help you. Saraswati Devi may herself come and play Veena but there can be no enjoyment. Even here while sitting in the class for an hour, your body and mind should not be disturbed. If after half an hour your knee begins to hurt; the class is over for you!!! Your attention is now on the knee.

Or perhaps your mind is disturbed. While you were coming to class, a rash driver overtook your vehicle via the left. Some people are so particular about this that they may go crazy and the Class is over for them! To enjoy anything, you require a relaxed body-mind-sense complex. And hence many desires are centered on oneself. And many rituals are meant for this.

- 2) **Acquiring the objects of enjoyment or *Vishaya Prapti*** – If I have got all the sense organs in healthy condition that is not enough. The organs need to interact with sense objects to enjoy. If I have a healthy system, I can certainly eat well. But I also need the resources i.e food.

Without good food, what is the use of having a nice tongue? And without wonderful things to see, what is the purpose of the eye? Not only do I need my sense organs, but I also want *Vishayas* as well because only when they interact (sense organs and objects) do I draw pleasure. And Veda knows that human beings will first ask for health, but later when health is granted they will also ask for “things”.

- 3) **Acquiring the correct environment or *Loka***:- Veda has studied the human life comprehensively. Even if one has a healthy body and pleasant objects, a happy life is possible only when the environment is harmonious, peaceful and healthy. Suppose there is a news that a terrorist has planted a Bomb somewhere here (don't worry, we are fine here...it is only an example ☺), then you may not enjoy anything that is spoken. Or if you see poverty around, you can never enjoy your posh house because whenever you open your window you will see the other people suffering! And so to enjoy something, along with the sense organs and objects you also need a conducive environment or *Loka*.

Hence we have seen that there is *trividham karma phalam*; threefold fruits of actions i.e *Upaadhi Phalam, Vishaya Phalam and Loka Phalam*

All of these are discussed in the Veda Purva. And Veda Says that if anyone wants something let him perform the appropriate Karma.

*Pashu Kamashchinvita....(Vedic Mantra Sung here)*

*Pashuman Bhavati....*

Do you want cattle? Do you want rains? Do you want health? Do you want shining skin? Do you want fame? For whatever you want Veda Purva prescribes a ritual. And generally people are interested in these things.

---

However Veda points out that if a person goes through life enjoying a healthy body, possessing sense objects and having a healthy environment and if such a person is a thinking person who is willing to learn from his experience, he will discover some important things.

He will discover that although these results of actions are all wonderful and they give pleasures; all of these have certain intrinsic defects. They have minus points also. We don't say they have minus points only...Be Careful here. We say they ALSO have minus points. For every result you have to pay the price. And this generally is something people do not understand. Because for most of the people life is purely mechanical.

*Balastavat Kreedasaktaha... (Shankaracharya Bhaja Govindam)*

*When you were a kid you wanted play, as a young man you desired women etc....*

People have no time for thinking. And nowadays with so many distractions, the ability to introspect is even more difficult. However there are some people – *Brahmanas* ; i.e. cultured thinking persons- who lead an alert non-mechanical life. The number of such people will always be few. Krishna says in the Geeta....

*Manushyanaam Sahasra...(Geeta)*

*Only one in a thousand is interested in knowledge etc....*

So you will never see the entire Madras city turn up for a Geeta or Upanishad class. Some rare people may turn up. And such rare people are those that discover some defects in the *Karma Phalams*. What are these defects?

Three types of defects are there in ALL these Karma Phalam.

- 1) ***Dukha Mishritatvam*** :-All these pleasures are mixed with pain also. They are not unalloyed pleasures. Why do we say this? To accomplish these results, one has to struggle. Nothing comes free; which means there is planning and tension and anxiety. Something may go wrong at the very end. The higher the pleasure, the greater the competition. When it pays well, everybody desires a bank job. Later everybody wants to become an Accountant. The moment something pays well, all are after that particular object.

Accomplishing an object is not enough. One has to retain it. As the Tennis Ace will say, "Getting to the top of the ATP rankings is easy but retaining it is more difficult". That is why there are upsets in Sports. Retention is as difficult as accomplishment.

Someone said: - "First I want Status. Then I want Status Quo". That Status Quo is almost impossible.

In Sanskrit, the first problem is called "Yoga" – union problem. And the second problem is called Kshema – "Retention problem". If Accomplishment involved pain, maintenance involves even more pain. And despite all the efforts taken to maintain the status quo, whatever is accomplished will be lost one day. Everything is a gift from the Lord and the Lord has the right to take away anything at any time without a Notice period. ☺ Even your very life itself can be taken away!

And when loss takes place despite my best efforts then that is the greatest pain. Therefore, acquisition is *Dukham* (pain), preservation is *Dukhataram* (more pain), and loss is *Dukhatamam* (highest pain).

- 2) ***Atripiti Karatvam*** :- Whatever we accomplish with our actions is going to be finite. The rule is "As the Action, so is the result. Every Action has a proportionate result."

And we know that all actions are finite in nature. In Mundaka Upanishad, we discussed that all the accessories or instruments used in action are finite; the working people are finite, the working place is finite and the working duration is finite. When all of these are finite then it is illogical to expect an infinite result out of a finite action. Any *Karma phalam* is therefore going to be finite and no one is going to be happy with finitude.

As long as I am finite, I am going to keep looking for the next higher possibility. Until I get one house, I may be craving for that. But once I get this one house, then I immediately feel that I need another house in Ooty or Kodaikanal so that I can spend my summer holidays there! If I have one car, I feel that I need an extra car....one for me and one for my spouse. Or perhaps two TV's so that I don't have to fight with my spouse about what Channel to watch.

Whatever you have, you always think of the next possibility. The other people may be envious of you, but you always feel that something more is possible.

Nachiketas tells us in Kathopanishad...No Human Being can ever be satisfied with any amount of money.

That is why Rs 800 Crore scams are possible! Those people who do such scams, do this because they still feel that they do not have enough...I don't even know how many zeroes are there in this number ☺ . All *Karma phalam* continues to keep one in a state of dissatisfaction.

3) **Bandha Tatvam**: - All the Karmas have an enslaving capacity. They all can cause dependence like the dependence causing drugs. If you regularly take a sleeping pill to sleep then after some days you cannot sleep without one. A smoker after sometime becomes a slave of cigarette; a drunkard on his drink.

Scripture says that if I need *Karma Phalam* to be happy then I am dependent on these things. I need crutches; not necessarily physical crutches but mental Crutches to be happy. If I need external support to be happy; it indicates that I am a weak person. When I accomplish a lot of *Karma Phalams* and I learn to use a lot of them to be make myself happy, then any one of those *Phalams* is capable of making me unhappy.

“If the Gas connection is not working one day, you are sad. No Car....Ok, that is a enough to spoil my day. Why can you not take a Bus? NO, I cannot. Why Not an Autorikshaw? No way!!!. Why can you not ask your friends to take you to the Upanishad class? No, that is below my dignity. So I will miss my Upanishad class. “

Every object has the capacity to bind. Thus we travel not from dependence to independence. When analyzed, we are travelling from dependence to greater dependence. And we call this – Success! We call this success because we can order so many things- however Vedanta says that you are a failure. Why? Because you are dependent psychologically.

So to summarize, you have to remember these nine Terms

- Three Types of Actions – Physical, Verbal and Mental
- Three Types of Results :- Improvement of the Body, or Acquisition of sense objects or improving the environment
- Three Types of Defects:- Mixed with pain, Never Infinite and Tend to Bind you more

---

Generally however people do not discover these three defects. A Karma Yogi i.e. a person who leads a Vedic life alone discovers this. A Vedic life is designed so that you discover these defects. Without discovering this, you will not look for a better goal. You will say that “Everything is Fine”. You will settle for something less when something higher is possible. Therefore Veda prescribes a way of life by which I can accomplish two things; I can fulfill my desires and I can discover the limitations inherent in them.

And once I discover these defects, I will automatically look for a better goal. I want to find a goal which is free from these three defects i.e *dosha rahita sadhyam* or *Dosha Rahita Purushartha*.



When I become mature I seek THIS particular defect free goal. I want to accomplish THAT which will not give me any sorrow, and will give me completeness or *purvatvam*. When I come to this stage in my journey, Veda Purva becomes irrelevant to me. This is because Veda Purva prescribes only three types of actions with three types of results and these no longer have any appeal for me. The balloons and toys, so dear to me as a kid, no longer appeal to me now. I have grown out of these toys. For a discriminative person all these *Karma Phalams* have become like toys.

Nachiketas in the Kathopanishad was offered all the worldly things by the teacher. His teacher said, "Don't ask for this knowledge. I will give you a house in the middle of Madras, with 24 hrs water supply etc . I will give you gold and horses and servants and I will make you the emperor. Nachiketas, I will give you all this in exchange for this knowledge"

You know what Nachiketas, said?

*Tavaiva Vaha Tava Nritya etc (You can keep these with you; Refer Katha Upanishad)*

"I have grown out of all these. I am interested in a defect free goal. Veda Purva is irrelevant for me now and I am interested in Veda Anta."

This is a shift from Veda Purva to Veda Anta. Or from Purva Mimamsa to Uttara Mimamsa. This is shifting from "*Athatho Dharma Jijnasa*" to "*Athatho Brahma Jijnasa*"

When such a mature person goes to Vedanta, then Vedanta points out that there indeed IS such a goal.

Now my natural curiosity is to know more about this goal? And the Upanishad introduces this goal to me and calls it Brahman. Brahman is that goal which is free from all these above defects.

So my next question is, "What is the nature of that Brahman. Describe it to me. Once I have a description, I will go and acquire this Brahman. Just tell me where it is, where I can purchase it; I will somehow go and get it. Because I am a great go-getter. Just tell me how to Fish it out."

So Vedanta, after an elaborate description of that wonderful Brahman, suddenly gives me a shocking information about the same.

**THAT YOU ARE!!! That Brahman which you are seeking, that defect free goal which you are seeking is YOU yourself!**

This reminds me of a woman who was looking for a baby-sitter for her child. She sent the baby to different places and in each place she found some problem or the other. Somewhere there were too many children, or perhaps the baby-sitter was not very punctual or perhaps she was not very patient with the child ; at every place there was some or the other problem. And this lady noted all the defects in all these places. And she kept scratching her head, because she wanted a Baby-Sitter who was free from all the defects. Then after searching carefully for a very long time, she finally found out, "There is only one person in the world who can fulfill all these conditions; And that is ME! The mother of the child" So what she was seeking was HERSELF!

So the teaching of Vedanta is "Aham Bramhasmi". I am that Defect free Brahman!

So here afterwards my job is no more seeking Brahman because the Upanishads do not present Brahman as an object to be accomplished. It reveals Brahman as my own self.

However before reading Vedanta, my independent conclusion based on my own analysis was that I was a lacking and incomplete person. Vedanta now comes and tells me that I am Brahman, lacking nothing. It tells me that I am a *Purna Purusha*.

So what should I do now? My job is no more acquiring Brahman because Brahman is not presented as an object to be acquired. My job is to find out whether I am Brahman or Not. That is my new Challenge. Vedanta does not ask me to acquire Brahman. Vedanta tells me to enjoy my status of Brahman.

My job is to find out whether I enjoy *Bramhatvam* or Not. My current conclusion is that I enjoy only incompleteness or *Jivatvam*. Vedanta tells me that I enjoy *Brahmatvam* or completeness. I have to find out which one is correct.

And here begins SELF-Inquiry to find out if I am complete or incomplete. If a person successfully goes through this inquiry, he will discover to his utter surprise that the notion that something is lacking is a misconception. The idea that I need things and people to be happy is a misconception. The fact is that I need nothing to be happy; I am happiness itself.

This knowledge is called *Brahma Vidya* or *Atma Vidya*; also known as Self Knowledge.

## Talk 2:-Shanthi Patha (Peace Invocation)

In the last class I pointed out that the *Veda Purva* prescribes varieties of rituals in the form of *Kayika*, *Vachika*, *Manasa Karmani*. All these are generally known as *Sadhanani* or Means. And by following these *Sadhanas*, three types of *Phalams* or ends are promised by the Veda :-

- Improvement of one's equipment
- Improvement of the objects
- Improvement of Environment

And the goals accomplishable via these *Sadhanas* are called *Sadhyams*.

We also discussed that an intelligent person, in due course of time discovers that all these goals are endowed with certain defects. We looked at the three types of *Doshas* or Defects in these goals.

- Mixed with pain
- Never give Total Satisfaction
- They lead to slavery or pshychological bondage

Thus all three *Sadhyams* or goals are with defects. So naturally the mind of the thinking person turns away from all these goals and he tries to seek a defect free goal. When he seeks a *Nirdosha sadhyam*, he finds that *Veda Purva* becomes redundant for him; the *Veda Purva* deals only with *Sadhyams* which have these defects.

Then he comes to Vedanta which promises a defect free goal. We saw in the Mundaka Upanishad the mantra,

*Pariskya Lokan parishkritan etc....(Refer Mundaka Upanishad)*

Veda says this defect free goal is called, Brahma or Brahman. (In Sanskrit it is Brahma, ending with "a" but in English it is called Brahman)

Naturally as a seeker I am interested in *Brahma Prapti*. And the Upanishad also encourages me by saying that, "If only I attain that Brahman, I will be a free person. I will not have these three defects i.e. I will not experience pain or incompleteness." And thus I become more and more interested in the attainment of Brahman.

For this attainment, I first need to know where this Brahman is available so that I can go and fetch Brahman. I read Vedanta. And Vedanta talks about the glory and definition of Brahman... Brahman is Satyam , Jnanam , Anantam (limitless) ,nirgunam (attributeless), nishkalam (stainless) etc...all these wonderful things. I become very interested.

But then Shruti says, that Brahman which you want to accomplish or attain, happens to be YOU!

Until now my mind was objective and extroverted. When I hear this statement for the first time my mind turns inward i.e. it becomes subjective and introvert. I have a mixed reaction; the first reaction is

happiness because I Already Am what I am seeking according to the Upanishads. In other words, the sought is not different from the seeker. This itself is a very BIG relief and there is some *Trupti* and *Ananda*.

At the same time, there is a problem. And what is the problem? Before reading Vedanta, I have already got an idea about myself. The idea is – I am a limited *Jiva* subject to birth, death. Subject to all kinds of lack. In fact the list of what I Have is much smaller than the list of what I do not have. I am a lacking, finite, limited, miserable *Jiva*.

And when I come to Vedanta, Vedanta tells me, “You are Brahman”. Now there is a clash of ideas. Am I *Jiva* as I took myself to be until now or am I Brahman as revealed by Vedanta?

When I come to this moment, I do not have to go in search of Brahman. My struggle is to find out whether I am *Jiva* is correct, or I am Brahman is correct.

**I am Jiva is my conclusion; I am Brahman is Vedantic revelation. Which one is correct?**

What is required hereafter is Self-Inquiry. And what is the purpose of Inquiry? To find out which statement is true, I am *Jiva* as thought by me or I am Brahman as revealed by Vedanta.

So from here on, there is No more Karma. *Veda Purva* was exclusively dealing with varieties of Karma; whereas Vedanta does not involve even an iota of karma. It involves inquiry; it involves Study- A Study of Myself.

I want to find out: - Who wins the case? Me or Vedanta.

---

If I want to make a systematic self-inquiry, Vedanta is ready to help me. In fact, Vedanta also gives me a warning, “Never do the self-inquiry by yourself. You will fail miserably. In fact you will confirm your *Jivahood* even more.” You can enquire with open eyes or with closed eyes (Some people close their eyes and keep asking “Who am I? Who am I? Who Am I?”); but such self-Inquiry done by you will not lead you anywhere.

Therefore Vedanta says “Do the self- Inquiry Assisted by Me (Vedanta)”. And Not only should you have the assistance of Vedanta- that alone is not sufficient- you should also be assisted by a *Guru* who knows how to open the Vedanta; who has the key to open the Vedanta.

So what is the *Sadhana* involved here? It is Self-Inquiry with the help of *Guru – Shastra Upadesha*. (Scripture and teacher assisted inquiry)

*Guru Shastra Upaya Sahitha Aatma Vichaara* – This is our job now. This is called Jnana Yoga.

A person needs to do this inquiry properly and also for sufficient length of time. Properly directed inquiry and adequate inquiry are both equally important. When I want to reach a street in front of me; I should take care two factors i.e. I should move in the correct direction and I should move adequately. If the street is 30 steps away and I take only 10 steps, I cannot complain that the street has not arrived. The direction may be correct but adequacy may be lacking. Any effort requires both direction and adequacy. Similarly self-inquiry must be in the proper direction and adequate.

And if this is done as prescribed, then my greatest discovery will be – “I am *Jiva* is a false notion! I have taken this for granted because I have never made a proper self-inquiry”

For e.g. we had been thinking for several hundred years that the earth is at the center and the sun is going around the earth. However, when one scientist makes a correct inquiry, he discovers that the earth is going around the sun and not vice versa.

Similarly, I have taken for granted that I am *Jiva*...that I have to get peace of mind from outside...that I need security from outside...that I need happiness from outside. I have assumed that all these basic things have to come from outside and on inquiry I find that these conclusions were made without thinking.

As a child, I started with desiring toys-In fact nowadays even before the child is born, parents have the toys ready. And I conclude that I need toys to be happy. The Toy is replaced by video game; the video game is replaced by a car; the car is replaced by a wife; the wife is replaced by a child; the child by the grand-child. But I have never questioned my basic assumption about whether I need these objects to be happy. I have assumed that my needs are true. This assumption is called *jivatva bhranti* or Self-delusion.

No delusion will go unless it is attacked. A delusion has to be attacked it by proper inquiry. Delusion does not automatically fall away with time like hair or teeth. It requires a deliberate well directed effort. And that well-directed effort is *Jnana yoga*. When done correctly the result is:-

*Jivatva bhranti avagachati...and Bhramatva jnanam aagachati (The delusion of Jiva goes and the knowledge of Brahman dawns)*

Thus, I am not discovering Brahman as a new thing. I am discovering Brahman as a new status of myself. For e.g (In the Mahabharatha) when Karna was exposed to Kunti’s statement, he did not discover the sixth Pandava (a descendant in royal lineage of King Pandu) as a new person. For Karna, the sixth Pandava was a new status that he discovered for himself. Until then his delusion was –“I am not a Pandava . I am a *Suta Putra* (Charioteer’s son).I am not a *Kshatriya* (warrior)”. Now this delusion was replaced by the knowledge, “I am *Kshatriya*”.

What did Karna have to DO to become a *Kshatriya*? Absolutely Nothing, No Action was necessary. Because he was already a *Kshatriya*!

And what do I need to DO to become Brahman. I need not do anything. This knowledge helps me own up my eternal Brahman status and disown my *Jiva* status. After owning by Brahman status, I drop the notion that I require external factors to be contented. Every external factor is now a bonus. It is nice if present and it is perfectly Ok if absent. The presence and absence of a Stick makes a big difference to a lame person. But when I have two strong feet, then presence and absence of the stick does not make a big difference. If I have it then I may use it and if it is taken away from me, I am still fine. This is called *Purnatva Prapti*. I am complete without any object.

*Purna Madah Purnamidam .....(upanishad invocation)*

---

What does Vedanta do? Vedanta through knowledge helps me own up my *Purnatvam* or *Brahmatvam*. This is called Moksha. This is called freedom. Freedom from what...from my *Jivatvam*. And this is the

content of the teaching in the Vedanta. We have this teaching at the end of all the four Vedas-the Rig, Yajur, Atharvana and Sama Veda. It is called Veda Anta because it occurs at the end of the Vedas and the very same portion is also called *Jnana Kandam* because in this portion there is only knowledge involved. There is no *Karma* discussed in this portion of the Veda.

There is yet another name for the same portion of the Veda – “Upanishad”. The word Upanishad has several meanings. I have already provided one meaning in the introduction to my previous Upanishad; this meaning indicates the mode of gaining knowledge and its benefits.

“*Upa*” means “Going Near” a Guru and “*Ni*” means “Nitaihi avasthanam” or sitting down – “Going to a Guru and sitting at his feet”; which indicates the mode of gaining knowledge. “*Sad*” means destroyer. Destroyer of what? Destroyer of *Jivatvam*...Destroyer of Bondage...Destroyer of *Samsara*. So taken together “Upanishad” means that knowledge which is acquired by approaching a teacher and sitting down at his feet, gaining which there is a destruction of all bandage. This is one meaning of Upanishad.

There is a second meaning also. The expression “*Upa*” can refer to “Aatma or the Self”. How is this? Literally the word “*Upa*” means near...and what is Near to me? if I take the outside wall as the reference then the wall is far and you are near to me, if I take the Theosophical Society as the reference then the Theosophical Society is far and wall is near; if I take the Mylapore as the reference then the Theosophical Society is near and Mylapore is far; everything in creation is relatively far and relatively near.

But what is Absolutely Near? Absolutely Near must be that where the distance is zero. And that closest thing is I myself, the Aatma. The Self is the closest to me and therefore “*Upa*” means “Aatma” . “*Ni*” can also mean “*Nischaya Jnanam*” or doubtless knowledge. At the end of inquiry you should not say.... “I think I am Brahman” OR “Perhaps I am Brahman” OR “My guru says I am Brahman” OR “The Upanishad says I am Brahman”; all these statements indicate doubtful knowledge and not “*Nischaya Jnanam*” . Knowledge should be *Hasta Amalakavat i.e* obvious like a “berry held in your palm”. “*Upani*” thus means Clear Self-knowledge. And the word “*Sad*” has got another meaning. It also means “to reach” or “to take one” somewhere; that which takes one to some other place. What place will this knowledge take you to? This knowledge will take you to Moksha. Previously we said that this is the destroyer or *samsara* and now we are saying taker to *moksha*. Upanishad – That clear Self-Knowledge which will take you to Moksha.

In the Upanishads , this teaching is in the form of dialogues between the *Guru* and *Shishya*.

*Guru Shishya Samvaadaha.*

Swami Chinmayananda puts it nicely, “What is the difference between a discussion and an argument? A Discussion generates light; an Argument generates heat!” So you choose if want to become enlightened or you want to get heated up! Between a Guru and *Shishya*, the discussion is *Samvaada* which makes the *Shisya* enlightened.

At the end of the Vedas, there are many dialogues. Either a single dialogue or a group of dialogues put together is called one Upanishad. In certain cases an Upanishad may have only one dialogue. For e.g. In Mundaka Upanishad, there is a single Guru, a single student and a single dialogue. But In Chandogya Upanishad, there are several teachers, several students and several dialogues. In Prasnopanishad there are 6 students, one teacher and 6 dialogues.

The four Vedas together have 1180 Upanishads. Of these 1180 Upanishads , 108 are popular. And of those 108 Upanishads, 10 are generally studied because these 10 Upanishads have Adi Shankaracharya’s

pioneering commentary. These 10 Upanishads are chosen by Shankara from all the 4 Vedas. Why did Shankaracharya choose these 10 Upanishads? There are a couple of reasons:-

1) These 10 Upanishads will give a comprehensive teaching of Vedanta from all angles. All the other Upanishads will deal with these same topics alone and hence studying these 10 is as good as studying 108 or 1180 Upanishads.

2) These 10 Upanishads are the ones that are predominantly analyzed logically by Vyasacharya in his *Brahma sutras* to show that Vedantic teaching does not violate logic i.e. Vedanta is not a dogma or faith. Shankaracharya also feels that a commentary on these 10 Upanishads will be useful for later *Bramha Sutra* study.

Of these 10 also, we generally study only 5 or 6 and this takes us a few years. We don't include Chandogya or Brihadaranyaka in our study because these are voluminous Upanishads.

---

We are now going to commence the study of Kena Upanishad which belongs to Sama Veda. It is a very small Upanishads consisting of only 4 chapters in prose form. Prose Upanishads are generally called "Brahmana Upanishads" and poetry Upanishads are generally called Mantra Upanishads. For e.g. Mundaka is a Mantra Upanishad while Kena is a Brahmana Upanishad.

Why is it called Kena? The first word of the Upanishad is "Kena" and hence it is named after the first word. This is similar to Ishavasya Upanishad which begins with the word "Ishavasya". (An Upanishad may get its name due to different reasons; not necessarily from the first word.)

This Kena Upanishad has a *Shanthy Patha* (Peace Invocation). All the Upanishads begin with a *Shanthy Patha* (Peace Invocation). Generally all Upanishads belonging to a particular Veda will have a common *Shanthy Patha*. For e.g. Mundaka Upanishad, Prasna Upanishad and Mandukya Upanishad belong to the Atharvana Veda and they share the same Peace Invocation

*Bhadram karnebhi ... (May I hear what is auspicious etc; Refer Mundaka Up)*

Similarly the Sama Veda Upanishads like Kena and Chandogya will have a common Peace Invocation.

This "Peace Invocation" is chanted in the beginning of the study by both the teacher and the student. The success of the study depends on two factors both of which are extremely important.

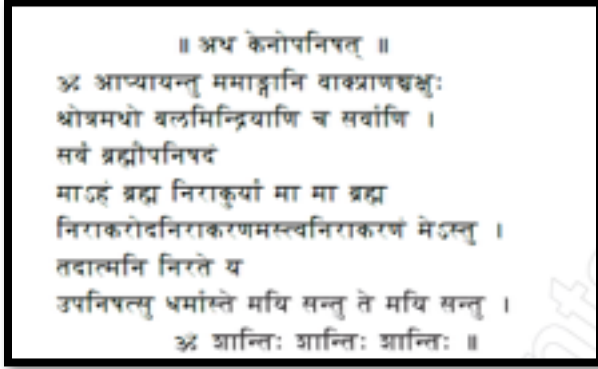
- **Individual effort:**-One should have a value for Upanishad and one should take interest and initiative in the same. If one has only a casual approach, then one will leave the study at the smallest excuse. Unless I have a *Teevra jijnasa* (intense desire) it will not work.
- **Grace of the Lord:** - Effort alone is not enough. We also require the grace of the lord. *Ishwara Anugraha* is also important.

So how do you get the *Ishwara Anugraha*. You need not "get" *Ishwara Anugraha* because really speaking Grace is constantly flowing like the sunlight falling on the earth. One need not make any special appeal to the Sun to send his light. What is needed, is the ability to tap this solar energy. Similarly *Ishwara Anugraha* is always there-prayer becomes a medium of tapping the *Ishwara Anugraha*. I don't

“generate” light by putting solar reflectors; I only tap the ever existing light. So prayer becomes extremely important for tapping that grace.

What is the purpose of the prayer? That I should be free from all the obstacles for the study of *Shastra*. Therefore it is called *Shanti patha*. *Patha* here means Repetition or Chant- a chant that is done by both the teacher and student for the temporary cessation of all obstacles.

Let us read the *Shanti Patha* now



Refer [http://sanskritdocuments.org/all\\_pdf/kena.pdf](http://sanskritdocuments.org/all_pdf/kena.pdf) for original sanskrit)

Translation taken from and modified to match Swamiji's comments :-<http://www.vedarahasya.net/kena.htm>)

***Om ! May my organs and limbs, my speech, my breath, my strength and my sense organs like the ear, the eyes etc., become efficient enough to perform their respective duties properly and without any hindrance. Everything is Brahman as propounded and abundantly made clear in the Upanishads. Brahman should not leave me aside. I should not leave Brahman aside. I pray further that such an inseparable relation may continue for times to come. I also pray that the virtues (as described in the Upanishads) of those wise men who dwell in the Atma (or the Soul) become part of me and reside in me.***

***Om. Peace! Peace! Peace!***

In this *Shanthy patha* , the student is asking for two things.

- Freedom from obstacles to the study.
- All favorable factors must be with me to pursue this study

What are these favorable factors:-

The first favorable factors is: - All my equipment's or organs must be health. Without health, I cannot accomplish anything either material or spiritual. And even if I accomplish something, I cannot enjoy that without health. Therefore never sacrifice health. Even though Vedanta says that the body is not the end in itself you should always remember that the body is the means to the end. A Vedanta student knows that even to sit comfortably for a certain duration and listen with attention, health is needed. ☺

Therefore ***mama angaani aapyayantu...***( May my organs ...be healthy)

What are those Organs? *Vaak , praana, chakshu and shrotram* (my speech, my prana, my sense organs like the eyes and ears). We will see further details in the next class

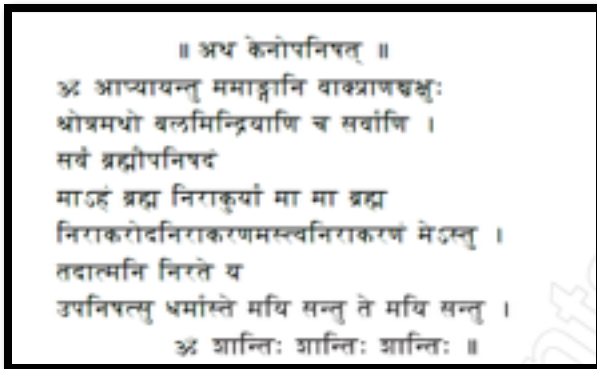


## Talk 3:- Shanti Patha and Khanda 1:Mantra 1

The Upanishad Kena begins with a *Shanti Patha* which is chanted by both the student and the teacher for invoking the grace of the Lord so that the study can be successfully completed. Through this *Shanti Patha* the student is seeking three things

- **Health of the physical and subtle body:** - Whether it is a spiritual or material pursuit, we have only one vehicle for the same and that is the human body. It is the same body, the same set of sense organs , the same set of *pranas* and the same set of *antahkaranas* which has to be used for either of these pursuits. If not throughout life, then at least until I acquire Atma Jnana or self-knowledge, I need health. After *Atma Jnana*, even if health is not perfect, I will have the mental strength to face any condition. Therefore Oh LORD , please give me health
- **Invocation of Shraddha or Faith-** I want faith in Brahman- both *Saguna* and *Nirguna*  
**Qualifications required for gaining this knowledge-** This is called *Sadhana chathustaya sampatti* or the four-fold qualification in whose presence alone knowledge takes place, knowledge can be sustained and in whose presence alone can the benefit of the knowledge can be reaped. Oh Lord, let me have all those qualifications!

