

# MUNDAKOPANISHAD



SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA



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DISCOURSES  
ON  
MUNDAKOPANISHAD

BY  
SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA  
(OF UTTERKASI)

DURING  
The 41-Days'  
UPANISHAD GYANA YAGNA  
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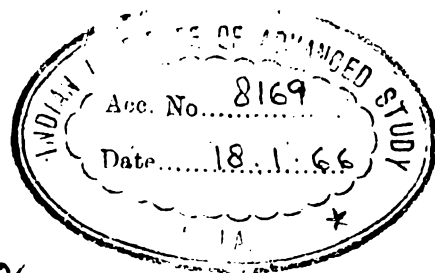
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‘ SIVOHAM ’

## INTRODUCTION

It is an immense joy to me to present this volume to the world of seekers not only because of its contents but also because of the labour of love that it represents. The commentaries added to each of the stanzas are compiled from notes carefully taken by the most uninitiated new-comers who got fired up into a new-found enthusiasm when they got slowly an entry into the calmer and serener fields of our sacred philosophic truths.

The very concept of *Gyana Yagna* was conceived by me in a moment of love, and these *Yagnas* were worked out in an atmosphere of love depending upon love, demanding only love. The workers work merely for love. Thus, every line in this book is a declaration of the sincerity and love that the youth of this country is capable of, even today, when they are really guided and truly harnessed to work in an atmosphere of spiritual purity and religious fervour.

The shortcomings and defects in these discourses are all mine ; the beauty, the expression, the dignity and the fire of enthusiasm that one frequently meets with in the commentaries are all the sacred charms added to them by the very love-hearts of the selfless workers who helped me throughout in the general organizational work of the *Yagna* and in the daily conduct of its programmes.

But for these nameless and numberless juvenile enthusiasts, the *Yagnas* could not have been the glorious

successes that they were, especially when a stranger comes all of a sudden from the Himalayas, to serve a town-folk, who are, in their critical judgment, always suspicious of a new-comer.

I heartily thank all the volunteers who came to the various *Yagna-salas* as though to a Temple of *Seva* and served the cause with a divine devotion.

**With Akhanda Prem & Om**

16, Park Area, }  
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*Thy own Self,*

**SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA.**



# MUNDAKOPANISHAD

## Chapter I—Section 1

ओं भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजात्राः ।  
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिरव्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥  
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः ।  
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥  
ओं शान्तिः । शान्तिः । शान्तिः ॥

*Om Bhadram Karnebhih Srunayama Devah  
Bhadram Pasyae-Makshabhi-Ryajatraha ॥  
Sthirai-Rangaihi-Sthushtuvam-Sasthanoobhi-  
Ruyasema Devahitam Yadayuhu ॥*

*Swasthina Indroo Vridhasravaha  
Swasthina Poosha Viswa Vedaha ॥  
Swasthina-Stharshyo Arishtanemihi  
Swasthino Brihaspathir Dadhathu ॥*

*Om Santhi ! Santhi ! Santhi !!*

O ye Gods, may we hear with our ears (always) what is auspicious ; O worshipful Ones, may we with our eyes see what is auspicious. May we live the entire length of our allotted life hale and hearty, offering our praises (unto Thee). May Indra the ancient and the famous, *Pooshan* (Sun) the all-knowing, the Lord of swift Motion (*Vayu*) who saves us from all harms and *Brihaspathi* who protects the spiritual wealth in us—bless us (with the intellectual strength to understand the scripture and the heroic heart to follow the teachings).

Peace !

Peace !

Peace !!

No Upanishad-study ever started without the *Guru* and the disciple chanting together the PEACE-invocation. Every-day the teacher and the taught sat together and started their discourses only after a common prayer. In these days of acute scepticism, the educated illiterates would wonder what would be the power and strength, necessity and function of prayer in life. "Forgive them Lord, they know not what they say."