Let us read the *Shanthy Patha* again



We have already seen the meaning upto ***Balam Indriyani cha Sarvani*** in the last class

***Sarvam Bramha (Everything is Brahman)*** - From the scriptures the student has heard this expression and he repeats it. He has not understood yet what this expression means since he is only a student. It means that the whole creation is nothing other than Brahman. There is no world other than Brahman. Brahman mistaken is called “World” and the correctly understood ‘World’ is called Brahman. This is the basic Vedantic teaching. Thus according to scriptures, Brahman and the world are not two things. Just as the rope mistaken as the snake are not two things. Mistaken rope is a snake and the snake correctly understood is the rope. The whole world correctly understood is Brahman.

How to understand that All is Brahman? The mantra continues that Brahman should be understood ***Aupanishadam i.e*** through the Upanishadic scriptures. It cannot be known through any other instrument of knowledge like perception, inference etc.

***Ma aham Brahman nirakuryam***(May I not negate that Brahman) - May I not deny the existence of Brahman . Until I study the Upanishad, I have No way of knowing Brahman. Brahman is knowable only through Upanishad. Through the sense perceptions, I cannot see Brahman. I cannot know Brahman via a rational process. Therefore the tendency will be to reject Brahman. And that is why people become *Naastika* (Atheists). Brahman it is not available for scientific experimentation. So our tendency is to say, “What is not available for perception and scientific inquiry is NON-Existent”. The student prays, “Let me not fall into this trap. I do not want to negate either *Saguna Brahman (God)* or *Nirguna Brahman*.”

Let us look at why I tend to negate Brahman or *Ishwara*

I tend to negate *Ishwara* because there are so many questions with regards to *Ishwara* which seem to have no answers. The questions that are generally asked are:-

- Why did *Ishwara* create this world? Could the fellow not have sat quietly doing nothing? ☺
- Ok, he created it. But why did he have to put all of us here?
- And if he had to create Mankind, why can he not make all Humans nice and ethical?
- If the Lord cannot change the people, he must not be omniscient and omnipotent. On one hand people claim that the Lord is omnipotent. And that omnipotent Lord seems to create a world which is full of problems with criminals, fraudulent people, violence, evil etc. In fact, one of the very big questions in all systems of philosophy is: - What is evil? If God is ALL Goodness, then why should there be any place for evil in the world. Therefore I am not able to accept *Ishwara* as omnipotent
- There are others who claim, “I am such a great Bhakta (devotee)...I have done so many things for God...and I am facing many problems in my life. Therefore I don't belief in God”

Thus belief in God creates a lot of rational problems.

What about Brahman – that *Nirguna* thing. Brahman creates even more problems when compared to *Ishwara*!

The Upanishad tells me, “YES, there is Brahman”. But it also says, “You cannot taste it, you cannot touch it, you cannot smell it and you cannot see it. It is unknowable, unthinkable, un-experientable, imperceptible, incalculable”....PHEW!!!Nothing seems to be possible with this Brahman. In fact the Upanishad also says that it is un-transactable i.e ***Avyavaharyam***. Now if this thing is not available for ANY transaction then it does not make any difference in my life whether this thing is present or not. ‘Let it be present or let it be absent. What good is it to me! Why know such a useless phenomenon like Brahman. There is no need to accept such a useless Brahman.’

Thus we see that both *Ishwara* and Brahman are difficult to accept. And hence the student prays to the Lord, “Oh Lord, whatever happens I do not want to reject Brahman. If I am not able to find an answer to my question, I will struggle to get the answer. But I will NEVER reject *Ishwara* and Brahman. If I have not found the answers, I will NOT conclude that the answers are not there. I will conclude that I have not

understood sufficiently what *Ishwara* is and what Brahman is. Oh lord, please give me faith until I can clearly understand what is *Ishwara* and what is Brahman”

I remember a beautiful prayer by a devotee:-

***Tava tattvam na janami kidrishoasi maheshvara***

***yadrishosi mahadeva tadrishaya namoh namah***

*Tava Tatvam na Jaanami Kidrishosi maheshwara* :- Oh lord Maheshwara (Shiva), Of what nature you are, I am not able to fathom...Are you are male or female?...or whether you are energy...or whether you are here or there or elsewhere or nowhere...I do not know anything. But still I say this ....

*Yadrishosi Mahadeva Tadrishaaya Namoh Namaha* :-Whatever is your nature, oh Lord, to THAT nature I offer my prostration. It is my limitation that I have not known you. It is not your limitation.

A similar idea is expressed here...Let me not Reject Brahman ...let me have shraddha(faith).

So I pray that ....Not only I should not reject *Ishwara* but ***Ma MA brahma nirakarot (Let not Brahma also reject me)***. The first **ma** is “let not” and the second **ma** is “me”. Don’t get confused by the two ma’s repeating. Let me have *Ishwara’s* grace. Even to have faith in the Lord, I need the Lord’s grace. Let me enjoy the grace of the Lord. Since this *shraddha* is the basic foundation for any scriptural study, the student repeats this again ***Anirakaranam astu Anirakaranam me astu***. Thus the second part of the prayer is over.

The third part of the prayer is, Let me have all the necessary qualifications to understand Brahman. ***Tad aatmani nirate***. I am a person interested in Brahma Jnana. “***Nirata***” means, “committed to” or “obsessed with” or “serious about”. I am not a casual person but a committed person. Committed to what?***Tad aatmani*** i.e. To that Aatma or Brahman.

***Upanishadsu dharmaha***...I need some qualifications. We have already looked at the qualifications in Tatva Bodha and I hope you have not forgotten the same ☺

To simplify the same you can remember 4 D’s. The four D’s are:-

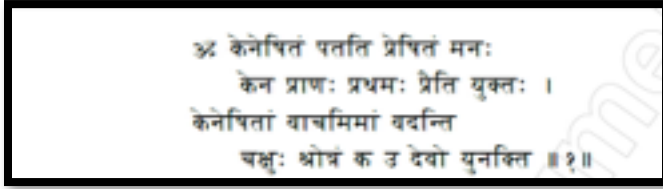
- **Discrimination:** - Understanding that the spiritual growth is most important in life. Material growth is subservient to spiritual growth. If we have a choice between the two, we have to choose spirituality. Having spiritual priority is called discrimination. If I am in a place where there is scope for spiritual growth but materially it may not be very rewarding and suppose I get something which is materially rewarding but I will not grow spiritually then I must choose the former. That mind which can see the importance of spiritual growth is called a Viveki or Discriminating mind.
- **Dispassion:** - Seeing material growth as incidental. It is Subject to arrival and departure. This cannot be the primary goal in life. Seeing the secondary nature of materiality is called dispassion
- **Discipline:** - This includes physical, sensory, emotional and intellectual discipline. Krishna gives an elaborate list of virtues in the Geeta. I want these virtues within me.
- **Desire for Freedom:** - I am a slave of this world. The world can make me happy or depressed or irritated; people can determine if I am happy or not. I want to be a master of my inner condition. For how long should my wife or husband or other family members decide my happiness? They

seem to have my “happiness-switch” in their hands. I want to decide what my mental condition should be. This is called internal freedom.

Let all these 4 qualifications be there in me. It is not enough that I pray to the Lord. I should also work to acquire these 4 D's. *Bhagawan* can never help us unless we are ready to put forth our effort. *Bhagawan* cannot substitute our effort; *Bhagawan* can only boost our effort or complement our effort. He can only be a catalyst for our effort. So I will do what I have to do but in addition to that, Oh Lord, I want your grace. The student appreciates the role of the Lord's grace and so he repeats it the second time...***te mayi santu...te mayi santu.***

***Om shantih shantih Shanti.*** Let there not be obstacles from 3 sources: - supernatural ,surrounding or internal . Thus we have seen the *Shanthy patha* for the Kena Upanishad and it is the same for all the Sama Veda Upanishads

Now the Actual Text begins.



(English translation taken from the shining world web site [www.shingingworld.com](http://www.shingingworld.com). May be modified slightly to match Swamiji's comments.)

**1. OM. The disciple asked: By whose will is the mind directed to its objects? By whose command does the most important life breath do its duty? Who causes the eyes to see and the ears to hear? Who speaks through the mouth?**

This is the first mantra. The Upanishad has 4 chapters. Each chapter is called a *Khanda*. We are in the *Prathama Khanda* i.e first chapter. Kena is a very small Upanishad. But even though it is small, it is a very powerful Upanishad. The Upanishad reminds me of the small needle-sized green chillies; they look tiny but if you bite them you will reach the 7<sup>th</sup> heaven straightaway. ☺

Like most of the other Upanishads, this one is also in the form of a dialogue. This dialogue method is used to signify many things:-

1. The first significance is, 'One should learn Brahma Vidya from a Guru only'. Independent study is a highly risky proposition. If I am not able to understand something then there is no problem; only time is wasted. But if I misunderstand something then this a big problem. If a Guru comes later, then his job becomes double fold. Already this person has read and misunderstood and now the poor Guru has to erase all the misunderstandings and thereafter he has to rewrite some understanding into the disciple's head! So the first significance of the dialogue method is to indicate that 'Every disciple learnt from a guru'. The disciple may be a very learned person-in *Chandogya* and *Brahadaranyaka* you will see that the students themselves were greatly learned people like Narada etc. But however learned you may be and however much you may be a Sanskrit scholar, Vedanta was never studied independently. Everyone who wanted to learn humbly went to a *Guru*.
2. The second significance is, 'A dialogue form is easier to understand'. It has a personal touch. And all our doubts will be appearing in the Upanishads from the mouth of the student. Therefore Shankaracharya says *Sukhartha pratibodhanartham* (for easy understanding) dialogue method of teaching is convenient
3. The Third significance is that Every Upanishadic student has learnt this knowledge from his Guru. And when the student asked the Guru where the Guru learnt this knowledge, the Guru says that he has learnt it from his Guru. And the Guru's Guru says...I learnt it from my own Guru ...and so on. This is a traditional wisdom which has no beginning.

This is just like the following; I am here because of my parents; my parents are here because of their parents...and so on. This has been so from beginningless time and we cannot trace this back.

When did the first human come on earth? Scientists are still pushing this date further and further away. They find a bone in South Africa one day and they say Humans appeared 2 million years ago; later they find another bone in Ethiopia and they say that humans appeared 3 million years ago ; another bone is found in some other place and the scientists say that humans appeared 4 billion years ago. 😊

Similarly we know that even the Upanishadic Rishis are not the composers of the Veda; they are also only transferors of the Veda. Therefore Veda is **Anaadi parampara praptam**; it is a most ancient teaching. And if this ancient teaching is still surviving then it means it has validity and efficacy. This validity of the Upanishad is revealed because of its ancient nature. This is the third significance of the Guru Shishya dialogue method.

In some Upanishads, the names of the Guru and Shishya are given. E.g. in the Mundaka Upanishad, Shaunaka , the student went to Angiras, the teacher for knowledge. Here in Kena the names are not mentioned.

Shankaracharya says that even though no names are mentioned you have to assume that some student approached some teacher for knowledge. How do I know that? Because the first verse happens to be a question. So there must be a questioner. And from the second verse onwards we get an answer in the entire Upanishad. And we have to assume that there was a Teacher.

So before reading the first mantra we have to add *Shishya Uvacha* (Student said) just like we say Arjuna Uvacha in the Geeta. Let us get started with the text.

A disciple asks a Teacher a question. The question itself is a very deep question. The student seems to be a very informed student who has studied a lot. To understand the question, we have to come to the level of the student. The student seems to know certain fundamental ideas from the scriptures. What are these ideas?

1. The student knows that the physical body is made up of matter. This is something all of us also know. Body is material in nature, whether you go by science or by *Shastra*.

If you go by science, then science will say that the body is full of chemicals. The body has aluminum, iron, nickel, potassium etc. That the body is made up of chemicals is proved because to cure the diseases you add chemicals to the body.

If you go by *Shastra* also, we say that the body is made up of 5 elements. There is earth- the solid portion of the body, there is water in the body which gives it its shape, there is fire in the body in the form of temperature, there is air in the body in the form of breath and there is space which we all occupy in plenty! This is a *panchabhautika shariram ( 5 elemental body)*. So the student knows that body is material. Matter is inert -> Body is matter -> therefore Body is inert (*achetanam*) by itself. This is the first thing that the student seems to understand (*sthula shariram achetanam*)

2. Then the second point that the student seems to know is that even the invisible inner body called the *sukshma shariram* is also made up of matter. We have seen before that the *sukshma sharira* consists of 5 *jnanendriyas*, 5 *karmendriyas*, 5 *pranas*, *manas* and *buddhi* ...the subtle body consists of 17 faculties. We can mainly call this "Mind" for our understanding. The student knows that the mind is made up of matter.

How do you prove that the mind is made up of matter? Science is not yet very sure about what the mind is. They are still confused whether the mind is synonymous with the brain, or whether mind is a separate process in the brain or whether mind of something which is located outside the brain.

*Shastra* talks about the nature of mind and points out that mind is also made up of matter. The only difference when compared with the body is that mind is made up of “subtle” matter. This is like the relation between matter and energy. In science an Invisible or intangible or subtle form of matter is called energy. Similarly mind is also a subtle form of matter only according to *Shastras*. And this is the reason that the mind is influenced by matter. Which is why many psychological conditions can be treated by chemicals or drugs. Today, there seems to be some confusion about whether the mind should be treated by counselling or whether drugs should be prescribed like many psychiatrists do. We are not looking at what is the proper treatment here. For us the important thing to understand is this: - Why do these psychiatrists prescribe drugs? Because they know that the mind IS influenced by these chemicals. Even bio-chemical and hormonal changes can change mental attitudes, moods etc. and this has been scientifically proven. If the mind has to be influenced by matter then mind must also belong to the realm of matter only. So the student knows that mind is matter. Matter is inert -> Mind is Matter - > So student concludes that mind is also inert by itself

To summarize, the two conclusions of the student are:-

- Body is matter -> hence inert by itself
  - Mind is matter -> hence inert by itself.
3. Even though logically, the body must be inert since it is matter and mind must also be inert since it is also matter we are faced with a different proposition experientially. Experientially, we feel that the body-mind complex is sentient. So this is the third observation of the student: - Body must be inert logically speaking but it appears sentient, mind must be inert logically speaking but it appears sentient. Therefore the question is, how can the naturally inert body-mind complex become sentient?

And the student himself solves the problem- I told you that this is an evolved student!!

He uses a very simple idea. Suppose milk is kept in a glass in front of you. You have tasted milk before and you know that milk is not sweet by itself. Now you drink this milk and you find that it is sweet. What do you conclude? You say, the milk must be sweet because of some external factor pervading the milk. **Naturally the milk is not sweet; experientially the milk is sweet. Therefore the milk must be pervaded by something that makes the non-sweet milk sweet.** Do you see the sweetener? No, both sweetened and non-sweetened milk are white. But you know that there must be an invisible principle which is pervading the milk and because of which the milk is sweet.

Similarly let us say you drink water and you find it salty. You know that water by itself is not salty. To my experience the water is salty. And therefore **there is an invisible principle which is pervading the water because of which the non-salty water is salty.**

You can extend this in any plane. The light bulb is not naturally luminous etc.....there must be **an invisible principle which is pervading the bulb because of which the non-luminous bulb is luminous.**

The student understands all of this. The body-mind complex which is made of matter has to be an insentient bundle of matter only. But now that it appears sentient, it must be blessed by some "invisible principle". The student calls this Deva; some invisible principle because of whose blessing the body is sentient.

So the student's question to the teacher is, "I know there is an invisible principle. I want to know what is that principle because of which the inert body, senses and mind behave as if they are sentient" This is the essence of the question. The teacher will have to answer: - That consciousness principle is called Aatma or Brahman. This is how the teaching is going to proceed.

Now Let us look at the meaning of the key words in the first mantra

**Mana Preshitam Patati** – The mind objectifies the world, *preshitam* as though it is propelled by some other force. Mind should not be objectifying anything...but it seems to be doing this. **Kena Ishitam... Blessed by Whom?** By whose will is the mind directed to these objects?

Then the second part of the question: - **Prathama Prama praiti**. The life principle; the 5 fold life forces are called **Prathama prana** here (foremost or most important prana). Life principle is the foremost or the most important. Without Prana, nothing can happen. During sleep, you are without organs of knowledge and organs of action. The thinking function is suspended, the egoism is suspended, memory is suspended. All faculties can be suspended. But one thing has to continue even during sleep. If that *Prana* is suspended then people around you will conclude that you are dead. *Prana* functions in all the three *avasthas*. So the disciple is calling it *Prathama prana* or "Most important life force". **Kena yuktha praiti... Blessed by whom does it function.** Here the student understands that Prana is also inert by itself. Prana is a form of Vayu. So he is asking the question what makes that Prana behave as if it is sentient.

**Kena ishita imam vaacham vadanti**- The organ of speech is not naturally sentient. Even a dead body has all the faculties like the tongue, jaws etc. Who or what is making it function? All the 17 organs of the sukshma sharira are made of the 5 elements only according to Tatva Bodha.

**Vaag (Speech)** is made of which element? Do you remember ☺ if you attended Tatva Bodha? Ok, It is the rajo guna of Aakash Tatva

**Chakshu Shrotram kahu devaha yunakti**: - **What is that Deva (here Deva means "sentient principle" or self-fulgent principle) which propels the sight and the hearing.** The student mentions only two sense organs but you must understand that he is referring to all the 5 jnanendriyas, 5 karmendriyas, 5 pranas . If the student could see the propeller, he would not have asked this question. Just like the sweetness in the milk is invisible, and the salt in the water is invisible similarly that extraneous principle in the body happens to be invisible.

As an aside, it seems that someone wanted to weigh consciousness. They wanted to know the weight of aatma. ☺ So they measured the dead body to check the weight of Aatma! It turned out that the body



weighed more after death; so the scientist was in a quandary! Please note that all such scientific methods can never know what consciousness is.

So the student is asking the teacher, please tell me. What is that principle? This is the only verse in the Upanishad that comes from the student. The rest of the verses are from the teacher. We will continue tomorrow. *PurnaMadah...*

## Talk 4:- Khanda 1: Mantras 1 to 3

The Upanishad begins with a question from a student. Through this question, the student wants to know about the *Atma*-The Self. The student seems to be an informed one. He is aware of the fact that the body-mind complex is an inert entity by itself. From the *Shashtra* he has come to know that the mind-body complex is made of matter. The body is made up of gross matter while the minds is made up of subtle matter. He also is aware of the fact that matter is intrinsically inert. Extending this principle he concludes that the Body-Mind complex which is material in nature must be *Achetana* or Inert. This is the conclusion that follows from a logical analysis.

While his logical analysis indicates that the Body -Mind complex should be inert, his personal experience is that the Body Mind complex is sentient. And therefore he can easily infer that this bind-mind complex should have some external factor because of which the insentient Body-Mind has becomes sentient.

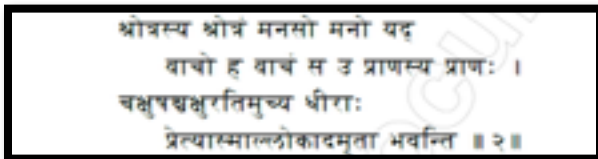
Let us take an example. You see this mike here, and it does not function .Later it begins to function. Visibly you see no difference between a functioning mike and a non-functioning mike. But you have the knowledge that the mike cannot function on its own and therefore you know that there is an invisible principle which is “blessing this mike” because of which the non-functioning mike becomes a functioning mike. You can extend this principle.

The body has borrowed consciousness i.e. *Agantuka chaitanya* or *Aabhasa chaitanya* or *Pratimbimba chaitanya*. I have used different words here but they all indicate the same thing; borrowed consciousness. And if this material body enjoys borrowed consciousness then there must be someone who is willing to lend. Borrowing is impossible unless there is a lender. We need a lender principle. This principle the student chooses to call as ‘Deva’. Deva means an intrinsically sentient principle which lends sentiency to an insentient entity. Deva means, *Swayam Chaitanya Tatvam* or Self resplendent. That which has got innate consciousness and which is therefore capable of lending consciousness to this inert body-mind.

That principle or Deva must be intrinsically conscious. If that principle is also borrowing consciousness from somewhere else then I will require ANOTHER principle to lend consciousness to this “Deva”. If that second lender is also enjoying borrowed consciousness then I need another lender etc. This type of logic is called an infinite regress defect. So the student wants to know a lender principle who is a non-borrower. Who is that non-borrowing lender who lends this *Chaitanya*. The student calls it ‘Deva’. Normally we call it Atma or THE SELF

The teacher is going to answer the question through the rest of the Upanishad.

Mantra 2



**2. The teacher replied: It is the Eye of the eye, the Mind of the mind, the Speech of speech, the Life of life, and the Ear of the ear. Separating the Self from the senses and renouncing the world the wise one realizes his or her immortal nature.**

This is the Key verse of Kena Upanishad. You can call it the foundation verse of Kenopanishad upon which alone the rest of the structure is built up. Every Upanishad will have a key verse; which is like a capsule which captures the essence of the text.

In the Geeta, when the verse **AshochaananVasho (The wise do not grieve)** etc) is stated you can say that the Geeta is complete. The rest of Geeta is only a commentary on this single verse. Another summary is given at the end of the Geeta. **Sarva dharman parityajya (Abandoning all rituals..)** This is considered the *Geeta Saara* (essence).

If somebody asks what is the essence of the Kena Upanishad, you can say it is this verse **Shrotrasya srotram**

Through this mantra the teacher wants to say that ATMA is that principle or 'DEVA' which the student is looking for. That principle is called ATMA whose nature is *chaitanyam* i.e *Chaitanya Svaroopo Aatma* . It is also called *Chidatma*. *Chaitanya aatma, Chit, Jnanam, Vignanam, Pragnanam* or even another rare word *Samvid*...all this is synonymous.

Naturally the next question will be. What is the meaning of that word - ATMA or Consciousness? What do you mean by Atma? To understand this you will have to remember the points that I have given in the introduction. Do you remember?

- Consciousness is not a part of the body, property of the body or product of the body.
- Consciousness is an independent entity which pervades and enlivens the body
- Consciousness is not limited by the boundaries of the body
- Consciousness will continue to exist after the body-medium collapses
- Consciousness cannot have any transaction once the medium of transaction collapses. Even though the transaction ends, it is not the end of the existence of consciousness. Non-transacting consciousness is **not** non-existing consciousness.

We call non-transacting consciousness as *Avyakta chaitanyam*. When it is accessible through transaction, we call it *Vyakta chaitanya*. Consciousness may be in a *Vyakta* form or in *Avyakta* form- but consciousness continues. In order to understand the five points above, I had given an example of light and the hand illumined by it.

- Light is not a part, product or property of the hand
- Light is an independent entity which pervades and illumines the hand
- Light is not limited by the boundaries of the hand
- Light will continue to exist even after I remove the hand
- Light will not be perceptible if the reflecting medium is absent. The non-perceptibility of the light does not imply the non-existence of light.

'Oh Student, This eternal all –pervading consciousness principle is the Deva that you are looking for'. This is the answer that the teacher wants to give. But the teacher presents the answer in a peculiar language that seems un-understandable. The teacher says, '*Shrotrasya Shrotram* (It is the Ear of the ear). Oh , Student, you are asking what is that principle which blesses the ear? Well, that principle is the EAR of the ear. The first EAR is not visible; the second one is visible. Atman is the EAR of the ear. Then you ask me the question what Blesses the eyes? It is the EYE of the eye. And you can continue to ask me...what blesses the nose? I will have only one answer. It is the Nose of the nose. What blesses the mike? MIKE of the mike. There will be only one answer for whatever you ask!' ☺

So In the first part of the verse we have seen that the teacher defines "The SELF" as... ***It is the Eye of the Eye, the Mind of the mind, the Speech of speech, the Life of life, and the Ear of the Ear.*** (In the first verse, this portion can be considered as "Definition of Atma")

Now what are we to understand by this expression? As I said in the beginning itself, when the teacher says 'EAR of the ear' etc. he is directing our attention to the consciousness principle. Why does the teacher choose to use such a language to express this idea?

There are several reasons for communicating in this manner:-

- When you say it is the 'EAR of the ear' you are communicating the idea that it is something DISTINCT from the ear. Suppose you say, 'This is the 'House **OF** Ram'. The moment you hear '**of**', you understand that the house and Rama are different entities. And they have some relationship. But the important thing is that they are different entities. So by saying that Atma is the Ear of ear, the teacher has communicated that Atma is that consciousness which is distinct from the ear. And at the same time it pervades the ear. Remember in our example, light is distinct from the hand and yet it pervades the hand.
- More importantly Consciousness is called Ear of the ear because, it is due to consciousness alone that the ear can function. The Ear is an ear because of its hearing power; it has its hearing power because of its sentiency; and its sentiency is because of the Atma. Similarly the Eye is an eye only when it has seeing power; the "eyeness" of the eye is only because of the consciousness lent by the Atma. This mike will stop to exist as a mike once electricity is gone; the "mikeness" of the mike is because of electricity. I can define electricity as the 'Amplifier of the amplifier'.

So now we understand that the teacher is defining 'ATMA' in this verse as THAT which is different from every organ, and which pervades every organ and because of which alone every organ functions as an organ. And that principle is consciousness which is that 'Deva' the student is looking for.

Some of you are wondering; why should he still put it in such a complicated language. He could have said, THAT DEVA IS CONSCIOUSNESS and that would have finished the matter. Instead of using the word "Consciousness" directly, the teacher is saying, "Dear Student, what you are looking for is that principle which is different from every organ, which pervades every organ and because of which alone every organ is that organ."

Is this an obscure language of a logician? I am reminder of a story that someone once told me. A logician's car tire was punctured and he was late for a meeting. When asked why he was late he said, "That part of my car, because of which the car moves forward and without which it cannot function as a car, has lost its pristine rotundity!" ☺ ☺ Now why cannot this person simply say, "My car's tire is punctured"? Similarly why cannot the teacher say, 'IT IS Consciousness'? Why does he have to say - It is

that principle which is different from every organ, which pervades every organ and because of which alone every organ is that organ....Phew. How is the teacher any different from this logician? Is he playing with words?

Let us try and understand the teacher. The teacher does not want to use the Word – “Consciousness”. The moment we hear a word like “Consciousness”, our tendency will be to sit in meditation and look for that consciousness. This is a mistake that we have been successfully committing till today. When the teacher tells us that ‘IT IS ATMA’, there are people who sit in meditation and hope to experience that ‘ATMA’ one day. Our tendency is to objectify everything that is taught. If I introduce the word -*Atma*, you will look for *Atma*. If I introduce the word *Brahman*, you will look for *Brahman*.

And if I say it is *Jnana Swarupam* (Pure knowing) then even this is a problem. This reminds me of a person who came to me and said, “Swamiji, I have been closing my eyes and asking ‘Who am I?’ for the last 12 years. After 12 years I have successfully managed to silence the mind. I am able to come up to the stage of Blankness. Earlier the mind used to run all over but in 12 years I have managed to make my mind blank. After this I am waiting for something to happen; when is ATMA DARSHAN going to happen? When will the Lord appear? When will that Atma come so that I can have direct perception?” Unfortunately that Atma is never going to COME, because it happens to be ME MYSELF! It is the VERY Subject -the consciousness principle - who is looking for something! I can sit for any number of lifetimes in meditation but I am never going to come across *Atman* or *Brahman*. Whatever I come across will NOT be *Atma* or *Brahman*. Kena Upanishad will say the same thing in the later verses. Every experience you get has nothing to do with Atma. Every experience deals with the object of experience. We are talking about the subject – “THE Experiencer”. Therefore the teacher is worried that if he introduces the word-“Consciousness”, then this fellow will now start looking desperately for this new object called “Consciousness”. And he will never succeed in finding it because Consciousness happens to be HIM!

Now, here we may get another doubt. You will say, ‘We all agree that if the teacher says “It is Consciousness” then the student is going to search for it and the teacher’s intention is to show that “Consciousness” is not an object to be searched but it is the very student himself. Why then can the teacher not make it still simpler? Instead of using the word Consciousness, the teacher could have said, IT IS YOU! This would have stopped the person from searching. The word “Consciousness” creates a problem; it makes the person search. Perhaps for a few days the person will search externally; later he will search internally. Consciousness is neither outside you and neither is it inside. Consciousness is YOU. So why cannot the teacher not say the ‘Deva’ you are looking for is YOU! Isn’t this a better method of communication?’

Even here the teacher is worried. In the teacher’s mind, ‘YOU’ means the consciousness principle. But in the student’s mind, ‘YOU’ refers to the ‘BODY-MIND’ complex. So now you see? If the teacher says, ‘It is You’, the student will assume it is the body-mind complex. The teacher has to find some method by which the student should understand that “I am that principle. I am the consciousness OTHER THAN my organs”.

And what is the best method...***Shrotrasya Shrotram. It is the Eye of the Eye, the Mind of the mind, the Speech of speech, the Life of life, and the Ear of the Ear.***

If you carefully analyze WHAT is the EAR of the ear, you will come to one conclusion only. IT IS “I”. “I” AM THE ONE WHO AM BEHIND THE EAR AND WHO AM FUNCTIONING THROUGH THE EAR. This is why when I turn my attention elsewhere then the ear cannot function as an ear. Let us say that some car passes by and now your mind has gone away behind your eyes to look for the source to that sound. You have

decided to take the attention away from your ears and for those two minutes whatever the Swami says is not registered even though you have physical ears. What is really the EAR of the ear? IT IS YOU...who is other than the ear and who makes the ear function because of your identification with it. THAT you are ...that consciousness principle...this is what the teacher says indirectly through this verse.

Having given this capsule, this will be elaborated in all the mantras later. Now the teacher wants to talk about the benefit of this knowledge. What is the benefit I can possibly get by knowing I am not the ear but the 'EAR of the ear' or I am not the mind but the 'Mind of the mind'.

The teacher says ...***Dheeraha Adhimuchya (The wise one transcends the body-mind)***

***Dheeraha...Wise people or discriminative people:*** - Why are people who have this knowledge called *Jnanis* or discriminative? When the *Jnanis* use the word "I", they take only the consciousness as themselves. They don't confuse the body-mind with the "I". In the case of non-discriminative people, the word "I" is used for both the consciousness and the body-mind; it is all mixed-up.

A discriminative person takes the body-mind complex as an incidental medium for his transactions which he uses in the waking state. The Jnani says, 'In the waking state I use the body-mind medium and experience the world of physical and subtle objects. In sleep, the body and the mind stop functioning; they are relaxing. The transaction ends, the world ends, the thoughts end, the emotions end. It is very clear that all the thoughts and emotions are incidental experiences that come to me when I temporarily use the body-mind complex. If in another life I have another ant body, I will have another incidental equipment which will give me another incidental biography. These incidental Biographies come and go and they all belong to the body-mind. But what is MY real biography? My original nature? It is free from all these incidental experiences. It is free from the notions of birth, death and Change. All of these are not present in me. I have TRANSCENDED the body and its limitation.'

Therefore the Upanishad says, ***Dheeraha adhimuchya...Adhimuchya*** means transcending. ***The wise one transcends.***

Let me give you an example. Suppose I make a statement, '**I am happy**'. Does happiness belong to the mind or to the mouth? Happiness belongs to the mind. We all agree with this. But please see who is making the statement? BOTH the mind and the mouth are required to make this statement. To say something a mouth is needed and for the mouth to say that thing, a mind is required behind it. The mind-mouth together are making the statement. But even though the mind-mouth together are saying, 'I am happy', we do not refer to the mouth aspect of this mind-mouth mixture when we say that we are happy. We only refer only to the Mind-Aspect. "I am happy" is a statement made by the mouth and through the mouth. And yet you know that this statement refers only to the MIND.

Similarly when you say, "I AM ATMA"- who is making this statement? It is Consciousness along with the Body-mind complex that is making this statement. But what a discriminative person means by the word "I" in the above statement is just the Consciousness aspect. He ignores the body-mind aspect and takes only the 'Consciousness' aspect alone as HIS identity.

The teacher says that by knowing this *Atma*, I transcend the Body-Mind complex....*Adhimuchya*. This transcending is not a physical action. It is not a physical event. It is an intellectual event- purely in terms of understanding.

In our previous example, when I said that “I am happy”, I do not include my Mouth in the meaning of the sentence. I only refer to the mind. That non-inclusion of the mouth is called “transcending the mouth”. I take the mouth only as a medium of expression but I recognize that happiness belongs only to the mind.

Similarly when I say “AHAM BRAHMASMI” or “I AM THE ALL-PERVADING CONSCIOUSNESS” please note who is making this statement. This very *Jiva*, the Swami in front of you is making this statement. Can this Swami be All –Pervading. Certainly not! He does not even pervade the chair that he sits upon.

So how can I say “I AM THE ALL-PERVADING CONSCIOUSNESS”? It is simple; I have transcended my body-mind complex. And how did I accomplish this? USING the body-mind, I EXCLUDED the body-mind in the meaning of the word “I”. This “intellectual segregation” is called transcendence. Every *Jnani* does this only. He is using the same mouth and the same body as you are. He is eating food in the same manner like you. Please do not conclude that after becoming a *Jnani* you will start eating food through your ears. ☺. Everything will be just the same!

To conclude, When an *Ajnani* uses the word “I”, he is including the body-mind along with Consciousness. However, when *Jnani* uses the word “I”, the “Self” excludes the body-mind complex.

When you include the body-mind complex, it is called the primary meaning of the word – “I” - **Vachyartha**.

When you exclude the body-mind complex, it is called implied meaning of word- ”I” - **Lakshartha**.

The **Vachyartha** “Self” is mortal but the **Lakshyartha** “Self” is immortal. Therefore the teacher says that the **Wise man transcends (Dheera adhimuchya)**. This is called *Jivan Mukti*. How long does *JivanMukti* continue? First of all, a *Jnani* is not bothered about this. One is bothered about the body only when one is attached to the body. Now that the *Jnani* has transcended, he looks at this body as one of the millions of bodies- just like waves in the ocean. There is nothing special about this body. This body has to be born, grow, decay and finally pop off! A *Jnani* does not have any extra *Raaga* or *Dvesha* towards the body; going beyond *Raaga-Dvesha* gives peace of mind. All mental disturbances are due to strong *Raaga-Dvesha* with respect to the body-mind complex. This strong *Raaga-Dvesha* is so powerful that it overflows to the wife’s body, the husband’s body, the child’s body, the grandchild’s body etc. All relationships are for the physical body alone; ATMA has no relationships. In fact about this *Raaga-Dvesha* it is said in the *Geeta Adhascha urdhvam prasrutaha tasya shakha (The Samsara tree spreads out and branches outwards etc)*. Even the Theosophical society cannot spread as much as our *Raaga-Dvesha* ☺. All of these gets neutralized by *Jnanam*. And when I use the word Neutralized, I mean that a certain objectivity comes; a certain acceptance comes. There is a balance. So this is called *Jivan mukti*. And it will continue as long as the *Prarabdha* oil continues; as long as the flame of life burns. And when the *Prarabdha* oil gets exhausted the flame of light is extinguished. So the teacher says *Asman lokat pretya*.

And after death? *Sanchita* is burnt by knowledge, *Aagami* does not come at all for a *Jnani* and *Prarabdha* is exhausted. All these *Karmas* are gone. Therefore the teacher says that after death these *Jnanis* are **amrataha bhavanthi** i.e **they are one with the all-pervading brahman**.

This is like the pot space merging into the total space when the pot is broken. Pot space does not get destroyed when the pot is destroyed. Pot space only merges with the total. And what type of merger is this; it is a merger without motion. Please do not think that slowly it (or you) will merge little by little into the Total by dissolving itself (yourself) ☺

What do you mean by merger? The name POT- Space is withdrawn, that's all. Similarly you called this person a *Jivatma* because of the presence of an enclosure. In the absence of an enclosure, he is called *Paramatma*. Thus the teacher says ***Amrataha bhavanthi*** or they become one with *Paramatma*. This is called *Videha mukti*.

Thus we have completed our analysis of this first verse. In this this complete verse four topics are discussed:-

- Atma Swarupam is talked about...
- Atma Jnanam is talked about...
- Atma Jnanam phalam Number 1 i.e. jivanmukti is discussed
- Atma jnanam phalam Number 2 i.e videhamukti is discussed

Four huge topics have been encapsulated in this one small mantra. The teacher himself feels that full grasping may elude the student and so he clarifies the same thing again.

The teacher himself elaborates this idea in the following verses...

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग्गच्छति नो मनः ।  
न विद्यो न विजानीमो यथेतदनुशिष्यात् ॥३॥

***3. The eye does not go out on its own, nor the speech or the mind. We do not know the Awareness behind them. We do not know how anyone can teach it.***

Here in this mantra the teacher confesses that revealing this Atma is almost an impossible task. Any subject under the sun can be taught- Perhaps by using Slideshow, or by having laboratories to conduct experiments, or perhaps for studying microbes you can have a microscope. Somehow or other everything in creation can be communicated. But Atma is one thing which is almost impossible to communicate. The teacher does not want to say impossible, because he cannot conduct the next class otherwise. ☺ He has to wind up the teaching.

And therefore he says that it is an extremely difficult task. Why is the task difficult? We have already discussed this previously- Until coming to Vedanta, we have dealt with objective sciences. In the case of all objective sciences you listen and form a concept of what is being taught. And later you test or directly experience the concept. For e.g. in chemistry they will first talk about an experiment; you take down notes and you are told about what precipitate will be formed when some acid is used with Hydrogen-Sulphide gas. After reading all of this, you perform the experiment in the lab and you get the result. This is the case with any knowledge- be it Atoms, or Stars or even Human Emotions. Human emotions can be studied only because they can be objectified. Your emotions are objectifiable for you. Thus we have developed the objectification orientation and with this orientation we come to Vedanta. Here the teacher talks about Atma and Brahman. And the student forms a concept; He asks how does it look or what colour it is etc. And the teacher will say that it is *Avaranam* (colourless) and the student will conclude that it is a colorless **object**. And then teacher will also say it is *ashabdham* (soundless), *asparsham*(no touch), *agandham*(no smell), *arupam* (formless), *arasam*(tasteless). As and when some details of description are given out, the student will adjust his mind to try and conceive of it. The nearest object that most students can conceive of is SPACE. And having conceived Atma as space, the student tries to experience the Atma as Space through his *Dhyanam* or meditation. These are all beautiful



metaphors; and the metaphor in itself is not incorrect. But unless we are extremely careful, any word that it used can confuse the student.

Suppose I negate all of these words. I say, "It is not this, not this etc." The Poor Upanishad tries this method also. You cannot believe in how many ways the poor Upanishads have tried to communicate! And once I negate all the objective concepts, the student comes to me at the end and says, "Swamiji. I understood! There is NO ATMA. It took me 15 years but now I have finally concluded that there is no such thing; it is Shoonyam!" So he either he tends to objectify or he concludes that it is not there. The teacher has to teach in such a way that the student must conclude that Atma exists and yet the student must also not objectify it. He has to accept the Atma without trying to objectify it. This is a real task; a challenge for every Vedanta teacher.

Therefore the teacher says here. **Na Tatra Chakshu** - Eyes cannot capture that Atma. Eyes represent all the Jnaneindriyas and teacher is pointing out this it is not accessible to the organs of knowledge

What about karmendriyas? Can I somehow catch hold of it...**Na Vaak Gachati**. It is not accessible even for words. This is important to understand. Every word has a corresponding concept behind it. We have associated the concept with the word only through an objective experience. How does any word communicate to you? How does the word "clock" communicate to you? How does the knowledge arise in your mind? At some point of time you have seen a Clock and someone has introduced that object to you as "Clock". And you connect the word with the object. So we see that every word is known only by experiencing a corresponding object and therefore every word is an objective concept alone. Whatever words are used, you will either conceptualize an object outside or an object inside. Atma is neither an object outside nor a concept inside. Atma is YOU who is aware of the external objects and internal concepts. Therefore words cannot also objectify it. Also here *Vaak* represents all the *karmendriyas* and hence ATMA is *karmendriya agocharam*. (inaccessible)

Hmm, What about the Mind? The Mind is a very powerful organ; it can objectify things which *Jnanendriyas* and *Karmendriyas* cannot reach. For e.g. the mind can perceive LOVE. Is Love visible? No. Love is *Jnanendriya agocharam*. What about love being accessible to karmendriyas? NO, Love is not a karmendriya vishayam also. But still love is knowable within the field of your mind.

What about ATMA. No, it is not accessible even to your MIND. **NO MANAHA**. The mind cannot objectify. Any mental experience is an object of the mind and hence has nothing to do with Atma. Therefore **No Manaha**.

And finally the teacher drops a Bombshell on the student. **NA Vidmaha**. "Oh Student, I don't know the Atma". The student says, 'Teacher, You should have told me this before! After such a long time, you are finally telling me that you don't know the Atma'. The teacher says, 'Not only do I not know, Also **yatha anushisyaat na vijaanima**...I do not know ANYONE who can communicate the Atma. I am not referring to me alone; No Guru can communicate the Atma". By now the student must be frustrated and must be getting up to leave! ☺

Then the teacher says, 'This is the truth. But even the uncommunicable Atma has *somehow been* communicated by the scriptures which has been coming down in the form of a *Parampara*. And that it can somehow communicated has been proved by my guru communicating it to me. My guru used a peculiar method and he managed to communicate the Atma to me. And when I asked my guru about this method, he told me,"Hey student, do not give me the credit. I am able to communicate because of MY OWN guru". And His guru...because of his own Guru! So where did it all start.

***Narayanam Padmabhuvam Vasishtam Shaktim cha tat putra etc (Names of Gurus starting from the Lord)***

“The entire *Parampara* up to my Guru is responsible for me getting that knowledge. And not only did I get the knowledge from them but I also got this method of communication. They have imparted that method to me. And Oh *Shishya*, I will see whether that method works for you. I will try the same on you.”

What is this method? It is given in the next mantra which we will see in the next class.

***Purnamadah Purnamidam***

## Talk 5:- Khanda 1: Mantras 3 to 9

The Upanishad began with a question from the student through which the student wanted to know about that principle because of which all our inert organs are apparently sentient. The teacher could not directly answer the question. Therefore he indirectly answered it by indicating that the principle is the Eye of the eye, Ear of the ear, Mind of the mind etc. We have seen the significance of this expression in our last class. The expression Ear of the ear means - That conscious which is different from the ear, which pervades the ear and because of which the EAR can function as the ear. Since consciousness gives the "Ear status" to the ear by lending sentience to it is called Ear of the ear. The "Earnings" of the ear is caused by the presence of consciousness. Hence consciousness is given the title of "Ear of the ear".

Similarly the teacher takes the case of the mind, eye etc. and explains that without Consciousness none of these organs can function. This consciousness principle is the Atma. The teacher did not want to use the word Consciousness directly- if he uses the word the student will tend to objectify that Consciousness. The student will start a fresh *Sadhana* to find consciousness. If the student searches for consciousness outside or inside, he is going to fail miserably. Because consciousness is neither outside nor inside the student- IT IS THE VERY Student himself. Therefore the teacher indirectly communicates that the principle the student is looking for is consciousness which is nothing but him. Later the teacher confesses, 'I know I am using difficult methods. I can see that you are facing problems in understanding. It is not a deliberate attempt on my part to trouble you. I have no other alternative because consciousness is a unique thing.' What is its uniqueness-*Na Tatra Chakshur Gachati Na Vaag Gachati* – We have seen that this means that Sense organs of knowledge or action cannot objectify or grasp it. The mind also cannot objectify it. Later the teacher drops a bombshell by saying, 'I do not know that *Atma-Na Vidmaha*. Since I do not know the *Atma* I cannot communicate it to you .I cannot communicate something which is not known to me. And I am not referring to me alone, I wonder how any one will be able to communicate. It is incommunicable.' He makes a statement which can only give frustration to student. The student has come with all optimism but this Guru seems to be saying he does not know *Atma*.

And when the student is frustrated and about to leave the lecture hall, the teacher makes a statement in the next mantra which we will read now.

अन्यदेव तद्विदितादधो अविदितादधि ।  
इति श्रुत्वा पूर्वेषां ये नमसादध्याचक्षते ॥ ४ ॥

***It is different from the known and above the unknown. Thus we have heard from the preceptors of old who taught it to us.***

So in the previous mantras the guru has pointed out that words cannot explain the *Atma*. *Na vaag Gachati*. It is verbally not communicable. Still there is a silver lining amidst the dark clouds. 'There is a peculiar method of teaching by which even the uncommunicable can be somehow communicated. That methodology of communication is not my copy-right. I got this method from my Acharya. And My Acharya got it from his Acharya .*Evam parapara pramptam*-There is a traditional method of communication.This is called *Sampradaya*.' *Sampradaya* literally means the handing-over method

*sampradeeyate anena it sampradaaya*- The method of handing over the knowledge to the student.

Therefore look at the second line of this mantra.

*Iti shushruma purveshaam* - I have heard this from my “forefathers” or “Previous Gurus.

And what is said about that Guru -*Ye nah tad vyacah chakshire* -That person successfully communicated that knowledge to us.

Why does this particular Guru say that his teacher successfully communicated this knowledge? Because our Guru was once a student and acquired this knowledge from his own Guru. The Guru says, “I got the knowledge from my teacher and I can try on you. Whether it works or not depends on your *Punya* and my *Punya* ☺ . But I can certainly try this method on you!”

As an aside, there is one peculiar scolding in Tamil. In order to call a person a Fool we say - Person who does not have a guru! So even in the scolding, there is Vedanta hidden though people do not realize it; the scolding indicates that without a guru you cannot get this knowledge and will remain a Fool.

The Guru says, ‘I will give you that particular teaching. Listen carefully, *Tad Viditaat Anyatevaa atho avidaat adhi* -*It is different from the known and above the unknown*’.

This is a Key Vedanta teaching- A very important sentence. This statement is one of the key statements of the Kena Upanishad. All the statements coming later are a development of this statement. What does this mean?

*Atma is other than the known* -Is the first part of the definition. So after listening to this part of the definition of Atma, you have to negate everything that you know. Everything in creation comes under what you know. If I know a Star, it is known and hence not Atma. The Sun is known, the Earth is known. The Entire Creation comes under *Viditam* or Known and the teacher says that the Atma is something other than known. So we have negated the entire World. What about the physical Body-Even the physical body comes under something that is known to me. In fact it is known more intimately than the external world. I know every physical condition in the body. Therefore body also comes under *Viditam*. Atma is other than the known- *Viditaat Anya*. So Atma is other than the body. What about the mind? The Mind is still more intimately known to me. Therefore *Atma* is something other than the known mind also.

What will our mind do when it hears this statement? Once the teacher says that Atma is other than the known our mind will jump to the opposite end and conclude that Atma is Unknown- This is called dichotomous thinking. If Atma is not known it should come under UNKNOWN category. So the teacher quickly adds, “Please do not be in a hurry. Please listen to the full definition. *Aviditaat Adhi-Adhi* means *Anyat* or ‘Other Than’. Atma is something other than unknown also. It is neither known not unknown.”

What is the significance of this expression? Whenever we say that something is unknown, we only mean that this particular thing is Not known at present but is knowable. It is like this. Suppose I ask you to give me a list of all things that you have not eaten. Everything you enumerate will be **Eatable** alone. Will you put ‘Music’ in that list? No! And why you don’t put music. Because music is not Eatable. Anything in the “Not Eaten” list will be Eatable only! Again suppose, I ask you to list what you have not Read. Your list will be “**Readables**” alone. Readables alone can come in unread category.

So what is Not-known for most people? What is “**knowable**” alone can come in the unknown category.

By saying that Atma is other than the unknown also, the teacher is saying that it does not come under Knowable category AT ALL! If it is knowable; you will say that it is at present Unknown, but it is knowable and in due course of time it will become known. When I know it, Atma will move from Unknown to Known etc.

By making this statement the teacher is telling the student that the Self is neither known nor knowable.

What will be the student's conclusion? If something is neither known nor knowable then the student can come to only one conclusion- It must be Non-Existant. Only a non-existing thing is neither known nor knowable. But that conclusion is not allowed because the teacher has already said that ATMA exists in the first mantra *shrotrasya Shrotram* etc. ATMA is not Non-Existant

So now from the Definition given by the teacher we have a puzzle: - What is that thing which is existent but which is not known and which is not knowable?

If you analyze this carefully, it can be only ONE THING. THE KNOWER- "I-MYSELF"- I alone can come under the category of other than known or knowable. And I exist. 'The Knower' cannot come under the known category because any known thing is an object whereas the Knower is the Subject. Therefore 'The Knower' will never be known. Knower will not come under knowable; Knowables are also objects. Knower is the only thing which is NEVER an object. Atma is the Knower principle. Atma is never an object of knowledge, either in the past or in the present or in the future. The very attempt to know the Atma is a mistake. It does not come under the object of knowledge. By his definition the teacher has pointed out, **Tat Twam Asi**. That Brahman is nothing other than YOU the knower principle.

This is going to be elaborated in the later mantras.

यद्वाचाऽनभ्युदितं येन वागभ्युद्यते ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्मि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ५ ॥

**5. That which cannot be expressed by speech but by which speech is expressed...know That alone to be limitless Awareness and not that which people worship here**

Now here the teacher explains the definitions given previously. Atma is never known and never knowable. You MUST never attempt to know the ATMA. The very attempt itself is a mistake. And why is this- Because it is ever the knower principle

Analysis of Knower(Pramatha)- Means of Knowledge(Pramanam)- Object of Knowledge (Prameyam)  
Triad

The Knower is called *Pramatha* in Sanskrit. The root *prama* means "to know". *Pramatha* means the knower. The instrument through which different things are known are called *Pramanam*- means of knowledge. The eyes are *Pramanam*, the ears are *pramanam*, the tongue is *pramanam* etc. You can enhance the means of knowledge – For e.g to see you use a microscope or telescope etc. Even these enhanced means of knowledge are still called *Pramanam* . When a *Pramatha* uses a *pramanam* he comes to know a variety of things. The things known (objects) are called *Prameyam*.

E.g. when you use your ears to hear a sound then "Sound" or *Shabdha* is the *prameyam* here.

When you use your hand to feel a touch, then 'Touch' or *Sparsha* is a *prameyam*.

When you see, *Rupa* is a *prameyam*,

When you smell,*Gandha* is a *prameyam*.

Whatever we discover in this world is called *Prameyam*. Scientists have been enquiring into the microscopic world of atoms and the macroscopic world of stars. All of these come under *Prameyams*. This *Prameyam* list is a very big list. However in this big list, there is one thing which will NEVER BE Present-Can you guess?

What is THAT ONE THING which will never come under *Prameyam* list – HOWEVER powerful or enhanced the *Pramanam* may be? IT IS THE *Pramatha*- “I Myself”!

For e.g. I can use a microscope to see tiny objects. However even through the most powerful microscope, I cannot see my own eyes. Eyes – which come under the seer category in this example -are on this side (observer-side) of the *Pramanam*. The Eyes can never come under the other side (observed side) of the *Pramanam* and become the *Pramatha*. Only when the EYES comes on the other side of the *Pramanam*, can it become a *Prameyam*. There is one thing that can never come on the other side of *Pramanam*. That is THE SELF – The *Pramatha*.

You can extend this same example from Gross visual objects to subtle experiences also. Even here there is the Triad of - Experiencer, experiencing instrument and object of experience. If you make an exhaustive list of experienced objects through various experiencing instruments, you will never find one entry in that list- That is the experiencer. If Brahman is the very experiencer, how can that Brahman be ever experienced by anyone. Imagine a person who studies Upanishads for 25 years and sits in meditation and waits for the experience of Brahman- will he ever get such an experience? He may get some mysterious experience- but that experience will come under *Prameyam* list only. Therefore *Pramatha* can never be known through a *Pramanam*.

Now the question will come in your minds, if *Pramatha* can never be known through a *Pramanam* what is the proof for the existence of *Pramatha*? Or stated in other words, If *Pramatha* can never become *Prameyam* what is the proof for the existence of *Pramatha*?

The answer given by the Upanishad is as follows- Every knowledge of every *Prameyam* is possible ONLY because of the *Pramatha*. Even though *Pramatha* is never known, everything is known only because of the presence of *Pramatha*. Therefore *Pramatha* is evident in the knowledge of every object.

Let me give you an example. I cannot see my eyes at this moment. You agree? Have I got a mirror in front of me to see my own eyes? No! Now suppose I get a doubt about whether I have eyes or not? What will be your consolation to me? What will you tell me? You will say that, ‘Swamiji, even though you don’t see your own eyes, every visual perception that you have is a proof for the existence of eyes.’ I don’t require a particular perception to prove that my eyes exist. Every perception is proof for my eyes. Similarly, I don’t require a particular experience to know the *Pramatha*; in fact every experience is a proof for the *Pramatha*. *Prameyams* keep on varying; the instruments or *Pramanams* keep on varying but the in and through the varying *Prameyams*, in and through the varying *Pramanams* , one thing is evident - The presence of *Pramatha*.

Therefore the Upanishad says that *Pramatha* cannot be known. And at the same time, *Pramatha* need not be known because it is ever evident.

That ever-evident knowing principle, that ever-evident experiencing principle is called Atma. In fact, ATMA is the one that proves everything. And that which tries to prove everything need not be proved! It has proved its existence in the very attempt of proving everything. Why should I prove the one who

prooves everything? Here the teacher says that *Pramatha* is not known through the eyes. The eyes themselves function because of *Pramatha*. The ears themselves function because of *Pramatha*. Similarly *Pramatha* need not be experienced through the mind. The mind itself is experienced because of *Pramatha*.

**Thus, Self-Realization is dropping the attempt for self-realization with the knowledge that self-realization is not required because the self is ever evident. Self-Realization is dropping the desire for self-realization with the knowledge that self-need not be realized because it is ever evident in and through every experience.**

This is what is going to be said even ahead.

***Yad Vacha Anabudhitam It is never objectified by the speech.*** : - If it is objectified through the *Shadba Pramanam*, then Atma would have become a known object. It would have become a *Prameyam* of Vaag (Speech) *Pramanam*. On the other hand it is said here, that -***Yena Vaag abyudhyate. - It is that because of that which the very Speech is valid.*** These spectacles is valid as spectacles only when there is a *Pramatha*. A *Pramanam* enjoys *Pramanam* status only because of the *Pramatha*. Because of the *Pramatha* alone, ***vaag abyudhyate*** or the mouth is speaking. And the teacher concludes - ***Tadeva brahma vidhi.*** Oh student, you please understand that that knowing principle or knower principle alone is called the Brahman.

Ok, here we have to make a note. I said earlier that the knower-principle is called the Atma or Brahman. But for how long does the knower principle, the conscious principle, enjoy the status of 'knower'? It enjoys this status only as long as there is some object to be known. From the stand point of the *Prameyam*, I am called the knower principle. Suppose I know something then I am called the "Knower" or the Conscious knower principle. And suppose I stop the knowing operation? Suppose I close the eyes, or I close the ears. In fact, let us suppose that I stop all the *Pramanams*. What will happen? Do I become non-existent? I do not become non-existent. The knower principle drops the "knowerhood" status and it will become the "knowledge or consciousness" principle. Therefore *Pramatha* in his original nature is Consciousness. This Consciousness alone enjoys the Knower status when there is an object.

This is exactly like what I happening here. Here I enjoy the teacher status. Why? Solely Because of your Grace!! ☺ The teacher enjoys the "teacherhood" because of the presence of the student. And when the students are all gone; who is left. The teacher minus the teacher hood.

Similarly, Atma has got two statuses. The intrinsic status is called Consciousness and the incidental status is called *Pramatha* or Knower. Therefore, Atma is consciousness by itself and the very same Atma enjoys the knower status during transaction. In the waking state, I am a Knower of the waking world. In the dream state, I am Knower of the dream world. In the sleep state, I am not a knower but I am pure consciousness. If the world comes, I am called the knower of the world. If world goes, then I am the pure consciousness principle. Therefore the teacher says, *Tad Eva* -that very consciousness which becomes the knower with *Pramanam* and which is not a knower in the absence of *Pramanam*- That very consciousness alone is called Brahman. **Tad eve brahma.** This is a Maha-Vakyam (statement of great import needing deep reflection).

(In fact Kena Upanishad is full of Maha-Vakyams or Statements for Deeper Reflection. The first mantra, *Shrotrasya Shrotram*, is a Maha Vakya. The fourth mantra, *Any Deva tad viditaat*, is also a Maha vakya. And then 5, 6 7, are all Maha Vakyas. Here the teacher is revealing Brahman as the very Knower or the Subject. ***Tadeve brahma tvam-you are that Brahman-iti vidhi-may you know that.***)

You may ask here, 'What about the God which I have been worshipping as the Ultimate? I have been a Shiva bhakta or I have been a Rama bhakta, Krishna bhakta etc. Are Krishna, Rama etc Brahman or not?

I have a counter question for you: - By Krishna, do you mean Krishna as an object of your experience? Or do you mean Krishna as the very consciousness in you. If Krishna is a person in front of you, then that Krishna will come under *Viditam* (Known). He will become a *Prameya Vastu* and the teacher has very clearly said that Brahman is something other than known. Experienced Krishna is not Brahman; experienced Rama is not Brahman. You may doubt my words and so please listen to the Upanishad

***Yad Idam Upasate. Tad na bramha...Whatever you have been worshipping now, that is not Brahman.***

The Upanishad says WHATEVER you have been worshipping! So please do not ask me, is MY god Brahman? Anything you have been worshipping is not Brahman. Brahman is the very *Pramatha*, the consciousness principle. Therefore every *Upasaya devata* is NOT the ultimate reality. Then why should the Upanishads or the *Shastra* introduce various Devatas. If these Gods are not the ultimate truth then why should the scriptures introduce various gods at all? The answer is- These were introduced as a stepping stone to *Brahman*. The various stepping stones are not the first floor of the Building, The staircase is not the first floor- But can you ask why do we need a staircase? Fool, the staircase may not be the first floor but without a staircase you will not reach the first floor. All gods we worship are *Mithya*, but without those gods you can never come to *Satyam*.

Therefore Krishna will become *Satyam* only when you understand Krishna as "The Self or The *Pramatha*". Rama will be *Satyam* only on that day when you know that Rama is not different from Your Self. This is true for any deity. Thus in the early stages of worship, Krishna is an object of knowledge. However In the final stage, Krishna is the very Subject of knowledge. In the early stages of worship Rama is an object of knowledge. In the final stage, Rama is the very Subject of knowledge. In the beginning stage, bhakti is called *Dwaita bhakti*. In the final stage bhakti is *Advaita Bhakti*. In Advaita Bhakti Alone god is real; in all other *Dwaita* bhaktis God comes under non-real or *Mithya* only.

And who says this? Not me! You may doubt me! But the Upanishad itself says, *Yad idam upasate*, whatever you are objectifying - It is not Brahman! Therefore in meditation, you may have extraordinary visions-It is all very wonderful; instead of seeing Ghosts it is certainly better to see various deities in your visions- but always remember whatever *Darshan* (Vision) you have in your exalted meditation (Some people say that in their meditation they are able to go to the *Bhuvar loka*, *Suvar loka* etc and they see devatas coming) has nothing to do with the Ultimate Reality. What is that Ultimate Reality! It is *Atma*

Ok, so after the whole class is finished someone is going to come to me and say, 'Swamiji , When will I see the *Atma*?' I am going to take a coconut and break it on your head!!! ☺ ☺ ☺ Never ask this question- When will I see the *Atma*! Fortunately or unfortunately, you are THAT *ATMA*.

Continuing....