Gopala Iyer is a poor insignificant member of a big family and in his own house he is a victim of the mischiefs of even his youngest son. Sree Iyer earns his livelihood on a paltry pay which he gets as a Policconstable in the local *Thana*. Thus, he has, in fact, more than one personality in him—the father, the unhappy husband and the mighty policeman.

Now, when exactly does the ineffectual Gopala Iyer become the mighty "hand of law" as a policeman, a dread to the mischief-makers, a phantom for our cyclists and an ever-present ghost for every rash driver? Certainly, the policeman in him is not when he is in *dhoti* and shirt, rolling in the verandah of his house, persecuted by the mischiefs of his son or bullied by the claims of his wife. The moment Sree Gopala Iyer gets into his *khaki* shorts and puts on his red-turban, out of that very same personality, the policeman rises up and thereafter, he is a potent power to be reckoned with by every citizen!

Similarly, my friends, each one of us is not merely an ineffectual, fearful, ever-sighing, limited creature; but has within himself a personality supremely omnipotent, fearless, unlimited, all-blissful and Godly. Just as Gopala Iyer becomes a policeman by a process of self-invocation, and thereafter the policeman forgets

to act or live the weaknesses and limitations of Gopala Iyer, so too we can, through prayer, invoke the Divine in us and come to transcend our own today's personality and its defects and limitations. Prayer is the technique by which we tune ourselves to the highest perfection and thereby come to invoke in ourselves a greater perfection of both the mind and the intellect.

“To pray is to be seated with the Lord at His Feet. To pray is to aim at the target of God-head with the arrow of intense longing, which has the sharp end of full faith. To pray is, again, to receive consolation and inspiration as a disciple at the hands of the teacher.” In prayer are included praise, love, adoration and holiness.

Just before the study of the Upanishads, thus, each day, the master and the disciple pray, and thus invoke, the best in them to come out, by a full surrender to the mighty powers of an Omniscient God-Principle.

Every word in the *Santhi-pat* is a declaration hinting at the vicious criminal instincts in ourselves. We have started employing God, through prayers, as our advocate, commission agent, doctor and even abetter in our murderous intentions. This is not the fault of the technique. A dagger can be used in murdering the mother or protecting the family. If one vicious man murders his mother in a moment of antagonism, because of that we cannot declare that the dagger is a cruel weapon. Similarly, the technique of prayer is a blessing ; but it is we, who, by employing it for low purposes, vitiate the very institution of prayer.

The great masters in the Upanishads knew no desire nor the sense-world which they had enquired into and discovered to be hollow and riddled with carping sorrows. They prayed only for the cultural

evolution of the entire kingdom of beings. This national character of the Vedic period is stamped so faithfully in the words of the *Santhi* stanza in each of the Upanishads. Both the master and disciple sincerely wished and prayed that they should, during their spiritual life, see and hear nothing but auspiciousness. The sense-organs of the eyes and ears are the great grand-trunk-roads through which Satan enters the realm of the Godly within man. The other sense-objects do not so directly pave a way to the mental suicides in man. Both the outer scenes of viciousness and the inner murmurs of foul intentions directly sweep us in front of them and then defile the edifice of spiritualism in our bosom ; hence the great prayer of the Vedic seers that they should hear and see nothing but goodness and purity.

Here in the prayer of the Vedic Masters we have the *Das Capita* of the Hindus. If each one in a society or a community is to ardently and sincerely pray so as to meet with only auspiciousness and act for the same, in such a country at such an era of culture, jails will be redundant, slum areas will be unknown, poverty unimaginable, disease a mere exception. From the state of affairs available today, we may despair and fail even to visualise that such a perfect spiritual communism would ever be possible in the world, but this seems to be the pattern aimed at by the *Rishis* of old and their prayers clearly indicate to what perfections they brought their visions, in their own times, as facts realised.

Again, not only they lived in a spirit of complete renunciation and acted on the principle of universal love, but that perfect generation, perfect in every sense of the term, was never blind to the necessities of the physical and the material world. They never com-

plained of life. With an appetite, they wooed life and were ever impatient in their thirst for more of it ; this is evident from their prayers, that the Lord of the Universe must bless them to live *the entire span of life allotted to them* in all health and perfect vitality.

Their invocations to Indra, Vayu, Sun, etc., make us remember that Rama and Krishna—Gods are the products of a much later age. They were deities that were sanctioned in the *Pauranic* times. In the Vedic period, the Masters knew only the five Great Elements and such other manifestations to be the Divine personalities, the *Devathas*. They are invoked here by both the Guru and the disciple.

No Peace-invocation concludes without thrice repeating or invoking *Santhi*. The three repetitions are, it is explained by the *Acharyas*, addressed to the three groups in which all the probable obstacles in the study of the Scriptures can be classified. They are the God-sent (*Adhi-Daivika*), such as Lightning, thunder ; or phenomenal (*Adhi-Bhauhdhika*) such as fire, floods, landslides, etc ; or purely subjective (*Adhyatmik*) such as inertia, lack of faith, insincerity and such others that arise from our own negativities.

We shall every day open the discourses with the chanting of the invocation, and when we come to the thrice-repeated peace-chorus, we too shall sincerely pray that our co-operative effort at study may not be obstructed by any force belonging to any of the above three groups.

When the Upanishad-Seers, by complete elimination of their ego, achieved through the divine method of sublimation, reached the Palace of Truth, they entered therein to rediscover themselves to be the owners of it. That Realm of perfection is indeed the world

which having reached no one returneth. However, there are some among them, rare birds, who had flown back, in their divinely selfless game of service, to lead, guide and encourage other manifestations of themselves, unto the same Truth. They try to express the topography of the Realms—Beyond and the main paths by which one may reach it.

At such moments of Godly inspiration and intoxicating bliss the *Rishis* forgot to subscribe their names to their own masterpieces, the Upanishads! Thus, we have an incomparable literature on philosophy in the volumes of the Upanishads, the authors of which are unknown to us. We only know that there was behind these sparkling words of wisdom a personality who revelled in the subjective experience of the very theme which he described in such a wealth of details.

Even when we happend to write a fairly expressive letter or a satisfactory note we cannot but show it to others and share the joy that is in creative art. All creative artists are thus a liability and a nuisance with the gross men of action and trodders of beaten paths. A painter will beg at your feet to walk into his garret to enjoy his creation. A musician will go mad and make you miss your train. A writer will hang to your collars and make you listen to volumes of manuscript. An Archimedes will forget his own nakedness and run along the roads of the city crying "*Eureka.*" These are instances when man rises for a fraction of a moment from his low identifications with his own limitations and gets a glimpse of a minutest ray from the Absolute. There is no true poet or painter or musician or scientist who would not willingly claim himself to be the entire author of their wondrous masterpieces. Creative art is at its best only when the limited ego makes an exit

in all its entirety.

Naturally, the Upanishadic Seers, when they got themselves established in the experience of the Realms that lie beyond the shores of the ego, could not claim any authorship to their declarations. Even at their best they felt that they had not expressed anything about the actual majesty, glory, perfection and completeness of the theme they wanted to handle ; the Infinite cannot be grasped or conveyed in terms of the finite. " God defined is God defiled."