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनो मतम् ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ६ ॥

***6. That which cannot be known by the mind but by which the mind is known...know That alone to be limitless Awareness and not that which people worship here.***

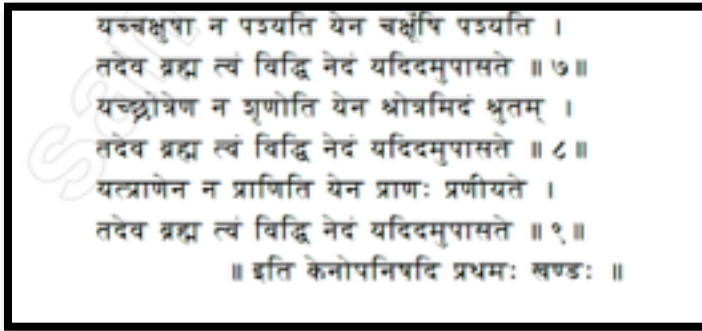


The teacher is applying the same logic to different *Pramanam*s. You may change the *Pramanam*-As discussed *Pramanam* is the instrument of knowledge or instrument of experience. You can make the *Pramanam*s more powerful. But even the most powerful instrument cannot objectify Brahman, because Brahman is not on the other side (observed side) of pramana. If it is on the other side, it will be called *Prameya*. It is on this side (observer side) and it is called Pramatha or Knower

To convey this Swami Chinmayananda would give a very nice example. Suppose a person was using a torch light in a dark room and he found that the light was very powerful. The person wanted to know what Battery was used in the torch due to which it gave such a powerful light. He removed the battery and put it in front of the light bulb. ☺ Can you guess what happened? There was no light and so he could not see the battery! So this person quickly inserted the battery back into the original slot. Now, the Torch was lit but there was no battery in front of the Bulb! He tried this operation many times and with great speed. After all, he wants to see the battery!!! Do you think he would succeed? ☺

No Matter HOW quickly he performs this operation, he is never going to see the Battery? And Why- Because Battery is on this side of the light. It is because of the battery that he is able to see the light.

Similarly, you can never objectify yourself. You cannot objectify Brahman with your mind- it is on the other side like the battery. It is because of the presence of Brahman that the mind is able to objectify!



**7. That which cannot be seen by the eye but by which the eye is seen...know that alone to be limitless Awareness and not that which people worship here.**

**8. That which cannot be heard by the ear but by which sounds are known...know that alone to be limitless Awareness and not that which people worship here.**

**9. That which the breath cannot smell but by which the breath smells objects...know that alone to be limitless Awareness (Brahman) and not that which people worship here.**

All these mantras are similar. The teacher takes three more instruments- eyes, ears and *Pranas*. Shankaracharya in his commentary takes the word *Prana* to mean the "organ as smell". So three *jnanedriyams* are taken. Through all these sense organs Atma cannot become a *Prameyam*.

This remind me - In the Lalitha Sahasranam (Thousand names of the Goddess) one of the names of Lalitha is Aprameya. The line goes...

*Aprameya Svaprakasha Mano Vachama Gochara (Refer Lalitha Sahasranama)*

If Lalitha is *Aprameya* (beyond objectification) then what form will she have? If she has a form with a beautiful sari and ornaments then She is Prameyaa! *Aprameyam* cannot be conceived by us, because we are in the first standard of Vedantik School. And so Lalitha is given a form or Vishnu is given a form. Even in Vishnu Sahasranama the name *Aprameya* appears. *Aprameya* means never an object of knowledge.

But the *Lalitha Sahasranam* does not want us to conclude that SHE does not exist- The next word informs us that *Lalitha* does exist! The verse continues by saying, she is *Swaprakasha*! *Lalitha* is Ever-evident.

Some people commit a mistake here. They conclude that since the mind or senses cannot objectify the Self or *Lalitha*, one should stop all the functions of the Mind and the sense organs. They believe that when one suspends all the sense perceptions and thoughts and sits in *Nirvikalpaka Samadhi*, then Atma will reveal itself. It has been stated that Atma is beyond mind and senses -We hope to get the *Atma Jnanam* by suspending these!

*Swaprakasha* means, it is evident ALL the time! When is *Pramatha* not evident? Even now from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm while I was speaking, every moment Consciousness was evident. You were conscious of the sound that this Swami was making. Therefore going to Samadhi for self-realization is a misconception. The Upanishad says that the Self is evident during Jagrat, during Swapna and during Sushupti. And if there is a 4<sup>th</sup> state -then Atma is evident in Samadhi also! Please Note this carefully: - We do not say that Brahman is NOT evident in Samadhi. We only say that Samadhi is not required for Consciousness to be evident. It is ever evident; this ever evident consciousness is that Atma that the Student asked for. With this verse the first chapter is complete.

*Purnamadah*

## Talk 6:- Khanda 2: Mantras 1 to 3

Of the 4 chapters of the Kena Upanishad, we have completed the first chapter in which the first phase of teaching has been completed. The student wanted to know about the Atma from the teacher and the teacher has revealed the Atma. The teacher pointed out that Atma is neither a known object nor an unknown object; in fact Atma is not an object at all. In Sanskrit we say that it is not a *Prameyam* at all which can be revealed through a *Pramanam*. If Atma is not an object and it still exists then there is only one way that the Atma can exist. It has to be the very subject itself. Therefore the main revelation of the first chapter is that Atma is ever the subject and never an object.

- Atma is ever the seer, never the seen.
- Atma is Ever the knower, never the known.
- Atma is Ever the experiencer, never the experienced.
- Atma is nothing but the very *Pramatha* itself and never a *Prameyam*.

This is the first stage of understanding. Atma is *Pramatha*.

And thereafter, we have to go one more step further. *Pramatha* enjoy the status of *Pramatha* only in relation to *Prameyam*. Subject enjoys the status of subject only in relation to objects. Therefore the subject-status of the subject is also an incidental status. The intrinsic nature of *Pramatha* is nothing but the Consciousness. Therefore we say that Atma is the content of the *Pramatha*; *Atma* is the content of the “Knower”. The content of the “knower” is consciousness. This consciousness is called Atma with reference to itself. And when there is an object of knowledge in front of it then from the stand point of that object, Consciousness get elated to the status of the Knower. In the presence of objects, Atma is the subject. From its own standpoint Atma is neither the subject not the object.

So we have to understand this teaching in three Stages.

- First we say Atma is not the object but it is the Very Subject.
- Then we say Atma is not the subject also but it is the very content of the subject.
- And what is that content? The consciousness principle.

And the teacher said this consciousness is the Atma or this Consciousness is also called Brahman. And whatever has been taught with regard to Atma, the same should be extended with regard to Brahman also.

- Brahman is never the experienced, it is the experiencer
- Brahman is never seen, it is the seer
- Brahman is never known, it is ever the knower.

*Brihadaranyaka* Upanishad says never attempt to experience Brahman. The basic mistake of every seeker is attempting to experience Brahman. The moment you experience Brahman, it will come under

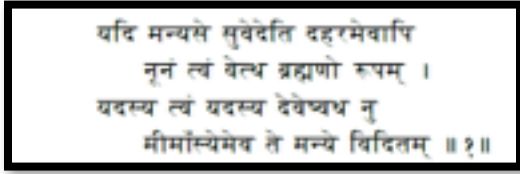
the “experienced” category. We have already said that Brahman is never experienced but it is the experienter. Brahman is not a matter for experience. Brahman is a matter for owning up as “AHAM Brahma Asmi” or I am Brahman.

How do you own this up? You do it as below:-

- First you say, “I-The Knower”-am Brahman.
- Further you progress and say-“I -the Consciousness” am Brahman. I need not work for the experience of Brahman since Brahman is experienced all the time as Consciousness.

If someone asks you, ‘When is Consciousness experienced by you?’, you should not answer this question. You should ask a counter question instead- ‘When is Brahman NOT experienced?’ It is experienced at every moment. Every word of mine you are aware of because of Consciousness. Therefore Brahman in the form of consciousness is always available. That *Brahma Chaitanya* I am- I am the Atma who is blessing the body and the sense organs. I am *Shrotrasya shrotram* , *manaso manaha*, etc. This is the first phase of Vedantik teaching.

Having taught this much the teacher wants to know whether the student has grasped the teaching. Therefore the second chapter begins with the teacher testing the student and the student passing the test with flying colors



**1. The teacher said: If you think you know Awareness well, then you only know a small portion of its limitless form. Therefore Brahman, limitless Awareness, is worthy of inquiry. The student said, “ I know Brahman”**

In this mantra, the first mantra of the second chapter, the teacher is testing the student by giving him a challenge. This is called the *Mananam* part of the teaching. The Vedantik teaching has to go through different stages.

- The first stage is *Shravanam* - which is passive listening and trying to grasp what the teacher is trying to convey. Even if you have any doubt while the teacher is conveying his message, you do not ask the same during *shravanam* . You set aside all your doubts and your sole aim is trying to understand what the teacher has to say.
- Having received the knowledge from the teacher in the *Shravanam* Stage, I should ask my own intellect if I accept what the teacher has to communicate. Am I convinced about the teacher’s communication? If I am not convinced, I can raise any number of questions. Either I find the answer within myself or I find the answer from my co-students via discussions or I go back to the teacher and clarify. This is called *Mananam*. Vedanta is a matter for knowing. As I have said, the only subject matter of Vedanta is Brahman. Brahman is already experienced by ME and I don’t require any separate “experience” of Brahman. I experience Brahman all the time in the form of Cosnsciousness- *Chaitanya Rupena* or *Chit Rupena*. Therefore my effort is not in the field of

experience. My whole effort is in the field of Understanding Clearly or knowing clearly. Once knowledge is my problem, then I have to use my intellect. I will Question every statement until I am thoroughly convinced. And this process of removing intellectual blocks is called *Mananam*.

The second Chapter of Kena Upanishad is the *Manana* Chapter. The first Chapter is called the *Shravana* Chapter.

The teacher is testing the student. “Oh Student, Have you now known Brahman now? I have taught the entire first chapter to you, I have taken so much pains for your sake. Now can you tell me whether you Know Brahman?”

The student is in deep trouble! What can the student answer? Either way he will be trapped! If he says-“I know Brahman”-Brahman will come under “Known” Category. If he says, “I don’t know Brahman”- Brahman will come under “Unknown” Category. And in the first chapter Brahman has already been defined as something other than “Known” and “Unknown”.

I hope all of you remember that sentence? It is a very important sentence in the entire Vedantik literature. *Anyateva Tat Vidhitaat Atho Avidaat Adhi*. (Verse 4, Chapter 1)

Therefore the student cannot say, I know. The student cannot say -I don’t know. The student cannot keep silent also. It will be construed as arrogance- When the teacher is asking him a question the student cannot sit silent. He has to say something.

Thus we see that a mischievous question is raised by the teacher. ☺ The student is going to be equally mischievous. ☺ He gives an equally mischievous answer; thereby indirectly communicating, ‘Oh teacher, you have communicated to me successfully’. This is the second portion of the Upanishad

Three and a half lines of this first mantra- Upto *Mimansyemeva Te* in the fourth line is *Guru Uvacha* or spoken by the teacher . Then the final portion i.e ***Manye Veditam (I KNOW)*** is *Shishya Uvacha* i.e spoken by the student. Later the Shisya will clarify what he means by ‘I KNOW’ in the next Mantra.

Let us look at what the teacher say? *Suveda* is a VERB meaning ‘KNOW WELL’. The prefix *Su* indicates ‘Well’ or ‘Good’. The subject is hidden in this sentence and we have to supply it. This line should be read as ‘*Aham Brahma Suveda*’ - it should be read within quotes as ‘I Know Brahman Well’. *Iti Manyase Yadi* – i.e suppose you conclude.

“Oh Student, after listening to the first chapter, suppose you conclude, ‘I know Brahman Well’

This mistake has been committed by any number of students. I have told you about a book that I read wherein somebody writes his auto-biography in which his “Experiences of Brahman” are brilliantly written! The entire book is in Black ink. But the portions where he talks about his “Brahman Experience” are all Red-lettered – He wants to say that it was a red-letter Day in his life! And he says, ‘I was sitting quietly in the morning. It was 4:27 AM. I was sitting by the Window Sill. Then gradually I forgot the surroundings-Consciousness of the surroundings was completely lost. And after sometime SOMETHING TOOK OVER!!! And a MILKY White Flash of Light gradually started engulfing ME. It approached me! And it went around the Guru’s picture thrice! And went AWAY.’ He writes that -This was Brahman!! ☺

Do you understand what the mistake here is? This person has got some experience-We are not questioning the validity of the experience. It is a mysterious one; normally we do not see such things- We see only GHOSTS and Vampires, because that is what we think about! This person certainly is seeing

something extraordinary. It need not be Bluff. It may be a FACT. But what we want to say is this -*Tadeva Brahma Tad Vidhi Na Idam Yadidam Upasate* i.e What appears and disappears for you comes under an object of experience. And it came in front of you- therefore it was Time Bound. And it went away also! Vedantic revelation defines Brahman as THAT consciousness which was present **before** the Milky Light came THAT consciousness was there **while** the Milky Light was there, and THAT Consciousness that continued even **after** the Milky Light left. We are talking about the “witnessing Consciousness”, but the person is carried away by the experiences – ordinary or extraordinary. And the experiences will stick! The teacher expects EVERY STUDENT to COMMIT THIS MISTAKE. This is one Mistake WE ALL HAVE TO COMMIT and grow out of!

And therefore the teacher says, “Suppose you had Some Such Great Experience and afterwards you conclude, ‘NOW, I know Brahman’ then my response to you will be-*Daharamevapi Nunam Tvam Vedha* YOU KNOW Very little of my teaching! You have not listened to my words carefully. I am showing you the light which illumines the Mike and because of my finger pointing in that particular direction, you have paid attention to the Mike and not the light (It is like a finger pointing to the moon; do not look at the finger! ☺ ). I was pointing to the LIGHT which **exists before** the Mike, which **exists during** the presence of the Mike and which will continue to **exist afterwards** as Well.

Similarly I am talking about the Consciousness in the MIND. You are thinking about the Arriving and Departing Mental Phenomena. While I am talking about the NON-Arriving, Non-Departing Consciousness in the Mind, you are carried away by the Arriving and Departing experiences in the mind. Therefore you have not understood.

The teacher says, *Asya Brahmana Rupam Manushyeshu* (we have to add this word Manusheyu to the sentence) you do not know the nature of Brahman, present in the Human beings.

*Manushyeshu Asya Brahmanaha Rupam Yat Upalabhyate Tad Tvam Na Vedha* – You do not know the Nature of Brahman present in Manushya – Manushya represent *Adhyatmika Upadhi* or the Micro Upadhi or Microcosm

*Deveshu-* Nor do you know the Nature of Brahman Present in Devas (Adhi Davika Upadhi- the Macro Upadhi or Macrocosm)

Oh Student, You do not know the nature of Consciousness in the Individual or the Total. In short, if you feel that you know then you do not know anything!!!

What should the student do if the teacher tells him this? ☺

Don't get disappointed. Do not develop any inferiority complex. But don't hold on to your wrong conclusions. In fact the biggest tragedy that can happen for a Vedantik student is for him to say, “I have gathered Data about Brahman from the Upanishads. Now what is remaining for me is that, in my meditation the Brahman of the Upanishadic description will come one day. He will grace me! He will give me a *Darshan* and tell me that I am pleased with your devotion. And He will touch my head and bless me!” Most of the people commit this mistake-they feel that scriptural study is a data-collection process. They hope that one-day the Brahman of the above description will come and give them *Darshan*.

And they stop the scriptural Study and Start intense meditation. One hour meditation; Brahman does not come. Therefore I must Increase the Duration...Make it two hours. Or perhaps I must make it four hours. Some people even stop sleeping. They sit through the night in meditation. And what is the benefit of Meditation- HEADACHE!

You are looking for something which is never going to COME AT ALL. That Brahman happens to be YOU WHO IS LOOKING. Doing Meditation, looking for the arrival of Brahman is the biggest pitfall most of the people get into. Therefore the teacher tells the student, *Mimansyameva Te*. Don't make such a conclusion. Please inquire into your Understanding. Mimansa – Means *Vichaar* or Inquiry. *Mimamsa* comes from 'Man'- *Dhatu* and means to analyze or to Inquire. *Mimansyam* – Potential Passive Participle form of *Man- Has to be enquired*.

So the verse upto this part of the first verse is the challenge thrown by the Teacher.

Now the Student after listening to this question- "Do you Know Brahman" responds i.e *Shishya Uvacha*. Shankaracharya in his commentary says -The *Shishya* ROARED LIKE A LION. Why should he roar? - Because his understanding what SO Clear. He was an *Uttama Adhikari*. The first chapter is for *Uttama Adhikaris*. The second chapter is for *Madhayama Adhikaris*. The Third Chapter is for *Manda Adhikaris*.

The student being an *Uttama Adhikara* i.e. well qualified roars like a lion and says, "*Manye Veditam -I KNOW Brahman!* It is very clear to me! I consider that I KNOW Brahman."

But we have seen that if the student says, I know Brahman, it is a wrong statement. Brahman becomes 'Known' and Brahman is something other than the 'Known'. The teacher must have raised his eyebrows. You have to imagine the scene! And therefore the student himself clarifies his understanding in the next verse. The next mantra is a commentary on *Manye Veditam* ('I know'- last part of the first verse) uttered by the student

The Shishya Continues the Mantra

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदति नो न वेदति वेद च ।  
यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदति वेद च ॥२॥

**2. The disciple said: I think I know Awareness. (Last part of previous verse). I don't think I know It well, but I don't think I don't know It either. The one who says, 'neither do I know nor do I not know It, knows It.**

So the student clarifies the statement. "I know Brahman" that he made in the first verse. This involves a mistake-Brahman becomes an object of knowledge. Therefore the student himself clarifies by giving a Second Statement.

And the student's next statement is, "Not that I know Brahman".

"Oh does this mean that you don't know?" Because, if the student says I don't know Brahman, it will come under 'UNKNOWN'.

The student says, "Not that I DON'T Know Brahman." And the teacher will again raise his eyebrow. (Imagine this scenen – 'OH! So you don't know Brahman.' 'I know!' 'Oh, so you know?' 'I don't know!' ☺ )

We have seen that the student makes these statement:-

- I know Brahman,
- Not that I don't know Brahman,
- I know, I don't know!

What is the essence of this statement? Brahman does not come under 'Known' category or 'Unknown' category. Brahman is not an object at all. And since Brahman is never an object, you should never use a **transitive** VERB with regard to Brahman.

DO you remember transitive verb and intransitive verb which we studied in school? What is a transitive verb? – A verb which has got an object is called a transitive Verb. When you say, I EAT, it is a transitive verb because it has an object implied i.e. I eat a mango or apple etc. When you say, I Smell, an object is implied.

Suppose you say, I “smiled”- What is the Object here? There is none and such verbs are called Intransitive verbs. With regard to Brahman, NEVER use a transitive VERB because if you use any transitive verb, Brahman will become an Object.

If you say, I experience Brahman then Brahman will become an Object of the transitive verb “experience”.

If you say, I know Brahman then Brahman will become an Object of the transitive verb “know”.

Similarly - I meet Brahman, I see Brahman, I touch Brahman, I merge into Brahman- people want to merge into Brahman! – All these verbs are transitive verbs. You can use ONLY one verb with regard to Brahman. What is that? I **“AM”** Brahman. Therefore the student wants to say, “Oh teacher, don't put such inconvenient questions. If you put an inconvenient questions my answer will be an inconvenient answer. I am going to reply like this -I know Brahman, Not that I Know Brahman. Not that I don't know Brahman Know I don't know’.

*Brahma Suveda Iti Na Manye* – I don't consider that I know Brahman Well

*Na Veda Iti No Manye* – I don't consider that I don't know Brahman

*Veda-* I know. Here you have to add (*Na Veda*) - I don't know

The commentator says here that the student is confident that he has understood Vedanta correctly. He looks around to see what the response of other students are. Some of the other students may have been sitting there and observing this interaction. A few of them appreciated our student - *Shabash!* Well Answered!!! And a few others kept Blinking -What is all this! 'Not that I know; Not that I don't know! I know I don't know'- It all sounds crazy. Why is this person quibbling with words?

(People say, Vedanta is looking for a Black Cat in a Dark Room where it is not there. It looks as though they are quibbling with words. ☺)

And here our student makes a comment that, 'Among other students, whoever has understood my statement, those students also have understood or have grasped Vedanta!' Look at his confidence! That is Why Shankara used the word *Garja* (He ROARS). 'Among the other students whoever has grasped my answer, all those students have grasped the Vedantic teaching.'

Let us look at what he says,

*Yo Na Tad Veda tad Veda-* Which ever student has grasped my statement, *Saha Veda* – He has understood Brahman. And what is my Statement- the Student reminds them of HIS statement once again

*No Na Veda Vedacha* – You should Read this within quotation. This statement of mine - *No Na Veda Vedacha* - Whoever has understood, they have grasped Brahman.



(Ok, I know that we should not say 'Grasped' here ☺ .Why- Grasping is also a Transitive Verb. What we mean is that we have grasped the fact that Brahman Cannot be grasped. The un-graspability of Brahman has been grasped)

यस्यामतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः ।  
अविज्ञातं विज्ञानतां विज्ञातमविज्ञानताम् ॥ ३ ॥

### **3. The one who doesn't know It, knows It: the one who knows It, knows It not..**

With the previous mantra the students answer is complete. The teacher is satisfied. You have to imagine so many things here- the Upanishad does not say all this. The teacher says, 'Wonderful, *Shabash*. You are my dear student. Our communication has fructified. Now you are free.' Then you have to imagine that the student has Left. Not only this particular student, but along with him, all the other students who understood his answer have also left.

Some of our students are still sitting there- it seems like nothing got started at all! And people have already LEFT! The teacher is saying it is all over. These other students are still wondering what is going on.

However here, in between, the Upanishad wants to come and glorify this teaching. It wants to glorify this wonderful communication that took place between the teacher and student. The following verses i.e. 3,4 and 5 are the Upanishadic glorification of the teaching. How does Upanishad Glorify this teaching. It says

Brahman is NEVER known to a person who says Brahman is KNOWN by me. Brahman is NEVER known to a person, for whom Brahman is 'KNOWN'. Known -> Object. Known is the past participle; past participle always refers to the object. The Upanishad says,

*Yasya Amatam Tasya Matam* – One who says "Brahman is Known' (matam – known), for him Brahman is not known at all.

The same thing can be seen in another way also.

*Yasya Amatam- Yasya Purushasya Brahma Amatam* - For that person for whom Brahman is not an Object of Knowledge.( A-Matam – Not an Object of Knowledge); *Tasya Matam-* For that alone person Brahman is known.

*Yasya Matam Saha Na Veda* – For that person for whom Brahman is an Object of Knowledge *Saha Na Veda-* he does not know.

Further the Upanishad says, *Avijnaatam Vijaanataam. Vijaanataam Avijaanataam*. The Upanishad is enjoying this play of words; this quibbling!! It says for the KNOWERS of Brahman, Brahman is not known- you have to understand this to mean that it is not an Object of knowledge. For the Non- KNOWERS it is Brahman, it is Known- For these non-knowing people Brahman becomes mistaken as an object of knowledge

Ignorant people consider It is Known. Wise People never consider it is known. The essence of ALL this is simple– Brahman is the KNOWER. Or to be More precise the very content of the Kowner; the Consciousness Principle.

Further....

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।  
आत्मना विन्दते दीर्घं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् ॥ ४ ॥

**4. To say you know it you must know it in every state of mind. To know it is to realize that you are immortal. By virtue of Awareness one gains life but one gains immortality by knowing It .**

A very important Mantra in the entire Vedantik Literature. And especially the FIRST Line.

*PratiBodha Viditam Matam* – We said that one should not work for the experience of Brahman. What is the reason? Not because Brahman experience is ‘NOT REQUIRED’ or Brahman experience is ‘NOT POSSIBLE’. We say one should not work for Brahman experience because the required Brahman experience is ALWAYS available for everyone. One need not work for *Brahma Anubhava* because, *Brahma Anubhava* is the only thing which is all the time present for all the people. Why? Because Brahman happens to be the *Chaitanyam* which is self-evidently experienced by all the people all the time.

When you listen to me speaking you are experiencing two things simultaneously; one is the sentence and the second thing is the awareness that “I am conscious of this sentence”. So when you are conscious of the sentence two things are evident- the sentence is evident and also the consciousness is also evident. When the Second sentence comes from my mouth, the first sentence goes away but what remains? Consciousness is there when you experience the second sentence. Consciousness is there when you experience the third sentence or fourth sentence. Experiences come and experiences go – the one thing which never comes and goes is the consciousness because of which I am aware of the arriving and departing experiences. In the waking state we have waking time, waking space and waking objects. Consciousness is also present. The entire Waking state goes away when we sleep.

Dream time, Dream Space, Dream Objects arise- But what continues? The same consciousness continues which is evident in an through the dream experiences is present here.

And do you know the greatest wonder! IN SLEEP even when NO experience is there is still SOMETHING present! What do you know during sleep? You know that there is ABSENCE OF EXPERIENCES; but to talk about the absence of Experiences you require the same consciousness.

Again Consciousness -> illumines the absence of experiences in sleep. So never ask when Consciousness is evident; the question should be When is Consciousness NOT evident! It is always evident.

*jAgrat svapna suShuptiShu sphuTatarA yA samvid ujjRimbhate*

*yA brahmAdi pipllikAntatanuShu protA jagatsAkShiNI |*

*saivAham na ca dRishyavastviti dRiDhAprajnApi yasyAsti cet*

*cANDAlO'stu sa tu dvijo'stu gururityeShA manIShA mama ||1||*

*Shankaracharya* in his first line if *Manisha Panchakam* says Consciousness is one thing for whose evidence you need not work for anytime. Everything else becomes evident because of Consciousness. And this Consciousness being Brahman, Brahman is evident in ALL the three *Avasthas* (states). And therefore there is no time when Brahman is not evident. Therefore for *Brahma Anubhava* nobody NEEDS to do any work.

Then what are we studying scriptures for?

The study of scriptures is NOT for *Brahma Anubhava*. But the study of Scriptures is for Knowing that this SELF-EVIDENT consciousness IS Brahman!!

In the case of Brahman, *Anubhava* is First. *Jnanam* is Later.

In all other cases, you KNOW something first and experience it later.

- You know *Badrinath* first and you experience *Badrinath* later.
- You know *Rasagulla* first and you experience it later.
- The normal order is *Jnanam* first and after that *Anubhava*.

But in our case *Brahman*, *Anubhava* is always there but our problem is that we don't know that this ever experiences consciousness is Brahman- because nobody has introduced that fact to me.

This is like the example that Swami Dayanandaji usually gives. Dayananda Swamiji was flying to Delhi. Somebody was sitting next to Swamiji and was talking to Swamiji all the time. After sometime this person asked Swamiji where he was going. Swamiji said, 'I am going to Rishikesh'. The person said that he too was going to Rishikesh and he wanted to meet a particular Swami. He asked Swamiji if Swamiji knew that person. Swamiji said, 'Give me the name and address and I will try to find out'. And this person gives an address which says "Swami Dayananda Saraswati".

What was the problem of this person- It was not the Experience of Swamiji. He had been experiencing Swamiji all that time. But he did not know that the person whom he wanted to Experience *in Rishikesh* was ALL the time right in front of him. If Swamiji had been in Rishikesh, the person would have to go to Rishikesh and experience him. If Brahman is in Rishikesh or the Himalayas, then you have to Study and wait until someone takes you there. Upanishad does not Describe Brahman. Upanishad introduces Brahman as something that we intimately experience. Upanishads are not words or description. Upanishads are words of introduction. And what introduction does Upanishad give us- That which is ever experienced by you. That is Brahman. That is going to be brilliantly pointed out in this important Mantra the detail of which we will take up in the next class.

*Purna Madah*

## Talk 7:- Khanda 2: Mantras 4 to 5

To find out whether the student has grasped the teaching, the teacher asked a question to the student. 'Do you know Brahman now after listening to my teaching?' The student cannot answer this question directly because if he says, 'I know Brahman' then Brahman will become 'Known'. And if he says I don't know Brahman, then Brahman will become 'Unknown'. The teacher has clearly indicated previously that Brahman cannot come under either of these categories - 'Known' or 'Unknown'. Therefore the student also gives the answer in a peculiar form. He says, 'I know Brahman. Truly speaking, I don't consider I know Brahman. Not that I don't know Brahman. I know, I don't know'. It appears to be a quibbling in words but what the student wants to convey is, "I cannot answer the question directly. I cannot say I know. I cannot say I don't know. And this is because I happen to **be** Brahman!" Brahman is neither "known" nor "Unknown"; it happens to be the very knower -the *Pramatha*. *Pramatha* can never become *Prameyam*. Knower can never become the known.

Having grasped this much, we have to go one step further. The knower is Brahman; but the Knower-Status also is only from the standpoint of the objects. When there are NO object, the Knower remains without the Status of being the knower. And Knower minus the knower-status is the very Consciousness. And therefore Brahman is the content of the knower; Brahman is the very Consciousness which is the content of the Knower. And therefore the ultimate understanding is, I -Consciousness -AM Brahman.

### **Pragnyanam Brahma**

I do not have a Knower Status intrinsically. When there is an object in front of me, then in the presence of the Consciousness the object become known. And From the standpoint of the Known objects, I temporarily enjoy the knower status. Minus the known objects, I remain without the Knower Status. And that is the Pure Consciousness. Therefore the consciousness – I – AM Brahman. This is what the student communicated.

The student later said, 'Whoever has understood my statement, he also knows what Brahman is'. With the first couple of Mantras, the student completes his statement and the dialogue is over. The Upanishad comes and talks about the successful communication that has taken place. The Upanishad says the same thing in its own language. The Upanishad says, 'Whoever says I know Brahman, he does not KNOW Brahman (Brahman is not an object of knowledge!). For whomever Brahman is not KNOWN, that person knows Brahman.

After this the Upanishad talks a little bit more about the nature of Brahman. In this important Mantra

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।  
आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् ॥ ४ ॥

**4. To say you know it you must know it in every state of mind. To know it is to realize that you are immortal. By virtue of Awareness one gains life but one gains immortality by knowing It .**

*Pratibodha Viditam Matam* :- This is a very important definition of Brahman. If we really understand this definition, then Vedanta is clear. Otherwise Vedanta can be eternally confusing. So to understand this

you should know some basic things about the Words. After all Vedanta is teaching something through words alone.

Words can be broadly classified into two types.

- One is the words of introduction- Introducing something or someone.
- And the second type is words of description.

We should clearly know the difference between words of introduction and words of description.