Again, unlike the philosophy and the philosophical text-books in Europe, in India, Upanishads were not Commodities for growing rich or instruments for earning applauses. To the West, philosophy is one of the avenues for self-gratification and self-satisfaction ; in the East, to the *Rishis* and their true children, the Hindus, Philosophy is for Self-adoration and Self-satisfaction. Hence they, as it were, chose to remain behind the screen and sincerely felt that the knowledge they gained and gave expressions to, was not theirs. They only happen to hear the *mantras* from within themselves as though spoken by somebody other than themselves. The term *Sruthi* itself means " that which is heard "

Every disciple when established in his own personal subjective experience of the Truth indicated to him by his own master, became himself a master and when he, in his turn, explained and expressed that state of experience to the Seekers who approached him, did not claim the discovery for himself but only quoted his own *Guru*. Thus, our scriptural text-books preserved their purity and chastity till today and have come down to us in the hierarchy of teacher-disciple-generations. We are not to allow ourselves to accept any declarations made from the platforms of the

intellect and the mind as part and parcel of our Eternal Vedas. If we do so, we too would have a philosophy that is changing every fifteen years as in the West.

In Europe, we find that with every changing vicissitude of national life, with every war, with every revolution, there is a thorough rearrangement of material values lived, and consequently, there is a change in the attitude of the mind and intellect to life. With every disturbance in the brain cells in kaleidoscopic variety, we get a library of philosophies from Plato to date. But in India, the Eternal Vedas and the Upanishadic Truths are as true today as they were when they were taught in the flowery valleys of the sacred Ganges. Though the Scientific developments, communal awareness, political consciousness or international situations, may meddle with our outer and inner worlds of objects and feelings, the experience of deep sleep, you will admit, is one and the same at all times. We may have progressed and thoroughly changed in the external set-up in the world and the consequent inner psychological and intellectual assessments of things, but the experience of sleep is not different at any time. So too, the External experience of Godhood. This is the goal preached in the Upanishads. It is not changing or changeable whatever be the outside change in our gross life.

ओं ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथम सन्बभूव विश्वस्य कर्ता भुवनस्य गोप्ता ।

स ब्रह्मविद्यां सर्वविद्याप्रतिष्ठामथर्वाय ज्येष्ठपुत्राय प्राह ॥ १ ॥

*Om Brahma Devanam Pradhamah Samba-Bhuva Viswasya  
Kartha Bhuvanasya Gopta—Sa Brahmavidyam Sarva-Vidya  
Prathishtam Adharvaya Jyeshtha Putraya Praha ॥ (1)*

Of the Gods, *Brahmaji*, the creator and the protector of the universe, was self-born first. He gave out the knowledge of Reality (*Brahma Vidya*), the knowledge of



all knowledges, the foundation for all Sciences, to his own eldest son, *Adharva*.

In Sanskrit, the word “*Brahma*” is used both in the masculine and in the neuter genders. In the masculine usage, it means that deity in the Trinity, who is the creator of the worlds of names and forms. When the word is used in the neuter gender, as ‘*Brahman*,’ it means the Supreme Reality out of which everything came out including *Brahmaji* himself. Here *Sruthi* says that when the very creator manifested out of the Pure Consciousness as a specific creative urge, it was not the birth of an individual who is the product of the male and female seeds. *Brahmaji* is not a product of sperm and ovum, but He is self-born : He is a manifestation of the creative urge in the Reality. He, it is said, was the first to give out the great Knowledge of *Brahma Vidya* to his own eldest son, *Adharva*. A father can never consciously deceive his own son by giving him a knowledge that is false and stupid. However cruel we may be, none of us would dare to advise our own child that “fire is cold to the touch” !

This Knowledge of the Supreme Reality is called *Brahma Vidya*, may be, because it was first given out by *Brahmaji* or because it deals with *Brahman*, the term as used in the Upanishads for the Eternal and Omniscient Pure Consciousness. This *Brahma Vidya* has been glorified in the Upanishads as the “Science of all sciences” ; as the ‘Knowledge of all Knowledges’ ; as the ‘foundation of all other sciences’ ! The Self is the Life Principle in us and all other knowledge-bits about the external world and the inner world are but modifications of the Self.