### **Words of Introduction**

Let us take the first case. A person is standing in front of me in the temple. The person comes over and offers prostrations to me. He then gets up and stands in front of me. I am seeing this person all the time. I am “experiencing” the person all the time. But I don’t know who this person is. One of my students comes near me and tells me, ‘Swamiji, this person who is doing *Namaskar* is my uncle. He happens to be the secretary of this temple. He is very happy to have you here in the temple.’ And my student proceeds to give me some more information about this person.

What type of words are these- These are words of Introduction. These words of Introduction do not give me any experience of this person. Words can NEVER give any experience. Words can give only information. These introductory words also do not give me any experience of the person. The introductory words only give me information about the person. But the peculiar thing is that once this person is introduced to me, I don’t want to experience this person separately because the experience of the person is ALREADY THERE even before the words of introduction. Even as he was doing the *Namaskar*, I was experiencing his height and experiencing his complexion! So the Experience is already there; what was lacking was information about the already experienced person. And these words have given me that information. Only Words can give information; eyes can only give the experience of the person. Eyes can never give me the information about the person. My eyes will never tell me that this person is the secretary of the temple. This distinction must be clearly understood. My eyes give only experience; no information. Words give only information; no experience. Therefore words give me the knowledge; eyes give me the experience.

The experience was already acquired even before the Introduction was given. And when I get the introduction, I have got the knowledge which was missing previously. So tell me- After getting the knowledge, will I work for an experience of this person? The introduction is of an already experienced and “being experienced” person. Once I get the knowledge the desire for experience drops off. The words of introduction give me knowledge. And after the getting knowledge, I will never have desire for experience. Why is there no desire for experience-Not because the words gave me experience. Words did not give me experience. Words gave me only knowledge. But still I don’t have a desire for experience because the words were talking about a person who is already being experienced by me. To Summarize, Words of introduction will not generate a desire for experience.

### **Words of Description**

There are another set of words called the words of description. There is a description of Amarnath- People tell me about the *Shivalinga* there which is so wonderful and they describe to me that it is made

of Ice. When somebody gives me the words of description. I get the knowledge of *Amarnath Shivalinga*. Knowledge was not there because *Shivalinga* was not already experienced. If *Shivalinga* was experienced it would have become words of Introduction. But in Madras when someone describes *Amarnath Shivalinga* to me, it will be words of Description. As soon as I hear these words, a desire to experience the *Shivalinga* is generated in my mind. Words of description will generate a desire for experience. Words of introduction will not generate a desire for experience.

### **Brahman- Introduced or Described**

Now the question we need to ask is what about the word “Consciousness”? Whenever there is a description of consciousness is this a word of description or is this a word of introduction. There are words in the scriptures dealing with *Chaitanyam*– Are these words of introduction or description.

Is Consciousness already experienced or is Consciousness TO BE experienced by you? Consciousness happens to be the only thing that is already experienced. In fact everything else is experienced only because of the Self-Evident consciousness. Throughout the class, you are conscious of every word of mine only because of Consciousness. You are conscious of this sentence. Then you are conscious of the silence between two sentences. And you are conscious of the next sentence.

Consciousness is never absent. Consciousness comes under always experienced. Scripture calls it *SwayamPrakasha* or *Nityasiddha*. So when the scriptures talk about Consciousness, are these words of Introduction or are these words of description? - It has to be necessarily words of introduction alone. These words give me the knowledge of something that is experienced all the time. It is just like the experience of the person in front of me at the temple. I need not get an experience since I see this fat or thin fellow all the time standing in front of me. I only need knowledge. The scriptural words give us the knowledge.

What kind of knowledge will the Scriptures give? Will it be a knowledge which generates a desire for experience? If you have carefully listened to you will understand that The Guru is giving me the knowledge of an ever experienced consciousness. The knowledge is an end in itself and it need not be followed by an experience. If the words are descriptive words then it should be followed by experience. Since these are introductory words, knowledge is the purpose of Guru’s communication. Information is the purpose of Guru’s communication. And information or knowledge is enough. The words need not give Experience, The Guru need not give experience, and You need not work for experience. Even before Vedanta Class started Consciousness was always experienced.

Only knowledge is given by *Shastra*. What information is given by *Shastra*- *Shastra* says that the ever experienced consciousness is Brahman. It is exactly like saying this experienced person in front of me is the secretary of the temple.

I hope you remember what we mean by Brahman? It is an independent entity. Please recollect the points we discussed earlier. What were they:-

- It is not part, property and product of the body.
- It is an independent entity which pervades and enlivens the body
- It is not limited by the body
- It continues to exist even after the fall of the body

This knowledge alone is given by scripture.

If there is some doubt in the knowledge then what should I do? Suppose this person says that he is the secretary of the temple. But I have a doubt that I was introduced to somebody else as the secretary. What should I do? Let us say I ask this person to sit in front of me and I stare at him; because I have a doubt whether this person is secretary or not. I ask all the other people to go away out of the room. And I ask this fellow to sit right in front of me. I stare at him. ☺

By experiencing him more and more the confusion regarding this person will not go away. What is required is not more seeing. I have to inquire into his words and verify if they are correct. What is required is more inquiry until my knowledge is clear.

More experience will not remove doubt. More inquiry alone will remove doubt. So *Shastra* has to give knowledge and the knowledge should be doubtless. And if there are doubts what we require is NOT experience. IF there are doubts what is required is more inquiry of *Shastric* words

So is you have a doubt you can inquire - Can Consciousness really be independent as *Shastra* says? Can Consciousness be all-pervading? Can it be eternal as stated?

What is required is more and more inquiry based on *Shruti's* words. And therefore in this Mantra the Upanishad says that Brahman has to be known as the ever experienced consciousness. Brahman has to be known as the ever experienced consciousness; that knowledge alone is the right knowledge.

Upanishad says *Pratibodh Viditam Matam* Brahman is never known through a particular experience. It is discerned through every experience. *PratiBodha* means every experience. It is not a particular experience in a particular state called Samadhi- *Savikalpa* or *Nirvikalpa*. Brahman is to be understood as the consciousness available in every experience.

Let us say, I have to see a particular person. And so I turn in this direction. And when I am turning in this direction, I will get the experience of this person. It is a time bound experience. And suppose I turn in the other direction, I will get a new experience of a new person. And when the new experience comes- what happens to the old person? That old person disappears. I recognize the person through a particular experiences.

But when I have to recognize the light, which person should I choose? In fact I recognize the light not through a particular person but I can recognize the light in and through the experience of every person. When I am looking at you, I know that it is the Light because of which you are experienced. Even when I look away in the other direction, the light is experienced. The experience of light is not in a particular perception. The experience of light is in and through every perception.

Similarly the experience of consciousness is not in any particular experience. The experience of consciousness is in and through every experience. Even when you don't have any experience then also you are experiencing Consciousness. Because of the consciousness alone you are able to say that - I don't experience anything. And therefore how should you recognize Brahman. It is to be recognized as the consciousness in and through every perception. *PratiBodha Viditam Brahman*. That Brahman alone is *Matam* really know. If anybody says that I have got the description of Brahman through this study of Vedanta and I am waiting for the experience of Brahman -What does it show? It means the teacher has not communicated properly. As I said during *Buddha Purnima*, if at all you want any experience after knowledge; If at all you want any experience you can work for the experience of *Jnana Phalam*. Never work for the experience of *Brahman*. Right knowledge is understanging that 'After knowledge I won't

work for the experience of Brahman. But I can work for the experience of Jnana Phalam.' The *Jnana Phalam* requires some *Sadhana* because between knowledge and the *Phalam* there are lot of obstacles like habitual conceptions etc. This *Sadhana* is called *Nidhidhyasana sadhana* about which we will discuss later.

Remember that All the meditations prescribed in the scriptures **AFTER** Vedantik study, are NOT for *Brahma Anubhava (experience of Brahman)*. All the meditations are for *Jnana Phala Anubhava (to gain the fruit of this knowledge)*. Our habitual problems like *Deha Abhimana* etc and the consequent anxiety, security issues are all deeply ingrained. They have to go away. But this is not achieved by any other new experience. This is done by application of knowledge.

*Amratatvam Vindhate*. A person attains immortality by knowing that the Consciousness is myself and that Consciousness is Brahman. These are the two basic pieces of information that *Shastra* gives

1. Consciousness is Myself
2. Consciousness is Brahman

What will happen when I understand this? My very vision changes. I am not a 'Body with Consciousness'. I am 'Consciousness with the body'. This looks like a small change in language; but it is huge difference.

When I say, I am a body with Consciousness – This means that I am mortal. The body will go away and so will I.

If I am Consciousness with the body- then I am immortal. The body which is with me will have to go away. But "I-Consciousness-AM immortal". Therefore *Amrutatvam hi vindhate*. There is no more fear of death. Whatever happens to the hand, light will not get affected at all. You can pour water on the hand, burn the hand, or cut the hand...whatever you want to do. Even an Atom Bomb; cannot destroy the light. Similarly I am the eternal consciousness.

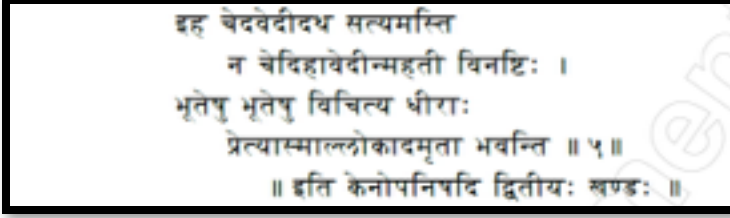
To come to this knowledge what all things are required? *Atamanaha Vindyate Veeryam*. Atma here means qualified mind or prepared mind.

*Sadhana Chatushchaya Sampanna Antahkarna* is called the Atma in this context. Not the Self. Mind is called ATMA here.

Through the prepared mind -*Veeryam*. *Veeryam* means *Jnana Yogyata*. And once the mind is disciplined what is the next stage. *Vidyaya Vindate Amrutam Immortality is attained through knowledge*. Note the words -Through knowledge. Upanishad does not say experience. Through knowledge which is born out of the introductory words of the scripture *Amrutam Vindhate* One attains immortality. One attains Moksha. To summarize the first stage is *Jnana Yogyata Prapti* and the second stage is *Jnana Prapti*. *Jnana Yogyata* means gain eligibility for knowledge. Second stage is *Jnana prapti*. Eligibility is through religion. Knowledge is through Vedanta. Veda Purva gives *Jnana Yogyata*. Vedanata Gives *Jnanam*. Thus the entire Veda is relevant for us. Some people require *Jnana Yogyata*. Why do they require *Yogyata*? Because they are now, *Ayogyata*. *Ayogyata* should become *Jnana Yogyata*. *Jnana Yogyata* should be *Jnaninaha*.

Continuing the same





**5. If a person knows the Self, eternal Awareness, the true goal of life is achieved. Suffering awaits those who do not know. Knowing it the wise let go of worldly things and claim their deathless status.**

The Upanishad says that many people have followed these two *Sadhanas* and attained liberation. It is not a new Project or new Venture! It is a time tested wisdom.

That is given in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> line. *Dheeraha* (or *Jnana Yogyaha* as we discussed) refers to those wise people who have followed a religious life. Entire Karma Yoga is leading a Religious life. All the Upasanas come under leading a Religious life. All types of Services that you do will come under leading a Religious life. Everything that you do as prescribed in the scriptures, will not make you a *Jnani*, but will make you *Dheeraha*. *Dheeraha* does not mean courageous here. Here it means the discriminative one or the one for whom priorities in life are clear.

By *Jnana yoga* they attain self knowledge. They discern. They get the discriminative knowledge. And what is the discriminative knowledge.

- Previously I said I am the body with consciousness.
- The next stage is I am the Consciousness IN the Body. This reversal itself is a BIG step.
- Then the next stage is –it is not enough that I know that I am Consciousness IN this Body- I should also understand that I am the Consciousness in every body.

The bodies differ. But the Consciousness does not differ. The light over this mike and the light over the other mike is one continuous light. In between objects there may be a gap; there is only object missing but the light is there in between also. Therefore there is ONLY one undivided light in the divided object. Thus divisions belong to the body but not to the consciousness. Consciousness is *Akhanda Chaitanya*. When I say I am the Consciousness - In the body then it means that there is One Consciousness here and there is another consciousness over there. Consciousness will become limited. I should know that Consciousness is undivided. That knowledge is called *Sarva Bhutastham Aatmanam Pashyati*. They see themselves i.e. Consciousness in Every living being.

I am the consciousness behind my body. You are the consciousness being your body. I and YOU are ONE and the SAME. We have got different names; not because Consciousness is different. We have different names because our bodies are different. Plurality belongs to the body. Differences belong to the body. Not Consciousness.

*Asmat Lokat Pretya* – It has got two meanings. Once I know I am the Consciousness with the body I have to ask myself the Question, Is the body my intrinsic nature or an incidental medium. Is this body an integral part of me or an incidental medium that I use. If I take the body as an integral part of me, then I will hold on to the body. I would want to keep the body eternal. I will say, 'Let everyone else die but not me.' We are all great philosophers when someone else dies. But we don't want death to come anywhere near us. And some people say that , 'Swamiji, I don't mind dying but I don't want to see the near and

dear ones dying.’ This is all because of one small mistake we have committed. We have taken this body as an integral part of ourself. What do the wise people do - they understand that the body is like a dress that I as consciousness am wearing. And it will be useful for some time. Afterwards it will wear out. And when it wears out there should be another dress. Therefore *Asmat Lokat pretya* means giving up the Abhimanam of the body (Identification with the body). Looking at the body objectively. I see millions of bodies coming and millions of bodies regularly going. This body does not have any specialty at all.

Bratrihari in his Vairagyam Shatakam offers his final prayer. At the time of death, he addresses all the five elements. He calls each element his father, brother, friend etc. Oh Five elements , you have been very kind to me. You have gifted a body to me for my temporary use. Because of your Grace, no charge was applied. And with the help of the gift, Bratrihari says I was able to gain this knowledge. I utilized this body very well and I have attained the knowledge with the help of the body. To know I am consciousness I need a body. To study Aham Brahmasmi -requires this medium. With the gift that you have made to me, I have made my life and now it is time to return this body to you with a note of Thanks!

I am able to return the body to the five elements with thanks only if I am detached from the body. I use this body as an instrument. And such people are called *Asmat Lokat Pretya* i.e having giving up the *Abhimaana* with the world. Having given up the *Abhimaana*, *Amruta Bhavanti* they continue to live until the *Prarabdha* is exhausted. The duration of the body’s life is not determined by my will. The duration is determined by the *Prarabdha* oil. And when this *Prarabdha* oil is exhausted, the flame will naturally go away. So therefore at the time of death or at the end of *Prarabdha*, *Amrutaha Bhavanti*...we become immortal. They become one with the immortal Brahman. W

Why do they say they become one with Brahman- Does it mean that they were away from the Immortal Brahman? No! They were already immortal Brahman; but now they merge into immortal Brahman as though – when the pot is broken the pot space merges into total space without motion. This is a unique merger in which there is no motion at all. Space does not gradually travel and merge. The word ‘merger’ is used because before the pot is broken the name pot-space was there and after the pot is broken the name pot space is not used. Similarly as long as the body is there the name *Jivatma* is retained. When the body is not there the name *Jivatma* is meaningless. *Paramatma* is the name. That is called *Videha Mukti*. *Asman lokat pretya* means after attaining *Jivan Mukti* they will attain *Videha mukti* also. This is the first meaning

The second meaning is – *Asmat Lokat pretya*- can be also taken as Death itself. Instead of *Abhimana Tyaga* it can be read as *Sharira Tyaga* itself. In the first interpretation it was *Sharira Abhimana tyaga* and in the second interpretation it is *Sharira Tyaga*. Either way he is one with Brahman.

Having talked about many people who have attained Moksha the Upanishad says, therefore a human being should not waste his life. Human birth is a very rare opportunity to attain this Moksha. *Jnanam* is possible only for the human beings. Animals only have to exhaust *Prarabdha*. In fact they cannot acquire even *punyam*; so there is not question of acquiring *Jnanam*.

To acquire Karma also free will is required. To acquire *Jnanam* also free will is required. You cannot say a cow which gives milk for *Abhishekam* in Shiva temple is getting *Punyam*. No! The cow does not get any *Punyam*. But the owner, instead of selling the milk and making more money, thought of donating it to the temple. The owner gets *Punyam*. The Cow never gets *Punyam* or *papam* because deliberate thinking is required to acquire *Punyam* or *Paapam*.

In *Manushya Loka* alone Karma is possible. In *Manushya Janma* alone *Jnanam* is possible. And therefore the Upanishad says, since you have got Manushya Janma better make use of this *Janma* and attain knowledge.

Suppose a person says, I will see this in the next birth. The Upanishad replies, next birth what type of body you will get is known. We do not believe in linear Janma. It is not a gradual evolution. According to Shastra, an animal can become a human being. And if Human being does not utilize the life properly a human being can become animal also. If the government puts you into jail, it is because once outside you are a threat to the society. You know what is God's imprisonment? Animal body is Ishwara's imprisonment. In the animal body the *Jiva* cannot do much damage. A tiger can maximum kill a few people. But a Hitler can kill millions of Jews. So therefore animal *shariram* is a form of imprisonment. We have all come out temporarily for some time. Bhagawan is watching; should I put these people back or should I release them. If you live properly permanent release is possible; otherwise again back to Animal Sharira. So either become GOD or become DOG. It is your Choice.

Upanishad says, *iha ched avedi*. Suppose a person gains knowledge in this life. *Iha* means in this life. *Atha Satyam Asti* then alone the *manushya janma* is valid. It is meaningful, it is purposeful.

You may ask-What about accomplishing all other things. Isn't it purposeful? Vedanta does not accept that because anything you accomplish is a finite goal. You may become Bill Gates. Let us assume your wealth is 100 Billion. Even 100 Billion is finite. So all accomplishments being finite you have to travel from finitude to finitude. Finitude to Finitude means No progress at all. And therefore Vedanta doesn't consider it a Real Accomplishment at all.

So *Yaha Aatmanam Aviditva asmad Lokaat praiti saha kripanaha*. He is an unfortunate person who dies without gaining this knowledge.

*Yaha Aatman Veditva asmat Lokat Praiti saha Brahmana*. One who gains this knowledge he alone deserves the title Brahmin. (According to Vedanta, *Jnani* alone is a Brahmin. All others are either A-Brahman or pseudo-brahmana )

*Atah Satyam Asti Na ched Iha Avedi*. So if one does not gain this knowledge in this Janma then *Mahati Vinashtihi* or the loss is immense loss. You are missing the INFINITE. Brahman being the infinite it is the greatest loss. Therefore may you know the value of human life and start your Sadhana either for *Jnana Yogyata prapti* or *Jnana Prapti*.

Don't say, 'Swamiji why can I not start after retirement?' Please don't misunderstand me. But who told you that you are going to survive after retirement. Who knows that you are going to survive even tomorrow? No Body knows when death is going to come. And therefore when your faculties are in good condition and when the life is available now, may you make use of the human life and attain Moksha! The Upanishad concludes the section by glorifying the human *Janma* as a means of brahma *Jnanam*.

More in the next class

*Purna Madah*

## Talk 8:- Khanda 3: Mantras 1

We have completed the first two chapters of the Kena Upanishad in which the central teaching of Vedanta was given i.e. *Jivatma – Paramatma Aikyam*. In these two Chapters almost every mantra was a *Maha Vakyam* by which the Upanishad pointed out that that 'Consciousness-The very subject which experiences everything- is nothing other than Brahman.

*Tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidam upasate.* That Very consciousness which experiences everything and it is not any object of experience is Brahman

And also the Upanishad concluded the teaching in this well-known mantra

*Pratibodha vidhitam matam amrutatvam hi vindhate etc*

Since Brahman happens to be the Consciousness itself, it is experienced self-evidently by everyone. Any separate effort for Brahman Experience is not required. In fact every other experience is possible only because of the ever experienced Brahman. We don't say Brahman experience is not required. We don't even say Brahman experience is NOT possible. We only say Brahman experience is ALWAYS AVAILABLE in the form of the Consciousness because of which ALL OTHER experiences are possible.

There is the eternal experience of Brahman in the form of (I-ness)*Aham , Aham Aham iti*. In the eternal experience of Brahman everything else is experienced. All the other experiences come and go. We also saw that if Brahman experience is always present then the purpose of the Vedanta *Shastra* is not to give the experience of Brahman. Vedanta wants to give the knowledge of Brahman. Hence we said that the Upanishadic words are not words of description but words of Introduction. We employ words of introduction to give the knowledge of something which is already experienced. Upanishadic words are words of Introduction since they give the knowledge of the ever experienced Brahman. What is that knowledge given by the Upanishad? The knowledge is –'BRAHMAN IS THE CONSCIOUSNESS. THAT CONSCIOUSNESS IS YOU. THEREFORE YOU ARE BRAHMAN'

Once I learn to own up this ever evident Consciousness as myself, I have attained *Brahma Jnanam*. It is purely a job of the intellect. The Intellect cannot give the experience of Brahman and Intellect NEED NOT give the experience of Brahman because Brahman is ever experienced. But intellect is required to gain the KNOWLEDGE about the ever experienced Brahman. Through the words of the Upanishad we are getting the knowledge in the intellect. The knowledge which takes place in the intellect is that- The ever evident Consciousness - I WAS, I AM and I EVER WILL BE. This body which I mistook as myself is really a medium through which I – the Consciousness – am interacting. Once I shift this "I" from the body to Consciousness then there is a transformation.

Previously I *was* the body and I *had* the consciousness. Now I **AM** the consciousness and I **have an incidental body** which arrived on a particular date and which will certainly depart on a date. Between the arrival and the departure of the body, I transact through this body. When the body has departed I stop my transaction. BUT I certainly do not stop existing! So the cessation of transaction is not a cessation of my existence. Therefore Geeta says

*Na jayate Mriyate Vaa kadachit etc (It is not born etc)*

I EVER AM; sometimes transacting; and at other times without transactions. This owning up which requires the intellect is called *Bramha Jnanam*. And this *Bramha Jnanam* is also called *Jivan Mukti* because in this knowledge I drop all my sense of limitation. I know that all the limitations belong to the body alone and "I-Consciousness" cannot claim the limitations of the body. And therefore *A-Purnatvam* goes away and *Purnatvam* is owned up. This owning up alone is called *Moksha*. And I continue to transact as a *Jivan Mukta*. When this body falls at the end of the *Prarabdha*, my transaction through this particular body stops. Then I am called *Videha Mukta*. There is no difference in ME- Consciousness in these two states. The difference is only with respect to the transaction through the body. When I transact it is called *Jivan Mukti*. When the transaction is not present it is *Videha Mukti*.

In fact every day during sleep you have the experience of *Videha Mukti*. In the *Swayam Jyotih Brahmana*, the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* gives Sleep as an example of *Videha Mukti* where the duality is not at all experienced.

Having explained this wisdom comprehensively the Upanishad concludes the second chapter with the verse

*Iha Ched Avedi Ata Satyam Asti...etc*

It states that if we own up this fact, life is fruitful. If we do not gain this knowledge then life is a great loss. In all other accomplishments I would have only travelled from finitude to finitude which is not progress at all.

Thus the actual *Kena Upanishad* is complete with the second chapter. Now we have got two more chapters in which the Upanishad wants to communicate the same wisdom for those people who could not understand the previous two chapters. Those who have the necessary qualifications i.e. *Adhikaris* will enjoy the first two chapters. It is a walk over for them. But for the unprepared ones, the first two chapters are too subtle and therefore the teaching will go above the head of these students. For such unprepared seekers the Upanishad says, 'Don't worry. I will give the same teaching in a diluted manner.'

What is this diluted manner employed over here? The Upanishad teaches through a story. Once you give the teaching through a story, people can enjoy the story and through the story the values or the teachings can be given.

For e.g. take the story of Lord Shiva burning Manmatha through the third eye. Manmatha disturbs Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva opens his third eye. If you watch one of those movies based on these epics, they invariably show some laser beams coming out from Lord Shiva's eye! These beams spread over Manmatha. And after two minutes Manmatha disappears into thin air! This is a simple story which even a child can understand.

The philosophical significance is like this: - The third eye represents wisdom. And Manmatha is the symbol of our desire. Another name for Manmatha is Kaama. He is called Manmatha because Kaama churns the mind and intellect. Churning is called *Mathanam*. The Churning Rod also is called *Matha*. (Nowadays you may not be aware of this with your modern electric mixers!). *Mathanadi* means to churn. Kaama is called Manmatha because he churns and disturbs the mind. And Shiva burning Kaama is nothing but Knowledge destroying our desires. Thus the story above conveys the philosophical idea very nicely.

Similarly the philosophical meaning of Kena Upanishad teaching is going to be concretized through a story in the third section. Some of you may have heard this story. I will just give you a small summary and also the significance of the story and we can go look at the Mantras later. It will be easier that way.

In this story, Devas and Asuras go through one of their regular battles; they are the arch rivals. The Devas win the battle. After the victory they want to celebrate and so they have a party. Each Deva is talking about his own personal glory; about how he deserves *Param Veer chakra*, *Maha Veer Chakra* etc for his prowess on the battlefield. Unfortunately the Devas became very arrogant. No doubt, they were great and powerful. And No doubt they played their role in accomplishing this victory. But they forgot the fact that any success is not only the result of individual effort but also the result of *Ishwara Anugraha*(grace). The victory goes into their head and the Devas became arrogant. The Lord recognized their arrogance. He decided to teach them a lesson and remove their arrogance.

The Lord appears in the form of a Bright *Yaksha*. *Yaksha* means a celestial being.

*Yajana Yogyaha Yakshaha* - A sacred being; a Brilliant being

The Lord appeared in such a way that he was neither too far away nor too close to the Devas. If the Lord had appeared too far away, the Devas would not have noticed HIM. If the Lord had appeared too close, then the Devas would have recognized who he was. So HE maintained a sufficient distance. The Devas were distracted by a bright being about whom they did not know. They decided to send a messenger to find out who the *Yaksha* was.

*Agni Devata* (Fire God) is the messenger of Gods.

(That is why whenever we want to offer anything to the Gods we hand it over to *Agni* in the *Agni Kundam* (Fire Pit). When we say *Agnaye Svaha* (To Agni) the oblation is offered into the fire. Even when you say *Prajapataye Svaha* (To the Creator) the oblation is offered again to *Agni* only.

Do you know that story? One gentleman who was settled in America came here. When he heard *Agnaye Svaha* he saw the offering being made to the fire. Then he heard *Vayave Svaha* and he put the offering into his mouth (*Vaay* is mouth in Tamil)! Then the priest said, No it has to be offered into the fire. So he spat it out into the fire. ☺

*Vayave Svaha* also is offered to Agni. How can we do that; you may say that address is different. We offer offerings into the Fire because fire happens to be the courier service of the Gods. *Agni Devata* knows the address of all the *Devatas* and before long the offering will reach the *Devatas*. Therefore

*Agnim Dutam Vrinimahe* (Vedic Mantra sung here))

*Agni* goes to find out about the *Yaksha*. The Lord wanted to remove the arrogance of *Agni*. Therefore he asks *Agni* a question, 'Who are you?' *Agni* feels very insulted, 'I should be asking him who he is. And before I can put a question, he is asking me who I am. It is an insult. I am well known in the entire world. Who does not know *Agni*?'

He says, 'I am *Agni Devata*. I am the Omniscient Lord. I can destroy everything in the creation. I have so much power.' The *Yaksha* says, 'You need not burn everything. I will give you a dried blade of grass. You only burn that.' *Agni Devata* feels insulted as this is not a sufficiently strong challenge for his ability. However He tries burning the blade of glass and he struggles with it for quite some time. *Agni* is not able

to burn it. Completely humiliated, Agni comes back and says, 'I don't know, who that person is.' But Agni certainly knew one thing, without the grace of that Yaksha he could not burn anything.

Then Vayu said, 'I will go. Agni does not know much. I am really THE ONE! Among the *Pancha Bhutas*, Vayu is the second son and Agni is the third. So Vayu Devata is elder to Agni.' And you know all know Vayu; he has lot of airs. ☺ He is the Air Devata after all!! He goes to find out about the Yaksha. Again Yaksha asks him the same question, 'Who are you?' Vayu feels insulted. He says, 'I am the great Vayu Devata capable of lifting everything in creation.' The Yaksha says, 'You need not perform such great things. That old blade of grass which Agni could not touch is still with me. Can you lift the same blade of grass?' Vayu tries his best with his cyclones and typhoons but nothing happens. He is not able to lift the blade of grass. Vayu also returns back humiliated.

So we have seen that both Agni and Vayu failed.

Then Indra, the lord of the Devas says, 'You are all useless fellows. You cannot accomplish anything on your own. I gave you such a small task of enquiring who the person was and you even failed at this. I will personally go now.' Indra goes with his extra arrogance; after all he is the Lord of all the devatas. He has more vanity. When Indra goes near the Yaksha, the Yaksha disappears. Indra feels even more humiliated than either Agni or Vayu. At least Agni and Vayu could have some conversation with this Yaksha. But Indra did not even get the opportunity for conversation. However here is the greatness of Indra; He understood that he has a problem. Agni and Vayu did not realize anything. Indra had more arrogance than either of them but he also had more discrimination. Immediately he recognized that it was his vanity that was the cause of all this. At once, he becomes humble.

You remember the story of Anjaneya (Hanuman) who went in search of Sita. He was so successful in crossing the ocean and fighting with demons on the way. However on reaching Lanka, he searched all over and he could not find Sita. Suddenly he realized, 'I have a thought inside me that I am doing all this. I have crossed the Ocean. I have fought with so many demons. I think it has gone into my head. Therefore the Lord is testing me. Let me pray to the Lord.' This is the famous prayer in the Ramayana which you all know.

*Namostu raamaya salakshmanaaya. Devyai cha tasmyai Janakaatmajaayai.*

*Namostu rudrendra yamaanilebhya. Namostu chandraarka marudganebhya.*

Where humility is not there success cannot come. Even if success comes before long Bhagwan will also give a lesson! In the Geeta when Krishna enumerates the values for a spiritual seeker, the first value he says is *Amanitvam Adhambhitvam (lack of vanity)*. In the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter again, Krishna reminds *Nirmanamohaha Jita sangha dosha. Manitvam* or arrogance in the worst enemy in any pursuit and especially the spiritual pursuit.