Ordinarily what we understand by ‘knowledge’ is only an assortment of modified knowledge and not

Knowledge as such. Upanishads deal—as they do, with the Vital Principle in us, which is the light in the intelligence, and because of which all other sciences are made possible. No dead scientist will any longer work at his table, nor will a dead artist add one more stroke to the half-finished work on his canvas. No music can come out of a dead musician ; no words from the speaker when the life has flown out of him. So then, since all our knowledges are possible only in a medium of Life, the science that directly gives a knowledge of it is indeed the foundation of all other knowledges — *Sarva Vidya Prathishta*.

अथर्वणे यां प्रवदेत ब्रह्माथर्वा तां पुरोवाचाङ्गिरे ब्रह्मविद्याम् ।

स भारद्वाजाय सत्यवहाय प्राह भारद्वाजोऽङ्गिरसे परावराम् ॥ ॥ २ ॥

*Adharvanae Yam Pravadetha Brahma-Adharva Tham Purovacha Angirae Brahmadeyam — Sa Bharadvajaya Satyavahaya Praha Bharadvajo — Angirasae Paravaram ॥ (2)*

The very Knowledge which *Brahmaji* taught to *Adharva*, he taught it to *Angira* in ancient days ; and he taught it to one of the *Bharadvaja* family named *Satyavaha* ; and *Satyavaha* taught it to *Angiras* — the knowledge was so handed down from the greater (teacher) to the lesser (disciple).

We have already seen that when the *Rishis* of the Upanishads gained a glimpse of the Reality during their white-heat moments of meditation, they were in such a divine state of an all-consuming inspiration that they never dared to claim the knowledge as their own. Each Master, after his own personal experience of the Truth, lived the ideal life of self-restraint, renunciation and detachment. Into their all-blissful life always entered a seeker seeking a satisfaction for his spiritual unrest. When the kindly Masters tried to guide their

disciples they did not claim this Knowledge as their own but only quoted, in their turn, their own Masters, Thus, the purity of the scriptures had been kept up by this tradition of a "divine-copy-right."

We have here an entire line of *Guru-Sishya-parampara* (teacher-taught family-tree) giving us the details of who taught whom. In this *mantra* the family-tree of Knowledge has been traced out to *Angiras* and in the following *mantras* you will find how he is the *Guru* to whom a disciple approaches with a transcendental question. The answer given to the seeker by *Angiras* is the contents of the *Mundakopanishad*.

शौनको ह वै महाशालोऽङ्गिरसं विधिवदुपसन्नः पप्रच्छ ।

कस्मिन् नु भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवतीति ॥

॥ ३ ॥

*Sownako-ha-vai Mahasalo Angirasam Vidhivadupasannah  
Paprachcha — Kasminnu-Bhagavo Vignathae Sarvamidam  
Vignatham Bhavathi-thi ॥* (3)

The great householder *Sownaka* duly approaching *Angiras* in the prescribed manner asked, "What is That, my Lord, which being known all these become known?"

The great disciple of this inimitable Upanishad is not one of those impotent cowards and runaways from life. Here is a healthy mind and intellect equipment soaked to satisfaction in all possible experiences of life and having intelligently lived an intense and active life feels an inward dissatisfaction even in the midst of the best that life can offer.

*Sownaka* was not suffering from mental psychosis ; he was not an embittered revolutionary ; there was no desire-suppression in him. He was not one of those products of 'mental hysteria' or 'intellectual dysentery' that we see today howling in madness from platforms

and parapet-walls, the trained species called ‘ political leaders.’ *Sownaka* was neither a tragic specimen of a bundle of superstitions that was hawked along in a handcart of leprous fanaticism and intolerance ! In *Sownaka*, we have a full-grown true son of the Aryans, who alone is fit to enter the portals of the Upanishads, successfully live the life advocated therein and with a joyous certainty reach the goal therein pointed out ! All the above-mentioned qualities in *Sownaka* have been indicated by one little phrase of inspiration “*Mahasalah*”— the Great Householder or a pious and a charitable rich man of devotion and faith who erected and maintained many a Great *Yagna-Sala* — Halls of Vedic Sacrifices.