Indra discovered humility and he prays to the Lord. And when he prays, Parvati Devi or Uma Devi appears in front of him. And Indra asks her the question, 'Who was the Yaksha?' This is the part of the story occurring in the third chapter.

In the fourth Chapter the story continues a little bit more. When Indira Asks Uma Devi who this Yaksha was, Uma Devi teaches Indra. She accepts him as her disciple. When vanity goes, disciple hood comes. Arjuna the arrogant one got converted to Arjuna the *Shishya* in the Geeta. Similarly Indira the arrogant one became Indra the *Shishya*. Naturally Indra got the knowledge taught by Uma Devi.

And what was the knowledge Uma Devi gave –The first two chapters of Kena Upanishad! Uma Devi did not teach anything new. She taught Indra – *Shrotrasya Shrotram .., Anya Deva Tad Viditaat.., Pratibodha Viditam Matam...* etc. The same teaching, Uma Devi gave Indira and Indra became a *Jnani*. Having attained Jnanam, Indra goes back to the Devatas and tells them all that transpired. Indira is glorified by all the Devatas. ‘What we could not accomplish, India you accomplished. Therefore you are great.’ Indra becomes the glorious one. And then Indra says, ‘I would like to share this knowledge with you also.’ Finally, Agni and Vayu also get Brahma Vidya. And the story is over. ☺

Thus the story is in the third section or the third chapter and in the first few mantras of the fourth chapter as well. Through the story symbolically the Upanishad wants to convey certain important aspects of Vedantic teaching. The story is simple and anybody can read and understand. But what is conveyed indirectly is important. Let us look at that

1. The first thing is, Yaksha appears in front of the Devatas indicating the existence of God or the existence of Brahman. Therefore the first significance of the story is *Brahma Astitvam*. Brahman of the Upanishad or the philosophy represents the Yaksha of the story. The *Nirguna Brahman* of the first two chapters is the *Saguna Yaksha* of the third chapter. Why should we prove the existence of Brahman through the story? This is because in the first two chapters it was mentioned that Brahman is not available for any organ. *Na Tatra Chakshur Gachati Na Vaag Cahaghati Na Vidmaha* etc. You cannot see, hear it, touch it, taste it, and think of it. It cannot be even described by the words. And it is something other than the even the known and the unknown. When we hear such a description of Brahman, our minds tend to conclude that such a Brahman cannot exist. It is very difficult to accept that existence of *Nirguna Brahman*. Not only lay people, even philosophers do not accept *Nirguna Brahman*. *Dwaitis* do not accept this. *VishisthAdvaitis* do not accept this. *Sankhya, Yoga* and many other schools do not accept *Nirguna Brahman* because it is impossible to conceive of. Hence the Upanishad through the Yaksha story tells us that *Nirguna Brahma* Exists. Have faith in that. Believe in *Nirguna Brahma* until you understand. Thus the first lesson is *Brahma Asti*
2. The second lesson that is given is: - All the glory that a person claims really does not belong to that individual. Any pride is meaningless. Any *Abhimanam* is *Mithya*. Agni thought that the victory was because of himself, Vayu thought that the victory was because of himself. But they both realized that they got all their power from this Brahman. Never have pride; be humble. *Abhimanam MithyaTvam* is the second lesson that is indicated.
3. The Third lesson: - Agni, Vayu and Indra could not know who the Yaksha is. Here, Yaksha represents Brahman. Agni and Vayu represent the sense Organs. In fact in the *Shastra*, the word Deva is used for the Gods also as well as the Sense organs also. ‘Agni & Vayu could not know the Yaksha’ indicates that the sense organs cannot know Brahman. And similarly Indra also could not know the Yaksha. Who is Indra? The Lord the Sense organs i.e the Mind. The Mind alone can make every sense organ function. Therefore ‘Indira could not know the Yaksha’ means that the Mind also cannot know Brahman. Brahman is beyond the senses and the mind. It is inaccessible to the senses and the mind. All these significance are brought out by Shankaracharya in his commentary. We don’t have to do any work; everything is ready for us. We only have to read it ☺. *Brahmanaha Durvigneyatvam* is the third lesson.
4. The fourth lesson: - Agni and Vayu could not gain this knowledge. They had to return disappointed. Whereas Indra gained the knowledge. How did Indra gain the knowledge?



Because he became humble. The arrogance went away. He bowed down. Arrogance makes our bodies stiff. We will not BEND down. 'Why should I bend in front of someone'? That arrogance is the cause of all obstacles. Indra was not an ordinary person-we are arrogant for no accomplishment but Indra had many achievements to his credit. There are two types of arrogance; some are arrogant with some accomplishment. But generally we are arrogant with No accomplishment. This is the different between pride and vanity. Indra had all the accomplishments but still he was humble. *Amanitvam* was present. He surrendered to the Lord. *Bhakti* also was there. That is why Krishna says at the end of the Geeta that the Geeta must be taught only to the humble devotees of the Lord. Humility and devotion should be the hallmark of a seeker. Indra became humble and a devotee also. When he invoked these virtues called *Sadhana Chatustaya sampatti* or *daivi sampatti* or *satvika sampatti* then knowledge did not automatically dawn upon him. Uma Devi or the Guru appeared. Humility doesn't give knowledge-Humility gives you a Guru. When I develop all the virtues of a student, I need not go in search of a Guru. The Guru will be around. Just as when a flower fully blossoms, the honey bee naturally comes. The flower does not have to send an invitation letter. Therefore Never ask the question, "Who is my guru? When will the guru come? How to test whether this Guru is the correct Guru?" There is no need for all this. You acquire the qualifications. The Guru will be helplessly drawn to you. Krishna was there right in front of *Arjuna* when he needed. Uma Devi represents the *Bramha Vidya Guru* or *Saraswati Devi*. Thus the qualifications or humility, bhakti and the necessity of Guru are indicated. Or we can say that the conditions for self-knowledge are indicated.

5. The fifth significance - After gaining this self-knowledge, Indra became the greatest among Gods. Though already he was great- he was the Lord of Devas-Indra became more glorious and everybody worshipped him for his knowledge. Therefore *Bramha Vidya* also gives glory, or *Vibhuti* to a person. The glory of any *Jnani* does not belong to the *Jnani*. The Glory belongs to the *Jnanam*. Before he gained knowledge we did not respect the person. After he has become a *Jnani* we do *Namaskara* to him. The *Namaskara* is Not for the person- the *Namaskara* goes to the *Jnanam* which is *Bramha Vidya*. The glory of *Bramha Vidya* is indicated by glorifying Indra. Indra Mahima is Jnana Mahima.
6. The final significance: - The story serves as a means for practicing certain *Upasanas*. We will be studying those *Upasanas* in the fourth Chapter. One such *Upasana* is **Lightning Upasana**. The *Yaksha* was brilliant; and he appeared very briefly. He attracted the attention of the Gods and disappeared. The poor gods were just celebrating their victory. Suddenly a brilliant thing appeared and before they could know what it is it disappeared. This reminds you of something- Yes, like lightning. Lightning also appears in a flash. It is brilliant and it attracts our attention and disappears. The *Upanishad* is going to prescribe a *Lightning Upasana*. Please note, *Lightning Upasana* does not mean that you do your *Upasana* with lightning speed; like some of you do your *Sandhya Vandhanam* ☺. This is not that kind of lightning *Upasana*. It is the *Upasana* of 'Lightning'. *Upasana Sheshatavam*. The story has a link with the *Upasana* in the fourth Chapter.

With This background we will read the Mantra. We can easily understand

ब्रह्म ह देवेभ्यो विजिग्ये तस्य ह ब्रह्मणो  
 विजिग्ये देवा अमहीयन्त ॥ १ ॥  
 त ऐक्षन्तास्माकमेवायं विजियोऽस्माकमेवायं महिमेति ।

**According to an ancient story Brahman obtained a victory for the gods.**

**They became elated and said, "The glory is ours alone."**

The Upanishad introduces the story. It says that in one of the many battles between the Devas and the Asuras, the **LORD got victory** for the Devas. The Upanishad is very careful in using the language. It does not say that the Devas got Victory. It says -The Lord got victory on behalf of the Devas. Why did the Lord support the Devas? Because Devas represent *Dharmic* Forces or *Saatvik* Forces. And *Asuras* represent *Adharmic* or *Rajasic* and *Tamasic* forces. As the Geeta says in the last chapter

*Yatra Yogeshwara Krishna...*

Wherever Dharma is there, the Lord will ensure victory. The lord is impartial. Lord supports Dharma; wherever it is. The Upanishad says that the Lord got victory for the Devas.

Note :-In the first two chapters Brahman is *Nirgunam*. In the next two, it is *Sagunam*. Because the first two chapters are for *Uttama Adhikaris* who can comprehend *Nirgunam*. The third chapter is for *Madhyama Adhikaris*. Therefore *Saguna Ishwara* is introduced.

Now what was the problem with this victory? The Devas did not acknowledge that it was due to the Lord. That simple acknowledgement is called Bhakti. It is also called *Nivedanam*. Don't we all offer *Naivedyam* ? All of you think that preparing any dish that you like, keeping in front of the Lord and taking it away at the earliest to eat it up is *Naivedyam*. No! *Nivedanam* does not mean preparing eatables and eating. *Nivedanam* means acknowledgement or informing. It is not just in the case of eating food alone. It is in the case of every action. Before eating we talk of *Nivedanam* saying, 'Oh Lord, this food is yours. The possibility of generating food is yours. The seed has been given by you. If I could till the land and produce the crops, that capacity of mine is also your gift. I want to enjoy my food remembering your blessings with gratitude.' Thus *Nivedanam* means, informing the Lord that whatever I have is your glory. But Devas forgot that.

*Tasyaha Brahmanaha Vijaye* In the victory of Devas- it was not really their victory- but they got the glory of it. The Devas received the glorification. Remember -Society will glorify me when I accomplish something -Well done! You have passed in the exam. Well done! You have built a fine house. Society will glorify because that is the nature of Society. But the scripture says, 'Let the society glorify you. In your own mind you silently hand over the glory to the Lord. It is all the grace of the Lord.' You need not say anything outside but in your mind you should know this. Our problem is that we sometimes say this to people outside but inside we are all puffed up! Whether you tell outside or not is not important. In your mind, not even an iota of arrogance need come. Let people glorify you. You receive the *Mala* from them; there is no problem. When you receive it; just say *Shiva Shiva* or *Narayana Narayana* or some such thing mentally and hand it over to the Lord. Devas did not do this. They received the glory and did not hand it over to God.

Everything belongs to the Lord. People ask me sometimes, '*Swamiji*, Your classes are being recorded. Suppose someone sells these recordings then what will happen to you? Isn't it your Intellectual property?' What Intellectual Property!!! I got it from my Guru Parampara. Every point that I have stated, has been beautifully presented by Shankaracharya in his Bhasyas. Where is the question of claiming any Intellectual property? Otherwise Shankaracharya himself would have done this. If he started claiming Intellectual property, the all of us will have to just shut up!! However whatever was given, Shankara never claimed as his own. He offers *Namaskara* to all the *Acharyas*. In his Taittiriya Bhasyam he says, "In future

society may glorify all these brilliant commentaries” And indeed Shankara’s commentaries are brilliant. People even call it Shankara Vedanta as if this is some NEW Vedanta. But Shankara himself says, it is not MY Vedanta

*Ehi Eme Gurubhihi Purvam* “These have all been coming down from our *Acharyas*.” All our *Acharyas* were the embodiments of humility. Only empty vessels make noise. The really knowledgeable ones keep quiet.

The Devas temporarily became haughty. *Aikshanta*-They thought to themselves, “*Asmakam Evayam Vijaya*.” All this victory belongs to us. Therefore the credit also should come to us.” You see, generally this is our tendency. Whenever any undertaking goes bad, you are quick to point out who was responsible. But whenever any undertaking goes well, we are quick to take responsibility. The Lord decided to teach them a lesson. How did he do this? We shall see...

*Purna Madah*

## Talk 9:- Khanda 3: Mantras 2 to 12

In the third chapter the Upanishad wants to convey the same idea which has been revealed in the previous two sections. It was presented in an abstract manner in the previous two sections. Now the same teaching is concretized through this story. What was presented as *Nirguna Brahman* in the previous two chapters is being presented as *Saguna Brahman* in this chapter. To know the *Nirguna Brahman* we have to take the help of the traditional teaching. *Eti Sushrumba Purvesham The Sampradaya Vakyam* is the only means of Knowing Brahman. In this story that same Upanishad *Vakyam* is represented by Uma Devi. Thus Uma represent the Upanishad. Someone nicely pointed out that AumKara has three letters viz. A U M. And Uma also has three letters...U M A. Uma re-arranged is AUM.

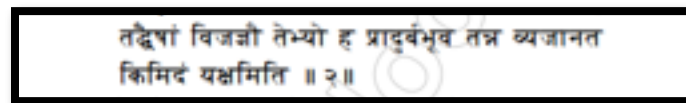
Aumkara represents the Upanishadic teaching. Aumkar is supposed to be the essence of the Vedas. When the Vedas are churned, Aumkara was produced according to a famous Mantra. Thus Aumkara or Umadevi represent scriptural knowledge.

(Similarly, Goddess Saraswati also represents only the knowledge revealed or churned out of the Upanishads. The words *Saras* means the Lake of Waters. And *Vati* means *the one who resides* in the Lake upon the lotus. This Lake represents the Vedic words. *Veda Shastram* is the Lake. This is similar to the phrase we use -Mahabharatha Pankajam etc. Saraswati is the wisdom born out of the lake of Veda. And when we say Saraswati illumines Brahman, it means that wisdom illumines Brahman)

Thus Uma Devi or Saraswati represent the scriptural wisdom and through the scriptural wisdom alone can Brahman be understood. The story is a symbolic representation of the teaching of the first two chapters.

We have already seen the story briefly. In the first Mantra, we saw that the Devas and Asuras had one of their regular battles and the Devas were victorious. In general, the Devas are *Satvik* and humble. They do not have the problems of arrogance and vanity. Somehow in a weak moment the Devas also became arrogant. From this it is clear that even the most *Satvik* or humble person may at a certain moment succumb to weaknesses.

This is why you will find that in all the Puranas, even the greatest Devotees faced some weaknesses. *Anjaneya* who is the very symbol of humility also faced the problem of *Garva* (pride). *Anjaneya Garva Bhanga*- is a famous story. Similarly there is *Narada Garva Bhanga*, *Garuda Garva Bhanga*, *Rukmini Garva Bhanga* etc. We have several *Garva Bhanga* stories in the Puranas. *Garva* means arrogance and *Bhanga* means destruction. If devotees like Narada and Anjaneya were gripped in *Garva* then how about the ordinary Devatas! They also had the same problem. Instead of expressing their gratitude to the Lord they took all the glory for their victory. They thought *Asmakam Eva Ayam Vijaya*. To us is this victory. When this happened Bhagwan thought that the time is ripe for the Devas to receive some "correction".



***Brahman, the Great Spirit, who understood their arrogance, appeared before the gods. But they did not know who He was***

**Tat Vijagnyou-** Here Brahman represents Ishwara. He is *Saguna Brahman* or *Maya Sahitam Brahman* or Married Brahman. Only with this marriage is an *Avatar* possible. *Nirgunam Brahma* can never take an *Avatar*. Nirguna Brahma cannot create, sustain or destroy the world. Creation requires *Rajo Guna*. Sustenance requires *Sattva Guna*. Destruction requires *Tamo Guna*. All these three basic acts require the three Gunas. And Nirguna Brahma as his very name indicates does not have these Gunas. Therefore He cannot do *Shrithi, Sthithi, Laya*. Nirgunam Brahma cannot take an *Avatar* as Yaksha. Yaksha is a form of Avatar.

The word *Taddhaisham* is to be split as *Tad Ha Eshaam*. *Ha* indicates that it is a real story; that it happened. The Upanishad wants to say that this indeed did happen.

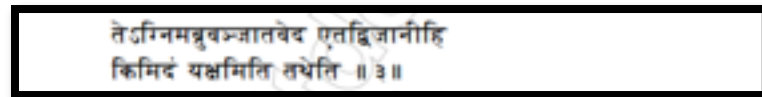
**Tad Brahma Vijagnyou-** That Saguna Brahma knew the thinking of the Devatas. Bhagwan tells us in the Geeta, 'Do not think I am sitting up above. I am in your own heart knowing all that you are thinking.' Hence the Lord is called *Hrishiksha i.e Hrishikanaam Isha* or The Lord of the Organs. Ishwara need not enquire what the Devas were thinking. Ishwara has got ESP! Through his ESP, *Saguna Brahman* knew the unhealthy thought patterns of the Devas. He decided to teach them a lesson.

The Devas are not incorrigible. Bhagwan does not correct the Asuras because there is no point telling them what is right. We should also know whom to advice and whom not to. Bhagwan knew that Devas are available for correction. Therefore he appeared before them.

**Tebhyaha Pradur bhabhuva** -He took an Avatar for their benefit. There are certain Avatars which are of long duration. Some others are of a Short duration. *Narasimha Avatar* is a very short one. Similarly this Yaksha Avatars is also a short one just taken for the benefit of those Devas.

Now where did HE appear- He appeared neither too far away nor too close to the Devas. He was close enough for them to know that somebody very brilliant has arrived. But he was far enough for them to not know what it is. Thus Devas had *Samanya Jnanam* but there is no *Vishesha Jnanam*.

**Tad Na Vyajanata** – Devas- you have to supply this subject here- did not know what that *Saguna Brahma* in the Yaksha form was. *Kim Idam Yaksham iti?* What is this Adorable Form? They started looking at each other and raising their eyebrows etc.



**They said to Agni(fire), "O thou that knowest all things born, learn of this thing, what may be this mighty Yaksha," and he said, "So be it." (Translation taken from Aurobindo)**

They decided to send someone to find out who that Yaksha is. They first chose Agni. As I said, Agni Devata is the messenger of the Devas. The very word Agni itself means *Agram nayati iti Agni* i.e the one who goes in front. Agni is like a pilot. The Devatas call Agni and address him as *Jataveda*(One who knows everything that is born in this creation). This address also is a very significant address. The Devas call Agni Omniscient. They are almost taunting him, 'Hey Agni! You are supposed to be Omniscient! According to the title that you hold, everything that is born is known to you. Here a Yaksha is born in front of us. And you do not seem to know about that Yaksha. Therefore your title does not seem valid. If you have to defend your title, you better go and find out who that Yaksha is.'

Another thing is that when you want to get something done from someone, you have to glorify that person. So Devas also used the method of flattery here. 'Oh Omniscient One! There is nothing that you cannot accomplish. You go and *Etat vijaanihi* may you know this fact i.e. who the Yaksha is.'

Agni felt very happy. He is wanted. The need to feel wanted is the biggest need of every human being. 'All the Devas need me.' Agni said, '*Tathasthu*. I will certainly accomplish this. Dont worry...'

तदभ्यद्रवत्तमभ्यवदत्कोऽसित्यग्निर्वा  
अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीज्जातवेदा वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ४ ॥

***He rushed towards the Yaksha and the Yaksha said to him, "Who art thou?" "I am Agni," he said, "I am he that knows all things born."***

*Tad Abhyadravata* (Agni is hidden) approached that Saguna Brahma. He wanted to directly ask him who he was. But the moment he went near, the Yaksha's presence was so overwhelming that Agni was dumbfounded. He was tongue tied and could not utter a single word. (This is like a person who is making his first public speech. Everything has been practiced very well in front of the mirror. But when he sees the audience- All that is practiced is gone! Someone once defined the Brain as- Brain is that which works until you start your first public speech) Agni Devata also felt the same thing. He could not speak. So Instead of Agni Devata addressing the Yaksha, the Yaksha decided to break the ice. The Yaksha started the conversation *Tam Abhyavadata*. 'Please tell me who you are?' Agni Devata was insulted. He is the most famous person in the world. How can there be someone who does not know who Agni is? Agni introduces himself, 'Don't you know you me. I am the Agni Devata who is worshipped in the very first line of the Rig Veda (Agnimeede). I am the very Fire in the Sun. In fact - Jaatavedaha aham asmi-I am known as JaataVeda ; the omniscient one who knows all things.'

तस्मिन्स्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदः सर्वं  
दहेयं यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥ ५ ॥

***"And what do you do, by what power are you known?" replied Brahman? "I can burn anything on earth," he said.***

The Yaksha asks Agni, "Tell Me what can you do?" This reminds me of people who seek employment going to some industry and the Boss asking them what they can do. "What skill do you have? Kim veeryam...what power or what skill or what talent you possess." Agni feels further insulted. He says, "I am so powerful that I can burn down everything in front. And I mean ABSOLUTELY everything. Whatever is there on the earth; be it multi storied buildings or huge forests. You name it; I will burn it down the Ashes." Agni wanted to frighten Yaksha and hence he is talking about his destructive power. Agni has both creative power and destructive power. Life comes about only where there is heat or Agni. Within the womb of the mother, there has to be an appropriate temperature for the growth of the child. If there is some problem in the womb, then the baby has to be kept outside within an incubator. This is because life is possible only with appropriate heat. Life is possible because of Agni Tatvam. Death is also due to Agni Tattvam. Agni is the life giver and the life taker. What did the Yaksha do? Here is the next insult...

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतद्देहि ।  
तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न अशाकं दग्धुं स तत एव  
निवृत्ते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ ६ ॥

**“Burn that!” said Brahman putting a small thin straw before him. Agni generated an immense heat that blackened the whole universe but he could not ignite the straw. Dejected, he returned to the Gods. “I could not find out who that Great Spirit is,” he said.**

What did the Yaksha do? He took a small dry blade of grass. Now don't ask me where did he get it? He must have had it around him somewhere ☺ . Even if there is no grass around, remember that Bhagwan is the one who is creating the entire universe. How difficult for him to materialize a blade of grass by his *Yoga Maaya Shakti*? So the Yaksha materialized a dry blade of grass and placed it in front. 'I do not want you to destroy the whole world. That is all too big. I just will give you this blade of grass. You burn this.'

This is like, a typist who comes to you for a job. You will ask him to type a small page so that you can judge his typing.

(This reminds me of something that happened to me. A typist had typed out my speech. And wherever I spoke about **invoking** the Lord, he has written **invoicing** the Lord! I guess after taking notes about invoices in his company, he can only think of Invoices even in his Vedanta class.)

Agni Devata was given a simple job. “Just burn this blade of grass *Tasmai Trinam Nidhadhou*”. Agni thought that this is too simple an affair and he will not have to put any effort. He just tried to burn it and failed! He kept increasing the temperature but the blade of grass remained the same. *Tad Upapreyaya* indicates that Agni was first standing far away. Then he came closer to that blade of grass. Even this did not work. He used all his powers. *Tat Dadhum Na shashaka*. If anyone else had been present there, they would have been completely burnt to ashes. They say that the bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki generated a few million degrees of temperature and for several kilometers everything was burnt down. And they also say that the Hiroshima atom bomb is one of the smaller ones! It seems that now we have much more powerful ones! Agni Devata must have increased the temperature to match the Atom Bomb or Hydrogen Bomb or Neutron Bomb etc- whichever ones you know you can supply here. And what was the result? Everything was burnt down except two things -The Yaksha and the blade of grass.

Agni knew that something was radically wrong. There was some mystery. *Tat eva Nivavrute*. He accepted defeat. “My burning power really does not belong to me. This Yaksha seems to have some power to Block my burning power.” You see, without that Yaksha's blessing, Agni is not Agni. *That which is not the ear but because of which the ear functions....*etc. You have to connect this with the earlier portion of the text. Eyes cannot see that Brahman. But eyes are capable of seeing everything else only because of that Brahman alone. Similarly Agni cannot burn the Yaksha but Agni is capable of burning because of the Yaksha alone. When the Yaksha withdrew the blessings, Agni lost its *Agnitvam*. Just like Brahman is *Shrotasya Shrotam* (Ear of the ear) he is also *Agnehe Agni* (Fire or the fire). When the Yaksha is gone, Agni loses his Agni status. Agni felt insulted and came back to the Devas camp. He was out in the first ball. He came back without scoring. But he did not want to accept that in front of the Devas. He casually said, “*Etat Yaksam Vijnatum na Ashakam*. I was not able to find out who this yaksha is.” HE said this casually and he went away from there!

अथ वायुमब्रुवन्वायवेतद्विजानीहि  
किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति ॥ ७ ॥

**Then they said to Vayu (Air), “O Vayu, this discern, what is this mighty Daemon.” He said, “So be it.”**

*Atha* .After Agni's defeat, all the Devas approached Vayu. Vayu is the elder brother of Agni. First *Akasha* (Space) is born. The second child is Vayu and later Agni. Vayu is more powerful. “Oh Vayu, Agni could not score any runs. At least you should hit a century. May you find out who this Yaksha is.” Vayu says, “I know that Agni cannot do anything. I will have to do it.” He goes to the Yaksha. The rest of the story is exactly the same as what happened in the case of Agni. The Mantras are also is almost exactly like the previous ones

तदभ्यद्रवत्तमभ्यवदत्कोऽसीति वायुर्वा  
अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीन्मातरिश्वा वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ८ ॥

**He rushed to the Yaksha; The Yaksha said to him, “Who art thou?” “I am Vayu,” he said, “and I am he that moves freely.”**

Vayu also with extreme pride went in front of Yaksha. As with Agni, he was also dumbfounded. Instead of Vayu talking, the Yaksha himself asked Vayu who he was. The First Insult!

As before, Vayu introduces himself. “I am Vayu- the one who moves everywhere giving *Prana* to everyone. Such a popular *Vayu Tatvam* I am. I have a special title *Matarishwa*”.(Agni was called *Jaataveda*) *Maatarishwa* means the one who moves about in the sky freely. No passport, No visa, No ticket can restrict Vayu. What did the Yaksha do? The Same thing...

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वमाददीय यदिदं वृधिव्यामिति ॥ ९ ॥

**“And what do you do, by what power are you known?” replied Brahman? “I can carry away anything that is on the earth,” Air replied haughtily.**

The Yaksha asked him the same question. “What power do you have? What function do you have?” Vayu said, “*Sarvam Adariya*.” Both the Devas have both constructive as well as destructive powers. Agni has got constructive power because everything is born in heat alone. Vayu also has constructive power; the constructive power of Vayu is well known as *Prana Shakti*. Imagine that there is a Vacuum here. We will all be dead! If the scientist have to go to the moon, they have to take Vayu along with them. We do not know the value of Vayu because it is freely available. Our Very life is possible because of Vayu. But Vayu does not claim the constructive power. He talks about his destructive power. “I can lift anything from the ground; cars can be lifted, trees can be uprooted by me.” I heard that some scientists wanted to measure the speed of the cyclone. In America there are certain places where you can predict each year the possibility of a cyclone. These cyclones can be very destructive. The scientists apparently wanted to do some research. Huge machines were installed to measure the velocity of the winds. After the cyclone it seems that the machine itself was not to be found! Such is the power of Vayu. What did Yaksha do? Same thing...



तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतदादत्स्येति  
तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न शशाकादतुं स तत एव  
निववृते नैतदग्रकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ १० ॥

**“Blow that away!” said Brahman putting a small thin straw before him. Air generate an intense gale but he could not move the straw. Dejected, he returned to the Gods. “I could not find out who that Great Spirit is,” he said.**

The same blade of grass was placed by the Yaksha in front of Vayu. “You just lift this blade of grass.” Again Vayu felt insulted since this was not a big enough challenge. But when Vayu tries, the grass is not uprooted. *Sarva Javena* He increased his speed and became a huge cyclone. Everything else around him gets uprooted except these two- the Yaksha and the blade of grass. Vayu was also humiliated. He put his head down. The second batsman is also out for 0. He went to the Devatas and said, “I could not find out who that Yaksha is.” And he winked at Agni! Only those two knew what happened. Later Indra decided, there is no use sending these Devatas. I am the Captain. Let me go and score the winning runs.

अथेन्द्रमब्रुवन्मघवन्नैतद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति  
तदभ्यद्रवत्तस्मात्तिरोदधे ॥ ११ ॥

**Finally, the gods told the Mind to find out who the Great Spirit was. “I will” he said and hastened toward it. But when he got quite close, the Spirit disappeared.**

Indra Went. “Hey Maghawan- one who is more powerful than all the other Devatas- you go and find out. Indra says, “You need not tell me. I have myself decided to go. You are all useless.” Indra went near Yaksha with more pride. *Tasmaat Tirodhata*. The Yaksha itself disappeared from that place. At least Agni and Vayu got some opportunity for conversation. Indra was so arrogant that the Yaksha thought that he does not deserve even a close *Darshan*. He disappeared. When this happened, Indra realized his folly. Indra is more Saatvik and more informed than either Agni or Vayu. He knew that the problem is due to his ego or vanity. Agni and Vayu returned from that place. But Indra because of his *Jignyasa* stayed there. All these points are very important. Some people attend Upanishad Classes. If they do not understand anything in the first two classes, they leave. But if there is a real *Jignyasu*, he continues undaunted. Agni and Vayu attempted to know the Yaksha and withdrew. Indra was not willing to withdraw. This indicates *Teevra Jignyasa*. *Teevra mumukshutvam* is indicated. And he knew that the problem was arrogance. And therefore...

स तस्मिन्नेवाकाशे स्त्रियमाजगाम बहुशोभमानामुमा  
हेमवती तांहीवाच किमेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ १२ ॥  
॥ इति केनोपनिषदि तृतीयः खण्डः ॥

**Then he looked up in the sky and saw the daughter of the Himalayas . He approached her and asked, ‘Who is that Great Spirit?’**

Indra discovered that his problem was lack of humility. When he understood that his arrogance went away. Standing in that very place he prayed to the Lord. Not only he developed *Vinaya* (humility) but also he developed *bhakti*(devotion). Appreciating this *Vinaya* and *Bhakti* of Indra there appeared a beautiful woman *Tasmin Eva Aakashe* in the very same place or space.