This great disciple, rich and prosperous, respected and revered in the society, approached his *Guru* according to the Upanishads, “in the prescribed manner”. Today, we find a Commander-in-chief or a Premier, a Minister or a Secretary visiting a Master by appointment, when, the *Mandaleswar* or the *Matadhipathi* is advised to arrange pipers and drummers from the Railway Station to the Ashram ! Such an attitude of arrogance or even equality is ruinous and suicidal for the seeker. This is indicated by the phrase here ‘*vidhivat.*’ The prescribed rule was that a disciple should reach the Master in a spirit of humble adoration and complete surrender, with a passionate urge to know and with an indomitable will to suffer any amount of difficulties in living the life of retirement and privations. The disciples approached the Masters-of-old with a significant sign of their surrender and their readiness to serve. When they approached a Master, they always carried in their hands a bundle of dry twigs or a bundle of fresh neem-twigs ; the former is

used for the Sacrificial-fire and the latter as the tooth-brush. Nothing else could you in those days carry to the men of realisation who remained in the forests, revelling in their own realised perfections. They had no need and in no other way could you serve them. This prescribed rule is given to us, may be to picture to us the attitude and the way in which in the ancient days the disciples reached their masters ; or may be, *Sruthi* has an intention of indicating to us the ideal manner in which even today a true seeker, who wants to dedicate himself and become a full time *Sadhak*, must approach *his* chosen *Guru*. Sree Sankara puts it to us that this statement must act as an injunction prescribed for the past, as well as for the present and also for the future, just as a lit lamp kept on the threshold must equally light up the interior of the room as well as the outer corridors of the house.

Now-a-days, not only that we rarely get the chance to meet a true Master but even when we meet him we know not how to approach him. Men of realisation are like flutes — by themselves they cannot sing ; the music is to be brought out of them by our blowing. To go to a Master and to sit in silent adoration is also a true *Satsanga* ; but this method is available only between a Master and a very highly advanced seeker. Ordinarily, we must pelt the Master with all our doubts — absurd, stupid, imaginary, deep and superficial. Only when we start asking questions can he get a glimpse of our personality, and only when he knows us can he open his mouth and serve each of us on the Path-Divine. In the Upanishads we find that disciples approached the *Guru* and each asked a very pertinent and deep question of pregnant import and endless message.

In the Upanishad now under discussion, we have the great question put by the disciple to his Master. The very question in its philosophical implication soars to the giddy heights of the transcendental, a height at which the mind forgets to flutter about, the intellect dares not to repeat its frog-leaps.

Ordinarily the material world in its field of enquiry comes to gain a knowledge, which is the knowledge *of* things. We have thus a knowledge *of* Astrology, a knowledge *of* astronomy, a knowledge *of* physics, a knowledge — *of* this, *of* that, *of* the table, *of* the book, *of* the pen, etc. All these give but a *qualified* Knowledge and not Knowledge *as such*. The disciple is here asking for *that* Knowledge knowing which all the other knowledges become known, without which no other knowledge is possible, the Knowledge in which all the other knowledges exist and maintain themselves. Having known the ocean, all waves and ripples, foams and sparkles, whirls and bubbles are known ; having known the sun, all its reflections, cast in wayside water-pools and in the undisturbed waters of the lake Mansarovar, are certainly known. Having known gold, we have known all that are made of gold. Similarly, *Sownaka* wants to know what is *that* Knowledge which is the very substance of all the knowledges. In short, he wants to know the Light Principle in our intelligence by which knowledge *of* things are illumined for us during our existence.

तस्मै स होवाच—द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म यद्  
ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति, परा चैवापरा च ॥

॥ ४ ॥

*Thasmai Sa Hovacha — Dvau Vidyae Vedithavyae Ithi  
Ha-Sma Yad Brahnavido Vadanthi Para-Chai-Vapara-Cha ॥*

(4)

To him (*Sounaka*) *Angiras* said : “ There are two kinds of knowledge to be acquired, namely, *Apara* and *Para* — lower and higher. So say those who know Brahman ” (the great Seers of the Upanishads).