Yaksha represents Brahman. The beautiful lady represents *Shastra*. First you think of *Brahma Vichara*. It will never work. You can never do Brahman inquiry. Brahman inquiry is always in the form of *Shastra* inquiry. Whoever makes self-inquiry will never succeed. Whoever makes *Shastra* inquiry will succeed. Brahman the Yaksha was replaced by *Shastra* or *Brahma Vidya* in the form of Uma devi. *Striyam Aajagama*

How was she? *Bahu Shobhamanam* This has a two-fold meaning. As a woman, she was brilliant and attractive. Self-Knowledge is also brilliant and attractive. She gives happiness to the devotee.

*Haimavati*. One meaning is the one who is *Himavat putri* or daughter of Himavan. *Hema* also means gold; so it could mean that She was with golden ornaments. Indra put the question to Her. "Oh Mother! Oh Devi! Oh *Shastra*! Oh *Saraswati*! I knew so many other things in this world. But I did not know about this Yaksha. Please tell me who that Yaksha is."

Now the stage is ready. Uma Devi-The Guru is present. Uma Devi- The *Shastra* is Present. A Qualified student is present. The teaching takes place. Indra understands that the Yaksha is none other than *Nirguna Brahma*.

And what was the teaching of Uma Devi. Chapter 1 and 2 of *Kena Upanishad*. So go back and read these two chapters.

*Purna Madah,,*

## Talk 10:- Khanda 5: Mantras 1 to 4

(Begins with Invocation i.e Shanti Patha)

We have completed the third chapter of the *Kena Upanishad*. In the third chapter the *Upanishad* conveyed the same idea that was expressed in the previous two chapters; but in the form of a story. The same ideas were symbolically presented. In this story, Indra got the self-knowledge after acquiring the

necessary qualifications, the main qualification's being *Bhakti* (devotion) and *Amanitvam* (Egolessness). To gain this knowledge, Indra required the help of Uma Devi who represents *Brahma Vidya Or Shastra*. Thus through this story, we know that one requires a qualified mind and the guidance of Shastra for gaining self-knowledge. If any one of these two are missing, then *Jnanam* is not possible.

A famous Shloka says

*Yasya nasti svayam prajna sastram tasya karoti kim*

*locanabhyam vihinasya darpanah kim karisyati*

(Rough Translation - Scriptures cannot help someone who does not have an insight of his own, just as a mirror cannot reveal the face to a man devoid of vision.)

If I have to see my own face, two factors are important.

- I should have a mirror which will reveal my face.
- In addition to a mirror, I should also have a healthy pair of eyes without which the mirror is useless. Both are equally important.

Eyes may be useful for seeing the external world but if I have to see my own face then eyes alone are not sufficient. A mirror *alone* is also not enough to reveal my face. I should also have a working pair of eyes.

In order to understand the meaning of the *Shloka*, replace the eyes with "Qualified Antahkarana". For self-knowledge, we require a qualified *AntahKarana*, the qualifications being *Shraddha, Bhakti, Vinaya, Shushrusha* etc. However, merely a qualified mind is not enough. The mirror called "*Shastra*" (scripture) or the Mirror called Guru is also required. In Vedanta we do not differentiate between the Guru and the *Shastra* because the Guru speaks only the words of the *Shastra*. There is no difference at all between the words of the *Shastra* and the words of the Guru. This *Shastra-Guru* combination represent the mirror.

In our story, the Guru-Shastra combination is represented by Uma Devi. A shining Uma Devi appeared in front of Indra. Indra with humility asked Uma Devi- This is also an important qualification. One should *ASK* for this knowledge- *Kim Etad Brahma* i.e what/who that Brahman/Yaksha is? And Indra got the knowledge from Uma Devi.

Now we are entering the fourth Chapter.

In the fourth Chapter, the Upanishad will talk about the glory of *Brahma Vidya* in the first few mantras by pointing out that Indra became the most glorious being, after getting *Brahma Vidya*. Note that before Indra had the *Vidya* he did not have this glory. But after getting the *Brahma Vidya*, Indra is described as glorious. And therefore the glory should belong to *Brahma Vidya* alone.

After glorifying *Brahma Vidya* in the first few mantras, the Upanishads will talk about *Sadhanas* (means) which the Upanishad has not mentioned until now. In the first three chapters the Upanishad has highlighted only *Jnana Yoga*. But *Jnana Yoga* can work only for a qualified mind. If I do not have a qualified mind, then Kena Upanishad will not work for me. Especially verses like *Naham Manye Suvedeti No na vedeti etc. (I know Brahman. Not that I don't know, I know I don't know etc)*. All these seemingly quibbling statements become extremely meaningful to me only when I have a subtle intellect.

Suppose a student feels that he does not have a subtle intellect, then there is no need to develop any sort of inferiority complex. The Upanishad says, "I will give you the method of making the mind subtle." *Brahma Vidya* by itself is neither easy nor difficult. Whether it is easy or difficult depends upon the state of preparation of the Student. For a prepared mind, *Brahma Vidya* is the simplest teaching. But for an unprepared mind, it can be the toughest thing to grasp.

In the scriptures itself you will find both these diametrically opposite statements regarding *Brahma Vidya*. For e.g. in the 9th Chapter of the Geeta, Krishna Says that *Sukham Kartum Avyayam i.e Self Knowledge is the easiest*. But in the Kathopanishad the teacher says, *Shurasya Dhaaraan Nichita etc i.e Following Self Knowledge is like walking on the Razor's edge*. It is extremely difficult.

So in one mantra it is said that Self Knowledge is very difficult. And in another mantra it is said that it is extremely easy. What am I to understand by these statements? The understanding is that; if you are prepared it is very easy. And if you are not prepared it is indeed very difficult to grasp. ☺

So, if I am not prepared what should I do? The answer is - Prepare! Please don't say I will go to other easy paths like Bhakti Yoga since this path does not suit me! At least my students should not commit such mistakes. There is no question of other easy or alternate paths to liberation. *Jnana Yoga* is the only path. If you feel that *Jnana Yoga* is difficult then make it easy for yourself by preparing your mind.

For preparation of the mind, two types of *Sadhanas* are specified in this Upanishad.

- If our state preparation is very low then we have to start with Karma Yoga. This is like Starting from A B C.
- But If I have some preparation, then the Upanishad gives the next higher level of preparation called *Upasana* (meditation).

*Karma Yoga* and *Upasana* are going to be talked about in the fourth chapter, not as a means to liberation, but as a means to prepare the mind. Along with *Karma Yoga* and *Upasana*, the Upanishad also talks about living a life of Values or a life full ethics and morality.

Thus *Karma Yoga*, *Upasana* and *Daivi Sampat* (morals) are going to be highlighted in the fourth chapter. If we follow these three *Sadhanas* according to our own level of understanding, we will gradually get a prepared mind.

And what should be done after preparing the mind? Go back to the first two chapters and listen to it once again!! ☺ Make a Second Attempt. And what if you do not understand? There is No Problem- Keep Listening!!! After the third or fourth listening, you will find that you will start understanding. You will say to me, "Swamiji, you are teaching better now! :)" It is ok-I may have improved as you say. As long as the NET result is that communication has taken place, I have no problem!

So keep on doing Karma Yoga and Upasana. And in parallel, keep on listening to Vedanta. Just as the qualifications gets more and more refined within your *Antahkarna*, the impact of scripture will become more and more pronounced.

I am going repeat the very same statements that I said in my very first class of *Tattva Bodha*, in the class on the *Mandukya Upanishad*. But you will say, "Swamiji, I GET it now!" This is very normal. KEEP on listening! As you keep listening, the impact becomes more and more pregnant. This is why we have several Upanishads. The topic of every Upanishad is the same- *Brahma Vidya*. We are just changing the

melody a little bit! If I stand here and repeat the Kena Upanishad every day you will say, "Swamiji we have already studied all this".

So I give the topic a new name, there are some mantras, there will be a new *Guru-Shishya* Dialogue and you will feel some enthusiasm about learning a new Upanishad!! The language is different, the angle of presentation is different. But the idea is that knowledge somehow takes place.

To summarize what we discussed so far, the fourth chapter has the following topics

- Glorification of *Brahma Vidya*
- Karma Yoga *Sadhana*
- *Upasana sadhana*
- And Values

With this background let us read the first mantra

सा ब्रह्मेति होवाच ब्रह्मणो वा एतद्विजये महीयन्वमिति  
ततो हेय विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ १ ॥

***It is Brahman, limitless Awareness" she said. Through the victory of Brahman alone have you attained glory," she replied. Then the Mind understood that It was Brahman.***

At the end of the story, Indra has been converted into a *Shishya* (disciple). Unless one becomes a *Shishya* knowledge cannot take place. For e.g for the entire duration of the first chapter of the Bhagwat Geeta , Arjuna was not a *Shishya*. Even during the first 10 verses of the second Chapter, Arjuna was not a *Shishya*. Only when Arjuna became a *Shishya*, could Krishna become a Guru. Similarly Indra became a *Shishya* and Parvati Devi became a Guru. Parvati taught Indira. *Sa* i.e Umadevi *Brahma Iti Hovacha* said that, 'The mysterious Yaksha was none other than Brahman. The only difference is that the original Brahman is *Nirgunam* (formless) but to teach you a lesson, Nirguna Brahman took form and became *Saguna*. Therefore the Yaksha is Brahman.' Then Parvati said that Indra had no right to claim any glory. 'If you had any victory the primary credit goes to Ishwara alone.'

Why do we say so? Philosophically speaking, every *Jnanendriya* or *Karmendriya* functions because of Consciousness. Without Chaitanya of Consciousness, every sense organ is but an inert bundle of matter. If the Devas could use their hands in battle then *Brahman* was the Hand of the hand. Therefore Parvati Devi said that this victory of yours really belongs to Brahman alone.

And Who is this Brahman? 'He is the burning power of Agni, the lifting power of Vayu etc.

What mistake did you make, Indra? *Manitvam* or *Pride*. You glorified yourself even though the real glory belongs to Brahman. Let society commit the mistake of glorifying the wrong person. But at least you should have known that the glory belonged to Brahman. Let other people garland you. But when you receive the garland, you must mentally offer that glory to Brahman. Krishna says in the Vibhuti Yoga, 'Whatever glory you see anywhere that you hand over to me.' But you claimed this as your own. *Etad Vijaye Mahiyatvamiti* , thus Parvati Devi taught indra.

(Please do not think that *Saraswati* and *Parvati* and *Uma* are different. In *Lalitha Sahasranam*, also one of her names is *Saraswati Shastramayi Guhamba guhya Rupini* i.e one of the names of Parvati Devi is

Saraswati. And who does Saraswati represent? She is the embodiment of *Shastra*. Shankaracharya in his commentary also calls her *Brahmamayi*).

*Tatoha Eva Vidhanchakara* i.e From Parvati Devi alone Indra knew. Thus through Guru's words alone one can know Brahman. So Guru is not Optional! Guru is compulsory! ONLY from a Guru can this be understood. When Indra himself requires a Guru, what is the question of us mortals? Without a Guru we can never understand.

तस्माद्वा एते देवा अतितरामिवान्यान्यान्देवान्यदग्निर्वायुरिन्द्रस्ते  
ह्यनभ्रेदिष्टं पस्पशंस्ते ह्यनत्रप्रथमो विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ २ ॥

***Since they approached very near and were the first to know that It was Brahman they excelled the other gods.***

Now the *Brahma Vidya Mahima* (glory) is going to be talked out. The Upanishad indicates that later the following development took place-It is not directly written in the mantra but we have to supply this interpretation. Indra Got the knowledge and Indra came back to the Devas Camp. Agni and Vayu were very curious to know what Indra found out. They rushed and asked him. Indra said, 'I could find out who the Yaksha was'. Naturally they were curious to know who He was. Indra then proceeds to teach Agni and Vayu and these Gods become *Jnanis*. You have to understand all this indirectly. We now have three *Jnanis* among the Gods i.e. Indra, Agni and Vayu and hence these three are superior to all the other Gods.

These Goda have two glories. Firstly meeting Yaksha is one glory common to all the three. (Indra also briefly met the Yaksha -though not for a long time) Not only that, these three also got the knowledge of Brahman before all the other Gods. Because of these two feathers in their cap they became the most glorious among the Gods.

We will study the middle portion of the mantra first. Those three Gods- Agni, Vayu and Indra- *Yenata Nedishtam pasparshute* i.e they contacted the Yaksha very closely. Indra did not have conversation but all had some closeness to the Yaksha. That is the first glory.

*Te Hyenata prathama vidhanchakara*- Those three Devas were the first to know Yaksha as Brahma. *Yenata* means Yaksha here. Later other Gods also knew Brahman. Even Yama also came to know about Brahman later. In Kathopanishad, Yama is going to become to Guru! But these three were the first to know and this is their glory.

*Tasmat* i.e *Because of* these two unique virtues listed above- *Ete Devaha Atitaramiva* i.e *these three Gods excelled* or became superior to *Anyan Devan* i.e all the other Gods.

From this discussion, we come to know that these Devas are superior because of Knowledge. Therefore the superiority belongs to the Knowledge. Brahma Vidya makes a human being superior to all the other human beings just as it made these three Gods superior to all the other Gods.

Through *Jnana* you will become *Manushya Shreshtaha*. Why does the Upanishad say this- So that at least for the sake of becoming Superior to others you may study the Upanishad! ☺ ☺

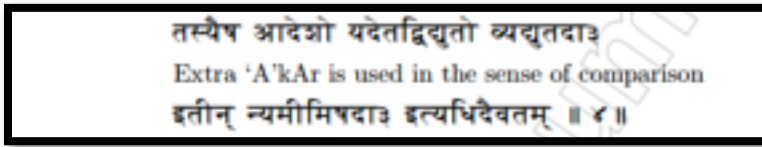
तस्माद्वा इन्द्रोऽतितरामिवान्यान्यान्देवान्स  
ह्यनभ्रेदिष्टं पस्पशं स ह्यनत्रप्रथमो विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ ३ ॥

**Because it got nearest to the Self, Indra (the Mind) excelled the others.**

In the previous mantra it was said that these three Gods are superior to all the other Gods. Who amongst these three Gods who is superior most? Of course, Indra alone is superior because all the three went near Yaksha; but Indra was the first to get Knowledge of the Yaksha. Agni and Vayu only got this later from Indra. And therefore the Upanishad says that Indra is the greatest among Gods.

Let us look at the Mantra. We will again look at the middle portion first.

*Sa Hi Yenata Nedishtam pasparsha* i.e Indra alone contacted the Yaksha. *Sa hi Yenata Prathama Vidhanchakara* -Indra alone knew this Yaksha first; even before Agni and Vayu. What is the result of this? *Tasmat* i.e Because of this extra glory Indra *Adhitaraam eva* i.e is certainly superior to *Anyaan Devaan* or other Gods. Once again remember that Indra got this glory through this knowledge and therefore this knowledge is the one that is being glorified knowledge in the Mantra. Continuing



***This is the instruction about Awareness with regard to the powers in the mind: It is like a flash of lightning; It is like a wink of the eye.***

With the previous Mantra the glorification of Brahma Vidya is over. You may think that the Upanishad has glorified Indra. But by glorifying Indra, the Upanishad is indirectly glorifying Brahma Vidya. Indra was glorious only after acquiring this knowledge.

From this mantra onwards, we are getting into *Sadhanani (means)*. I had said previously that there are three levels of Sadhana i.e Karma, Upasana and Values. Of these three, the Upanishad is first going to talk about *Upasana Saadhanani*.

Upasanas(meditations) are talked about in the following mantras. The Upanishad talks about four different Sadhanas in this portion i.e. up to Mantra 6. Mantra 4, 5 and 6 - these three Mantras talk about *Upasani*.

*Upasana* is defined as *Saguna Brahma Dhyanam* i.e meditation on Brahman with attributes. Of the four different types of *Upasana* , two are *Adhi-Daiva Upasani* , one is *Adhyatma Upasanam* and the last one is *Guna Vishista Upasanam*.

- *Adhi-Daiva Upasana* is meditating upon Brahman or Iswara by superimposing this idea on the external *Alambana* (substrate or prop).Meditating on the Lord with the help of an external symbol is called *Adhi-Daiva Upasanam*.
- *Adyatma Upasana* means meditating on the Lord with our own body or a part of your body as a symbol. You invoke the Lord upon your own body. In every *Anga Nyasa* and *Kara Nyasa* (parts of most vedic and tantric rituals), this is what you actually do! You are invoking the God or various aspects of God on your thumb, index finger etc. Here the subject itself becomes the symbol.
- The third type one is *Guna Vishesha Upasana* i.e meditating upon a particular glory of the Lord.

For all these Upasanas, the Upanishad is going to keep the story in the background. Based on the story the Upanishad is going to prescribe four Upasanas.

In the story we found that Yaksha, or the Lord, appeared very briefly. Everything happened within a trice. Also, the Lord is brilliant and attractive; he draws your attention. (In fact Krishna is called as 'Krishna' because of this attribute; he is attractive. 'Krishna' is derived from the root *Krish* i.e to draw or to attract. Krishna is the one who draws the mind of every person towards himself not only because of his physical beauty but also because of his *Ananda svarupa*(Blissful Nature). Similarly the Yaksha was *Manohar*(attractive). And Yaksha was *Prakasha Svarupa*(effulgent). Keeping all these in mind the Upasanas are prescribed.

In this particular Mantra, two *Upasanas* are prescribed. The first Upasana is 'Lightning Upasana'. I have already told you this does not mean that you are supposed to do your meditation in lightning speed and get up as soon as possible ☺. It is the *Upasana* of Lightning. We are taking Lightning as a symbol of Yaksha or Ishwara. Why do we choose lightning? Because it resembles the features of the Yaksha that we discussed. Yaksha was Brilliant; Lightning is brilliant. Yaksha was attractive; and wherever lightning occurs, our tendency is to look at it. Similarly, Yaksha appeared very briefly and Lightning also is very brief. Due to these common features lightning is taken to represent God.

Just Tell me, in which religion can you do all these wonderful things!! You can Take ANYTHING and you can make it a symbol of God. We have rivers as symbols of God; trees as symbol of God, Elephants as a symbols of God and here we even have 'lightning' as a symbol of God. Since the lightning is an external force it is called *Adhi-Daiva Upasana*.

Let us now look at the Mantra.

*Tasya Esha Aadesha*. *Aadesha* means *Upama Upadesha* i.e The following is the comparative teaching of the Yaksha and lightning. There is an *Upama* (comparison) between lightning and the Yaksha.

*Yad etat Vidyutaha Vyadyutada* This Yaksha is like the flash (*Vyadutah*) of lightning(*Vidyuta*). ( Sanskrit Grammar :- The '3' written over here symbolize the elongation of the vowel. The Long 'A' is represented by an "S" character and has a duration of two short A's. But if the numeral '3' is written over here then it means that the elongation should consist of three short "A". This elongation of the vowel is called *Plutam*. *Plutam* indicates that the vowel is longer than the two units. Anything more than two units i.e 3 units , 4 units , 5 units etc is called *Plutam*. Two units is called *Deergham*. And one unit is called *Hraswam*. What is the significance of the *Plutam* here-the *Plutam* will have significance depending upon the context. In this context Shankaracharya writes in his commentary that this *Plutam* indicates comparison).

This is the Meditation Number 1; Lightning meditation

Let us go to meditation number two. The second meditation is 'Winking Meditation'. Closing and Opening of the Eye is called *Nimesha*. We have to meditate upon the Yaksha superimposing him on the act of winking! Why does the Upanishad choose this 'Winking Meditation'? In "winking" also, what happens is exactly the same as what happens during lightning! Can you guess how?

The whole area is originally covered with darkness and is invisible and when the lightning strikes the whole place becomes visible. And when the lightning goes away the whole place is again immersed in darkness. Therefore there was darkness before; then there is a brief interlude of brightness and again there is darkness. Now, Just Wink your eyes. Is this not similar? The only difference is that the light does



not come from the lightning in the case of winking. The light comes from the very eye itself. This act of winking of the eye is taken as the *Alambana* (prop or symbol) for the second *Upasana*.

Therefore the Upanishad says, *Nyami mishadaa*..here again '3 A's are used' indicating comparison. In the first instance the world is bathed in the light of the lightning and in the second meditation it is bathed in the light of your own eyes.

*Iti Adhi Daivatam*. Both of these come under *Adhi Daivata Upasana*. In both of these we are using the external world as props; either the external world illumined by the lightning or illumined by our own eyes.

Now we have to study the third meditation which is called *Adhyatma Upasana*. Here we are not going to take the external world as a prop but we are going to take something within ourselves. We need to choose something similar to the lightning or winking or to the Yaksha i.e it must be appearing and disappearing and it must be brief and bright.

Can you guess what is that in you which comes very briefly, very brightly and disappears? There is only one suitable candidate-your own thoughts. ☺ Thus we are going to our own thoughts as a symbol for the Yaksha. Since the thought belongs to the Individual, it is called *Adhyatma Upasana*. We are going to enter into 'Thought' Meditation.

Note that, Every Meditation is a Thought! But here the Meditation is Upon the Very 'Thought' itself! How do we do that? Let us discuss in the next class...

Purna Madah...

## Talk 11:- Khanda 5: Mantras 5 to 9

In this fourth and the final Chapter of the Kena Upanishad, the teacher is presenting three topics.

1. *Brahma Vidya Stuti* or glorification of this knowledge.
2. *Upasana sadhanam* or Meditation as a means to prepare the mind.
3. *Karma Sadhanam* i.e Karma Yoga and other values as means for this knowledge.

Of these three topics we have already seen the first topic in the first three Mantras. The Upanishad glorified Brahma Vidya by glorifying Indra, Agni and Vayu. These deities got the glory because of Brahma Vidya and hence the glory belongs to Brahma Vidya alone.

From the fourth Mantra onwards we have entered the second topic namely *Upasanam*. Four *Upasanas* are being presented here. All the *Upasanas* are closely connected to the story in the third chapter. The first two *Upasanas* are called *Adhi-Daiva Upasana*. The third one is called *Adhyatma Upasana* and the fourth one is called *Guna Visishta Upasana*. Of these, we have seen the two *Adhi-Daiva Upasanas* wherein Brahman is meditated as lightning (*Vidyuta*) or Brahman is compared to the Winking of the eye (*Nimesha*).

What is the uniqueness of these *Upasanas*? In both these, lightning and winking, the whole world is illumined very briefly. For e.g. when lightning comes, the whole world is illumined briefly and it draws the attention of everyone -but even before we know what it is, the lightning disappears. In this story Yaksha also was exactly like this. Therefore one should meditate upon lightning as Brahman or the Lord himself. The second *Upasana* was the winking *Upasana*. Here the whole world gets brightened because of the light coming to our eyes. Therefore *Nimesha* is compared to Yaksha. Both these *Upasanas* are called *Adhi Daiva Upasanani*. The Mantra was thus concluded *Iti Adhi Daivatam*.

Now we are going to enter *Adyatma Upasana* in the next mantra.

अथाध्यात्मं यद्देतद्गच्छतीव च मनोऽनेन  
चेतदुपस्मरत्यभीक्ष्णं सङ्कल्पः ॥ ५ ॥

**Now the instruction about Awareness with regard to the individual self: The mind should go to it. By means of the mind the seeker communes with it intimately again and again. This should be the mind's motivation.**

In the *Taittiriya Upanishad* also we will be studying similar meditations in the third chapter. *Triptih Iti vristou* etc...Even in that Upanishad a "Lightning Upasana" is prescribed.

Superimposed upon the Lightning, the Lord is meditated as *Balam*( the "power" quality). And you all know that according to science, one streak of lightning has enormous power .If only we had the technology of taping the power in one flash of lightning, the scientists say that you can light up the whole world for one year (or something like that). This is the power present in lightning. Unfortunately

we do not know how to tap it. Even before we notice it, it is gone. Therefore the *Taitiriya Upanishad* says that the power contained in the lightning is *Bhagawan*.

However in this Upanishad we are meditating upon the “brightness” aspect in the lightning.

Having spoken about *Adhi Daivam* we are coming to *Adyatma Upasana*. In both of the previous *Upasanas* the external world was considered as an object for meditation. Here we are taking some quality in the individual himself as an object of meditation.

We have to find out which attribute of the individual is comparable to Yaksha? The Upanishad ingeniously presents our very own “Thoughts” as comparable to the Yaksha. And what is the basis of this comparison?

1) Thought is also *Kshanikam (instantaneous)*. - That is the main problem, isn't it. ☺ Thought changes violently without any connection. Suddenly in the middle of the class, your mind goes to DMK or AIDMK(Tamil Nadu political parties) .We do not have any helmet to retain or restrain the thought -the thought briefly appears and disappears like the lightning.

2) Every thought illumines a corresponding object. Any thought is like a streak of lightning. (*Sanskrit shloka* read by Swamiji to indicate that “Tree Thought” immediately illumines an object called Tree in our head).

Each though is bright like the Yaksha because it is capable of illumining an object. If my words are known by you then it is illumined by what faculty??-You may say that it is illumined by the ears. But how do the Ears itself illumine sound? When you receive these words, then corresponding to every word that I utter, your mind forms a relevant *shabdha vritti*. (Sound thought)

Suppose I say one thing and in your mind there is some other thought at this moment- Then even though YOU ARE HERE, YOU DON'T HEAR! ☺

(This reminds me-I once saw an advertisement for Earrings. The advertiser had written: - “Ears are not for Hearing. They are for Earrings! ☺ If you are sitting here and your thoughts are elsewhere, then my words have no connection with what is happening within you. So in this case, I would also say - “Yes, your ears are only for ear-rings just like the advertisement says.”)

Always remember that it is the *Vritti* that illumines the objects. Therefore the Upanishad takes the mind or the thought to represent the Yaksha.

This is a very subtle *Upasana*. The Upanishad says, “Every thought is going near or contacting Brahman as it were. And not only does every thought contact Brahman, every thought is as though revealing Brahman! “

How can we say that? You know that *Bramhan* is in the form of *Chaitanyam* (consciousness). Every thought is capable of reflecting consciousness just as a mirror has the capacity to reflect the sunlight. Every thought serves as a mirror as it were,reflecting the consciousness and forming "reflected consciousness" which is called *ChidABhasa* or *Pratibimba Chaitanya*. Since the ‘Thought’ forms the “Reflection of Consciousness” we can say that thought is contacting Brahman.

Not only do Thoughts indirectly reveal Brahman by forming this reflection. Thoughts help in our recognition of Brahman as it were. This is a very subtle idea. You have to understand this carefully. This Mike or this paper Clip is present here in front of us. Now we can say that the clip is known because it is

illuminated by the light. Anybody can understand this statement. But let us state another fact. When the clip is not here, even though the light is present here, you are not able to recognize or feel the presence of the light. So when I place the clip here, because of the clip the presence of the light is reflected and the clip indirectly makes the light manifest! In the absence of the clip, light is present but in an un-manifest form. But when the clip is here the light is manifested.

Let me make two statements. You should note the subtle difference between the two

1. Clip is illuminated by the light
2. The light is manifested by the clip.

The first statement is called *Prakashanam*. The second statement is called *Abhi-Vyakti*.

The clip helps in the manifestation of the light as it were. And the light helps in the illumination of the clip. Now if you understood this example then replace the 'light' with 'Consciousness'. And replace the 'clip' with 'Thoughts'.

Every thought is illuminated by the consciousness and the Consciousness becomes manifest because of thought. Thought helps in the manifestation of consciousness and therefore we can say that thought reveals the consciousness as it were.

When I am looking at every one of you, you are all illuminated by the light. But simultaneously, the presence of light is apparent, because of each one of you reflects the light.

Therefore we can say "Thought Reveals Consciousness". But we must always state this within quotes (qualify it). "Reveals" here means manifests. When a person is in Coma, the thoughts are not there, and hence the consciousness is un-manifest! But how do we normally describe such a person? We say that the person is Un-Conscious! The person is NOT Un-Conscious! Even in the so called un-conscious person, consciousness is present but the Consciousness is not manifest because the mind is not functioning or manifesting consciousness.

Even in this inert table, consciousness is present. But the table cannot entertain thoughts to help manifest consciousness. Hence we call it *Jadam* or inert. *Jadam* means that in which the consciousness is un-manifest and NOT that in which consciousness is absent as is commonly understood!

Do you know why we are all conscious? Because consciousness is manifest; and why is it manifested in us? Because of Thoughts! Therefore thoughts 'reveal' Consciousness.

Look at this mantra.

*Yad Etat gachati Vacha Manaha* i.e Mind goes to Brahman as it were. Like Indra, Vayu or Agni. Not only that *Anena cha Upasmarati* i.e a person remembers Brahman through the mind because the mind helps in revealing Brahman. And *Abhikshnagum sankalpaha*..he visualized Brahman through every thought as it were. Whenever I am contacting a thought, I am contacting Brahman. It is just that I am only not noticing it! Just like whenever I am looking at each one of you , simultaneously I am contacting the light in every one of you. But generally I only notice the people, I do not notice the light because of which you are seen. T

So everyone is meditating on Brahman. Through every thought each person is contacting Brahman only. *Abhishna* means repeatedly. Repeatedly one is contacting Brahman via thoughts. Thought can be taken

as *Brahma Upasana* or *Yaksha Upasana*. And thought is also brilliant like Yaksha. Every thought reveals the external world. During deep sleep also the external world is not revealed because thoughts are absent. When Thoughts are present then world is revealed; thoughts are absent then the world is not revealed. Therefore thoughts are all bright entities like Yaksha- appearing, illumining and disappearing. Therefore meditate on your thoughts. This is *Adhyatma Upasana* is Mind Meditation or Thought Meditation. It is a very subtle meditation. You should meditate on your own thoughts.

*Atha Adhyatmam* i.e this is *Adyatma Upasana*. With this the third meditation is over. Now we come to the fourth meditation.

तद्ध तद्धन नाम तद्धनामत्युपासितव्यं स य एतदेव वेदाभि  
हेनश् सर्वाणि भूतानि संवाञ्छन्ति ॥ ६॥

***That Awareness is adorable; it should be worshipped. All creatures desire the one who worships the Self.***

Three Upasanas are over:- *Vidyut Upasana*, *Nimesha Upasana* and *Mana Upasana*. Two of these were *adhi daviam* and one was *adyatmama*. Now we are entering the fourth meditation which is *Guna vishista Upasana* or meditation upon the lord as endowed with Glories.

*Guna* means virtues or *Vibuthis* or Glories. *Anantha Kalyana guna Sampanna Ishawara*. And how do you know that Ishwara is glorious? You have to go back to the story. From the Story, we understood that Agni's burning power did not belong to Agni. Agni thought the burning glory belong to him. But in front of the Yaksha, Agni understood, 'I cannot burn as per my wish. I always thought that I had the switch for Burning. But though I kept putting the switch ON, nothing seems to work. It now seems like the Main switch is elsewhere and someone has switched the mains off!'

What is that Main Switch? - Ishwara! When Yaksha- Ishwara -switched off the mains- Agni's repeated attempts failed. So Agni's burning power really belonged to the Yaksha. Similarly Vayu's Adana Shakti - lifting capacity- belonged to Yaksha. You have to extend this to everything in the creation. Here you have to remember the tenth chapter of the Geeta.(Vibhuti Yoga or Glories of the Lord)

In daily *Sandhyavandanam*, while chanting the Gayatri mantra we say , *tat Savitur varenyam Bhargaha* or that brilliant effulgence of the Sun. The Brilliance in the SUN belongs to *Bhagawan* and not to the Sun. In the form of *Savituha Bhargaha* or Solar Effulgence we are worshipping the Lord! You have to extend this to everything in creation.

In the tenth chapter of the Geeta , Bhagawan says that, 'If I have to keep on enumerating everything then Class will never get over. So he finally says *Yad Yad Urjita ...tad tad Eva* Anything Glorious anywhere , belongs to me. For that the Upanishad uses the word, *Tad vanam*. *Vanam* means *Poojyativam* or adorability. The General meaning of *Vanam* is forest. Here you should not take this meaning of the word. The root *Van* means 'to worship'. So *Vanam* means *vananiyam* or *Poojyam* or that which can be worshipped.

*Tad Vanam* is *Tesham Devatanam Vanam*; the worship ability of every Devata is due to *Bhagawan*. Even among Humans this is so. You meditate upon this Fact!

Now we are giving the Lord a new title i.e *Tadvanam* or Adorable in All. One should meditate upon *Bhagawan* as the glory in everyone. This is the fourth Upasana called *Guna vishista Upasana*. For the

*Guna Vishista Upasana* , the Upanishad also gives the *Phalam* or benefit. The Upanishad says that you have to apply the general rule - In whatever form you worship God, in that form you will get the benefit.

If you worship the lord as Omniscient, the benefit that you will get is *Jnanam*. Because you are meditating upon the Lord as endowed with all-knowledge.

If you meditate upon God as Omnipotent, you will get All-Shakti. If you going to meditate upon God as the wealthiest one possessing all the wealth in the creation- you will get Money! If you going to meditate upon God as the most attractive one; you can become Mr. or Mrs. Universe! If you meditate upon the Lord as the glorious one, you will become adorable in your group.

*Yaha Etad Evam Veda...*i.e whoever meditates upon Yaksha as the attractive one (Yaksha attracted Agni, vayu, Indra etc), the Phalam is *sarvani Bhutani samvangchanti* all other people will be interested in this person. They will Love your company.

I remember that someone said, "There are those that give happiness wherever they go. The other type- they give happiness whenever they go! ☺ If you want to be the first type, do *Tad Vana Upasana*.

Continuing...

उपनिषदं भो ब्रूहीत्युक्त्वा त उपनिषद्वाहीं वाव त  
उपनिषदमब्रूमेति ॥ ७ ॥

***The disciple said; 'Teach me, sir, the Upanishad.'The preceptor replied: "I have already told you the Upanishad. I have certainly told you the Upanishad about limitless Awareness, your own Self."***

So the teacher has completed the first range of *Sadhanas* consisting of four types of *Upasanas*. These *Upasanas* are meant for *Madhyama Adhikari's*. *Uttama Adhikari's* do not require any *Upasana* at all. They will directly understand Brahma Vidya. The entire discussion is over with the first two chapters itself. If people are not able to follow Brahma-Vidya, then the sadhana is *Upasana*.

If a person is not even a *Madhyama Adhikari* - even to practice meditation one requires some quietude; at least he needs to sit down quietly in one place!- If a person is extremely extroverted then he is not even a *Madhyama Adhikari*. He comes under *Manda Adhikari*. For such a person, even *Upasanas* will not work. And therefore we should prescribe *Karma Yoga*.

You are extrovert- So you may stay busy. But Instead of being selfishly busy, you be selflessly busy. That Karma Yoga Sadhana is going to be discussed here.

Before that one of the students stands up and says, 'Sir, I have a question. Please teach me Upanishad'.

Ok! ☺ So what was going on until now? ☺ *ShankarAcharya* gives some other interpretation. He gives a technical interpretation. I don't want to go into that right now. You can understand it like this.

The teacher without getting angry or frustrated says, 'I have already taught the Upanishad. In the first two chapters itself I have explained it. Afterwards the story and the *Upasana* were also explained. Therefore the Upanishad is completed.' And what type of Upanishad... *Brahmi Upanishadam abruma* i.e 'I have taught that Upanishad which deals with Brahman'. The word *Upanishad* means Secret teaching. Some of the *Upasanas* or Meditations are also called Upanishad because some of these are considered

Secret. For e.g. *Sri Vidya* and other meditations are generally not taught in public. Even though they are forms of *Upasana*, they are secret teachings. Even many of the *Tantra Shastra's* are kept secret.

So the word *Upanishad* means any secret teaching. Here the teacher specifies, 'I have given you that secret teaching which is dealing with Brahman or the ultimate truth. If you feel that you have not understood the Upanishad, you need not feel bad at all.' If a particular student understands the Upanishad then it does not mean that he is "special" or has "horns on his head" or any such thing. He has just done the preparatory *Sadhanas* in his previous *Janma*. And therefore for such a person, the *Upanishad* is a walk over even though he or she may be young in age.

The only difference is that some have prepared in the previous *Janma* and some have to prepare in this *Janma*. As far as preparation goes, there is no difference at all. 'You need not feel bad. I will give you further *Sadhanas*.' What are these? These will be enumerated.

तसै तपो दमः कर्मेति प्रतिष्ठा वेदाः सर्वाङ्गानि  
सत्यमायतनम् ॥ ८॥

***Austerities, self-restraint, and sacrificial rites are Its feet, and the Vedas are Its many limbs. Truth is Its home***

The teacher says, 'if the Upanishad building has to be constructed then like any other building it requires a good foundation. Without a foundation, the building cannot be constructed. Even if the building is constructed, it will collapse like a pack of cards. The same is true with regard to Brahma vidya also. Hence in the Veda, Upanishad comes at the end alone. Veda Anta is Upanishad indicating that the Veda Purva (initial portion) gives the foundation for Vedanta (concluding portion).

What does the foundation consist of? A few key bricks are mentioned

*Tapaha, Damaha, Karmaha...*

*Tapaha*- A life of Moderation or discipline. A life in which one avoids all excesses. One in which a person is not given to indulgences. Not a licentious life. Krishna will say in the sixth chapter, "*Yuktahara Viharasya...*". Everything should be in moderation- eating should be in moderation as also fasting. Sleeping should be in moderation as also waking. Talking and Silence also should be in moderation.

Everything is like this. Action is also important and rest is also equally important. The Golden Mean. I have defined *Tapas* previously as willful self-denial to establish my mastery over my own organs. Willful self-denial...Say NO to everything once in a while. Do it willfully...if you keep on eating then fast once in a while. If you do not do it willfully then you will get agitated during your fast. What is the purpose of *Tapaha*? To establish mastery over my own sense organs.

*Damaha*- Sense Control, which is mentioned in the *Geeta* very often. Sensory Discipline does NOT mean suppression. Waywardness is not correct and suppression is also not correct. Managing Sense Organs such that I AM THE MASTER of my organs.

*Karma*- Performance of one's own duties. *Swadharma Anusthanam*. Or it could also mean Performance of those actions which are meant for spiritual growth. *Shastra* has prescribed many religious actions meant for inner growth. Those actions will not give you money. They will not give you name or fame. For e.g. by doing *Sandhya Vandhanam* daily in the morning you will not get an increment in your office ☺.

We tend to renounce these actions at the first instance since we do not see any physical benefits! We are ready to do any action which will give me tangible material benefit and all these religious actions do not give such benefits. So I will define spiritual actions or Karma as - WHAT YOU GENERALLY GIVE UP WHENEVER THERE IS SOME PRESSURE ☺ .

*Vedaha*- Vedic study. Vedic study includes *parayanam* (reading and studying the meaning).

*Satyam*- Truthfulness or Honesty. Integrity. We have seen in Mundakopanishad "*Satyameva Jayate...*" (Truth shall triumph).So *Satyam* has been emphasized in almost every Upanishad.

Here the Upanishad is comparing the Self Knowledge to a cow. If Self-knowledge has to be compared to a cow, it requires Legs. These *Sadhanas* (*practices*) are compared to the Legs of the *Brahma Vidya* Cow. *Tapaha* is one leg, *Damaha* is another leg etc .

The body of the cow is *Vedaha Sarva Angani*; i.e all the other limbs are the Vedas.

And what is the cow shed in which the cow is well protected? For the Brahma Vidya cow the shed is *Satyam Ayatanam* i.e Truthfulness alone is the shed in which self-knowledge is well protected. What does this mean? Once truthfulness goes away, this teaching is not protected. This knowledge will also run away from you if you discard truthfulness! Just as the cow will run away if the shed is not there. Always remember *Satyameva Jayate. (truth alone Triumphs)*

With this the *sadhanas* are prescribed for *manda adhikari*'s also.

I hope you understand and remember the three levels?

- *Manda Adhikai* needs Karma Yoga
- *Madyama Adhikari* needs Upasana
- and *Uttama Adhikari* needs Jnana Yoga.

This is the entire teaching. And now the Upanishad is going to be concluded in the last mantra

यो वा एतामेवं वेदापहत्य पाप्मानमनन्ते स्वर्गे  
लोके ज्येये प्रतितिष्ठति प्रतितिष्ठति ॥ १॥  
॥ इति केनोपनिषदि चतुर्थः खण्डः ॥

***The one who knows this Upanishad shakes off all sin and becomes firmly established in the Infinite, the highest heaven.***

And so what should I do?? The Upanishad does not have a uniform advice. All people are not of the same level of preparedness. Since the *Adhikaris* are different, the teaching also will have to be different in keeping with the *Adhikari*'s.

People sometimes get confused. They say, 'Why cannot the Vedas give a simple set of commandments like the 10 or 20 commandments. This will make the whole teaching simple.' Sometimes the Vedas also give opposing advice. For e.g. the Mantra *Prajacha Swadhyaya* etc in the Vedas say 'You should get married, You should beget children, You should make sure your children are also married and they beget



children.' etc . And in another place the Vedas say, '*Na Karmana Na Prajaya*' etc meaning 'What is the use of children? Leave them all'. How are we to understand the meaning of all this? Veda is the most confusing book if we do not know the audience for whom the teaching is prescribed.

Here the advice is very clear. If I cannot do *Upasana* and Vedanta does not mean anything to me then I should predominantly take to Karma Yoga. Not that Vedanta should be given up. One can keep listening to Vedanta and one can keep trying *Upasana*. Unless you try it how will you know whether you are ready for this or not. But one should predominantly practice Karma Yoga.

Suppose one is quiet enough to meditate or perform *Upasana* then he can do this.

Note that even at the *Ashrama* Level,

1. Grihasthasrama is Karma Pradhanam. (Karma dominant)
2. Vanaprastha ashrama is Upasana Pradhana (Mediation Dominant)and
3. Sanyasa Ashrama is Jnana Pradhana. (Knowledge dominant)

I am using the word *Pradhanam* indicating that all three are present in all the Ashramas, but the proportion goes on increasing from Action to Knowledge.

Suppose one does all this what will happen? The Upanishad says...*Yaha Evam Etam Veda*.i.e Suppose a person receives this teaching *Evam* i.e in this manner. This word – In this manner- is important.

After listening to Upanishad you should not say things like Brahman is somewhere far away and you have to come across Brahman and you have to meditate on Brahman to reach Brahman. It should be understood that I AM BRAHMAN who is ever evident in the form of consciousness in and through every thought. Brahman is neither a known object nor is it an unknown object. It is NOT an object at all. It is the Very subject - I - which is ever evident. *Evam*- in this manner- if a person receives this teaching, then *paapmanam Apahadya*...He will destroy all his sins or *Paapam*.

All the Paapams (sins) consisting of three categories.

1. One is well known *Paapam* which is result of bad actions.
2. The second is *Punyam* (merits) which is a result of good actions. *Punyam* is also a Paapam from the Vedantic angle because *punyam* leads to *Punarapi Jananam*. (one more life)
3. And the third sin is Ignorance. This ignorance is the ORIGINAL Sin. According to Vedanta that is the fundamental *Paapam*. All these three will be destroyed by self knowledge.

*Swarge loka pratishthati i.e* He will be established in *Swarga loka*. What does this mean? The Upanishad is contradicting its own statement -*Swaarga* is supposed to be *Punya Phalam*(*result of meritorious action*). After *Punyams* are destroyed where is the question of *Swarga* or heaven.

So Shankaracharya says that in this context *Swarga Loka* means *Param Brahma*. It is not HEAVEN but Brahman itself. Brahman is qualified here as *Jeya* i.e the greatest thing or the ultimate. If *Swarga loka* is taken as one of the heavens then the adjective *Jeye* cannot be used. *Jeye* means the greatest one and *Swarga Loka* cannot be the greatest. The greatest can be Brahman alone.

*Prati tishthati*...he is well established in Brahman. Be careful. Please do not think that established in Brahman means that he goes and sits on top of Brahman. It just means that He knows...I AM NEVER AWAY FROM BRAHMAN. He becomes Brahman. *Prati Tishthati*. This is repeated again to indicate that the *phalam* is guaranteed. He will become one with Brahman! HE will definitely become one with Brahman.

Also in the olden days the Upanishad was not in written form. If it was written then you can underline a word or highlight it etc. But when it is purely spoken, the end is indicated by the repetition of the LAST word. With this the fourth chapter is over and the Kena Upanishad is also over.

*PurnaMadaha*

## Talk 12:- Summary

I will give you a summary of the *Kena Upanishad*. This is a short Upanishad belonging to the *Sama Veda*. Like most of the other Upanishads, this Upanishad is also in the form of a dialogue. The dialogue format is for convenience of understanding and also to show that this knowledge has to be gained from a Guru only. In this Upanishad we do not get the name of the student and the teacher and therefore we have to assume that a qualified student approached a qualified teacher. Qualified student means *Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampanaha* i.e. the one who has got discrimination between eternal and ephemeral, dispassion towards the ephemeral, discipline and desire for the eternal. These four qualifications of the student are assumed. Similar the teacher's qualification is *Shrotriya* and *Brahma Nishtaha* i.e. the one who has the knowledge of reality and the one who has the methodology of communicating the knowledge to others. The one who has both the knowledge and the skill of communication is said to be a qualified teacher.

So we have to assume that a qualified student approached a qualified teacher and gained this knowledge. This is the background of this Upanishad. This Upanishad is titled Kena Upanishad because it begins with the word *Kenashitam Patati* etc and based on the first word the Upanishad has been named.

It consists of four chapters and we will briefly see the essence of each chapter.

The first chapter has four Topics.

1. *Atma Prashna* (Question about reality) - The student asked a question based on his knowledge that the body and the mind are inert by themselves. The student already knew this fact that the body is made up of matter and the mind is also made up of matter. They are intrinsically insentient. If they are sentient now then it must be because of the blessing of something else. Just like the Fan is functioning because of the blessing of something other than the fan (electricity). By itself the fan cannot rotate.

The student asks the question - What is that external principle because of which the inert body and the inert organs are sentient. That unseen principle he calls *Deva*. What is that Atma because of which the inert body-mind complex is acting as if it is Sentient?

2. *Atma Lakshanam* (Indication of reality) - The next topic is the teachers definition of Atma. The teacher gives two important definitions. The first definition is *Shrotrasya Shrotram*...upto Chakshuhu in the first mantra. The literal meaning sounds funny- Atma is the Eye of the eye, the Ear of the ear, the Mind of the mind and the Speech of the speech. I told you the significance of this definition. Atma is the Ear of the ear means that Atma is that consciousness which is different from the ear, which pervades the ear and because of which alone the ear functions as the ear. Similarly you have to extend to Eye, Speech, mind etc.

If you take the essence of this definition then this is really the five points that we have discussed

- 1) Consciousness is not a Part, product or property of the body
- 2) Consciousness is an independent entity which pervades and enlivens the body
- 3) Consciousness is not bound by the boundaries or limitations of the body
- 4) Consciousness survives even after the fall of the body
- 5) The surviving Consciousness does not transact but continues to exist.

Such a consciousness principle is called Ear of the Ear etc. This is the first definition

Later the teacher gives another important definition for the same Atma. That is in verse number 4. ( The First definition was in Mantra2; 2nd and 4th mantras are very important in the first chapter). The teacher says that Atma is something other than the Known and the Unknown. That means it is un-Knowable. Why do we say this? Every knowable object, prior to knowledge was Unknown. After knowing, it becomes known. By saying Atma is other than the known and the unknown the Upanishad says that Atma is un-Knowable.

That means it is not possible to objectify it. It is something other than objects. And through the second definition the teacher conveys indirectly- If Atma can never be an object then by elimination we know that Atma has to be the very subject principle. The only thing other than Known and Unknown is the Knower. The only thing other than the object is the Subject.

The entire creation can be divided only into two principles -Subject and Object. If you have eliminated the objects then the only thing that is left out is the subject. Atma is ever the Subject and never the object; ever the knower never the known; ever the experiencer and never the experienced; ever the seer and never the seen. This is the second definition worth remembering. *Anyateva Tad Viditaat....*

3. Atma Jnanam (Knowledge of Reality) - What can be Atma Jnanam or Knowledge of Atma. If Atma is never knowable and it is never an object , then how can we talk about *Atma Jnanam*? The very word *Atma Jnanam* is a contradiction in terms because if I talk about *Atma Jnanam* then it becomes an object of knowledge.

Atma Jnanam can only be in one way and that is owning up the fact that I am the ATMA. There is no other knowledge other than this 'Owning Up'. This owning up automatically supposes another thing- When I own up the 'Consciousness' as myself then automatically the body mind complex gets disowned as Not-Atma.(not me) Owning up the Atma involves disowning the body-mind complex which the Upanishad calls as transcending the body mind complex. *Adhi muchya Dheeraha*. Transcending is not a physical act. It is purely a mental Act. When I use the word "I", instead of claiming the body or mind as "I", I claim the consciousness as "I". This inner transformation or inner shift of the "I" from the body-mind complex is called Atma jnanam. From *Deha to Dehi. Shariram to Shariri. Anatma to Atma*. This is the third topic.

4. *Atma Jnana Phalam* (Fruit of this knowledge)- What is the benefit of this knowledge? The moment I dis-identify from the body-mind complex, I look upon the body as one of the objects in the world. Before I looked upon the body as myself. Body was not included in the World! When I said "world", I would include everything except the body. Here what happens is when I

use the word "I", the Consciousness alone is considered. The body-mind complex is included in the Material universe.

The moment I look upon the body objectively, the greatest benefit is acceptance of the conditions of the body without resistance. I look upon it as if it belongs to somebody. Just like you read the obituary column without any reaction because that is somebody else. But 'this one' is also "Some"- "Body". *Jnana Phalam* is objectivity. Objectivity means acceptance of *Prarabdham*; remember that body has *Prarabdham*.

Acceptance means No resistance. No resistance means I am always cool ☺ . You would have studied in physics, the greater the resistance in the wire the more it gets heated up. My head is also 'wired' like that; the more the resistance the more it gets heated up. Sorrow is the indication of resistance. Resistance is the indication of subjectivity. And subjectivity is indication of "Solid Ignorance". So the first benefit is objectivity. Objectivity was indicated by *Adhimuchya Dheeraha* i.e. transcending of BMI

The second benefit was presented as the accomplishment of immortality. What do we mean by this? We have to be very careful. *Anatma* cannot become immortal. Body cannot become immortal.

Now Can Atma become immortal? ☺ Atma need not "become immortal" because it already is. Then who gets immortality? What do you mean by "getting immortality"? Getting immortality means shifting the "I" from the mortal body to the immortal Atma. In Ignorance I said 'I am mortal'. Now identifying with Atma I say, "I am immortal". Getting immortal is a pure 'shift' of identification-"I"-in the mind. It is a clean intellectual process. There is no Event of converting a Mortal into immortal. Even omnipotent God cannot do this; God cannot do certain things. That is why you will find in all *Puranas (Indian Mythology)* these Rakshasas (demons) will perform Tapas (austerities) and Brahma , Vishnu or Siva will appear in front of them- 'Child, I am happy with your Tapas. What do you want?' And invariably, he will say, 'I do not want to die.' And invariably the answer will be -Not possible! Choose another boon. Whether it is Hiranyakashipu or Hiranyaksha or Ravana Or any other Puranic character- you will see the same sequence. The question will come up- If Lord is omnipotent, how can you say that Lord cannot convert Mortal into immortal.

The definition of Omni potence is - Doing everything *possible*. It is Not Doing the Impossible! One of the impossibles is the conversion of the Mortal into immortal. Even Bhagawan cannot make an immortal body. Bhagawan's body itself will end. So attainment of immortality is owning up the essence of Atma as My own essence. With this the fourth topic is also over. This is the essence of the first chapter. In this the 2nd and 4th mantras are important.

The second chapter again highlights two topics - *Atma Jnanam* and *Atma Jnana Phalam*. They have been already discussed in the first chapter. But being important topics they are re-emphasized in the second chapter. Instead of putting *Atma Jnanam* in the mouth of the teacher, the very same idea is put in the mouth of the student.

The teacher said, Atma is other than the known and the unknown. We already know how the teacher has presented this topic. Suppose the teacher asks, 'Oh student, you have been attending these classes very attentively. Now do you know Atma.' How should the student answer?

If the student says, 'I know Atma', Atma will become Known. If he says, 'I do not know Atma', Atma will become Unknown. The teacher has already defined Atma as that which does not come either under known or unknown. Therefore the student uses a peculiar language. "Oh teacher, I know Atma. I do not think I don't know the Atma. I know that I don't know." This quibbling of words indicates that I cannot say either I know or I don't know. Both statements are wrong with regard to Atma.

So which statement is right? I have already told you - NEVER use a transitive verb. A verb which has an object is called a transitive verb. If you use a transitive verb then Brahman will become an object of the transitive verb. If you say, 'I Know Atma' then Atma becomes the object here.

If you say, 'I experienced Atma in Nirvikalpa samadhi' then for getting Atma you have to keep going after your Samadhi's. If you say, I saw the Atma or I contacted the Atma or I realized the Atma (people use this word 'realized' if they want to give this a slightly mystical touch ☺ ) - Any word you use will make the Atma an object. The only verb you can use is "AM"- I AM ATMA. *Aham Brahma Asmi*.

The Upanishad then makes this knowledge more clearly in a later Mantra which is an important one. *Pratibodha Viditam Matam i.e.* Mantra 4 in the second Chapter. This mantra is very significant. We do not have any parallel to this mantra in any other Upanishad. This is a significant mantra because many confusions regarding *Atma Jnanam* will go away if this mantra is properly understood.

In the previous portions we have said that Atma can never be known. It is never Knowable; it can never be experienced.

And when we make this statement very strongly then a student will conclude that Atma is a matter of belief. 'Swamiji says you can never experience it, and you can never know it. If Atma can never be known or experienced then how do I accept that there is such a thing called Atma. And without knowing if I have to accept something then it is only a belief. This is exactly like "Heaven". I accept "heaven" but I have never experienced Heaven. Without experiencing Heaven if I accept it, then it is a belief. All these days I was thinking that if I keep on meditating then one day I will experience Atma. Swamiji you have demolished my hopes by saying that Atma experience is never possible. I have to accept the Atma and if I have to accept this without an experience then it becomes a matter of belief. '

Are we to believe the Atma? For this our reply is- Atma cannot be Known. And Atma *need not* be known. Because even without your effort, Atma is *ever evident*. Atma is evident as the consciousness principle. The consciousness is evident even before the operation of the sense organs. When you do not operate your sense organs, then you do not have any sensory experience but even the absence of sensory experience is evident because of Consciousness. Therefore Consciousness is evident even before the sense operations begin.

Similarly even before your mental operation, when the mind is blank in that blank state is evident because of consciousness. Therefore the evidence of consciousness is present even without the operation of any organ. This is the difference between the Atma and the world. Every object in the world is evident because of the operation of the Sense organs. Whereas consciousness is evident even without the operation of the organs. Therefore Atma cannot be known and Atma need not be known. Because Atma is ever evident.

Then people will come and ask some questions like - If Atma is ever evident, when is the Atma evident? When is the ever-evident Atma evident? Etc. ☺

All nonsensical questions! The very word 'ever-evident' means you need not work for the evidence of Atma. Consciousness is evident in waking, sleep, dream or samadhi states. When experiences are there, Atma is evident. When experiences are not there also, Atma is evident. How do we say this? When the experiences are not there then the absence of experiences is Known because of the ever evident Atma.

So tell me what *Sadhana* (practice) you should do to know the Atma? The Upanishad says that doing the *Sadhana* is denial of Atma. The very doing is the denial of myself. It is like me looking for light here and there. The very search for the light is denial of the light that is present here. The very searching is possible because of light alone. That because of which everything is searched need not be searched at all!

Too many people think that Atma is known in Nirvikalpa samadhi. This is one of the worst and biggest misconceptions in the Vedantic field. This misconception can be negated in this mantra- *Pratibodha Viditam Matam*. In and through every experience Atma is evident and not in a *particular experience*. Note :-Atma is not evident in a particular experience. Owning up this ever evident consciousness as "I" is called "Atma Jnanam". This owning up requires a 'thought' in the mind. The evidence of Atma does not require a thought. But that "owning up" requires a thought. The thought is "This ever evident is Atma is me'. This is *Atma Jnana* presented in the fourth mantra.

And *Atma Jnana phalam* is talked about later. *Atma Jnana phalam* is *Sarvatra Atma Darshanam* and *Amtritvatva prapti*.

*Sarvatra Atma Darshanam* means recognizing myself in everyone. When the wave takes itself as a wave, it is located at a particular place. But when the wave understands, that it is water, then it sees itself everywhere. When I take myself as the body, I am located at a particular place, but when I know myself as Consciousness then where am I? - *Bhuteshu Bhuteshu* etc i.e. I am the Consciousness in everybody.

This is what is called as Universal Love. When I see everyone as myself, then just as I love myself, I will love everyone because everyone happens to be MY-SELF. In fact, this is the ONLY way Universal Love is possible. Of course, this last statement is not said in the Upanishad but it is a corollary! ☺

Jnanam Phalam #2 is repetition of what was discussed in the previous chapter i.e. *Amritasya Prapti* or immortality or freedom from fear of death. So note the important Mantra in this chapter i.e. the fourth mantra.

We now come to the third chapter which is only a symbolic presentation of the same teaching in the form of a story. Through the story we come to know that Indra, Agni, Vayu are not able to know the Yaksha who appeared before them i.e. the mind and the sense organs cannot know Brahman. The second significance is *Brahma Astitvam*. We have a doubt regarding Brahman's existence because it is not available or objectification. Through the Yaksha's existence the existence of Brahman is proved.

The third significance is the necessity of qualification for *Brahma Jnanam*. Qualifications like humility - When the devas were arrogant, they could not get the knowledge; Indra could not even meet the Yaksha. But when he became humble he was able to know this knowledge -the necessity of Guru etc (Indra could gain the knowledge only with the help of Uma Devi.)

The fourth Significance is that all glories belong to Brahman alone just like the hearing power of the ear, seeing power of the Eye, the thinking power of the mind etc. which was indicated through the story - Agni's burning power, Vayu's lifting power etc belonged to Brahman. So nobody has any glory of his own. Claiming the glory is vanity. *Mithya Abhimanam* i.e. every pride is illusory.

The next significance is that self-knowledge makes a person great in the world. Indra became glorious after he obtained this knowledge. Whoever gets this knowledge becomes "great". And finally the story becomes useful for practicing variety of *Upasanas* which will be given through the fourth chapter. Thus through the story the Upanishad conveys several ideas; this is the essence of the third chapter.

And then comes the fourth chapter and final chapter. Three topics are discussed. The first topic is glory of Brahma Vidya i.e every Jnani becomes an adorable person. All the glories of a Guru do not belong to the Guru himself. They belongs to the Knowledge that he possesses. Glory of self-knowledge was thus revealed.

Thereafter, two types of *Sadhanas* are prescribed for those who are not able to grasp the Upanishad teaching or for those who are able to grasp but not able to retain.

The first class of *Sadhana* is *Upasana*. Four *Upasanas* are prescribed viz lightning upasana, winking *Upasana*, thought *Upasana* and *TadVana Upasana*. Meditating upon Brahman as lightning or winking or thought brings out the fleeting nature of Brahman because in the story the Yaksha appeared briefly and disappeared. The fourth *Upasana* is called *TadVana Upasana*; the Lord is adorable to all. Brahman alone is the adorable thing in the world.

These four *Upasanas* are for *Madhyama Adhikari's* . And suppose there are people who cannot grasp the teaching at all- the *Madhyama Adhikari's* could grasp but could not retain. This type of person cannot even understand. For such people the Upanishad prescribes Karma Yoga and a life of values - a religious life based on performance of duty and values like Satyam, Dama , Tapa etc. When a person follows these values he will be able to grasp the teaching.

Then the Upanishad concludes by saying that whoever follows Karma Yoga and then *Upasana* and finally *Jnana Yoga* and gains this knowledge and such a person *anante swarge loke jeye pratishthati* i.e attains moksha. With this the fourth chapter is over and the Kena Upanishad is also over.

*Purna Madah...*