The question, you remember, was regarding the Supreme Knowledge. The disciple asked what it was. To this, the answer given is supremely evasive in this stanza. There are learned critics who claim this as a weakness in the Sastra text-books. Sree Sankara duly meets these critics and answers them.

Though the disciple is asking, “ *What is it,*” the *Guru*, discovering the entire depth of the muddled mind and measuring the real difficulty of the student, starts answering in an elaborate way. Again, we are generally aware, in our world of extrovertedness, only of sciences dealing with knowledge of things. It is the duty of the *Guru* to guide the disciples, from where they are at present, to the greater heights. So then, in the most scientific way, *Angiras* starts his discourse with a classification of the entire possibility-of-knowledge. He says the knowledge-possibilities fall into two distinct groups : the lower and the higher — the terrestrial and the transcendental. The question of the disciple enquired the transcendental and it is but the intelligent way for a teacher to negate that which it *is not* and then start the assertion of what it *is*. The negation itself is an indirect pointer to the Path which leads to that which is to be asserted.

According to Sankara, the implication of the very question directly demands such an answer. The question concealed in its words not only indicates a thirst to know what that Supreme Knowledge is, but also expresses at once a doubt in the mind of the student as to whether there can be such a Knowledge. The

import of the question is, “ Is there a Knowledge, O Teacher, knowing which all other knowledges become known, and if there be such a Knowledge, in what way is it different from the ordinary knowledges known to us and how can I attain It ? ”.

Unlike these days, when we approach a Master only to criticise and carp at him, in the days of our glorious ancient culture, seekers approached the teachers with a reverence and adoration the like of which is not seen in the country today anywhere.....except, probably, when an applicant, after a couple of years' soul-killing unemployment, approaches a petty commercial agent with an application for a paltry job ! In the presence of the Master the disciple dared not talk too much ; what he had to say, he said in the minimum number of words leaving half of it unsaid in suggestive expressions readable to the kind and sympathetic, intelligence of a *Guru* ! Hence this answer and the way of treatment adopted by the teacher, is quite appropriate, says Sree Sankara.

तत्रापरा, ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः शिक्षा कल्पो व्याकरणं  
निरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषमिति । अथ परा, यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते ॥ ५ ॥

*Thatra-Apara Rig-Vedo Yajur-Veda Sama-Vedo Atharva-Veda Siksha Kalpo Vyakaranam Niruktam Chando Jyothishamithi | Atha Para Yaya Tadakshara-Madhigamya-thae || (5)*

There, the ‘ lower knowledge ’ is constituted of (the four Vedas) the *Rig*, the *Sama*, the *Yajur* and the *Adharva*, and the (six Vedangas) *Siksha* (phonetics), *Kalpa* (codes of rituals), *Vyakarana* (grammar), *Nirukta* (etymology), *Chandas* (meter) and *Jyothisha* (astrology). Now the ‘ Higher Knowledge ’ — that which leads to immortality or that which goes beyond the word-meaning in languages.

After having scientifically divided the total know-



ledge-possibilities into two groups, the great *Rishi* is continuing here his scheme of teaching, by clearly describing the scope and content of the lower knowledge. Thus, we are told that all the four Vedas and the six Vedangas branches of knowledge that are complementary informations unavoidable in all attempts at a fuller appreciation of the Vedas all belong to the category of the 'lower knowledge'.

This must have been a staggering revelation to the student who was then as much a victim of his generation as we are now of our own times. The great Sownaka faithfully believed the Vedic declarations and lived an entire life following strictly the ritualistic part of our immortal religion. And at the end of his lifetime, when he reached the feet of a master seeking the Supreme, he was told that he had squandered away the best part of his life in wooing but the 'lower knowledge'. This information must have been, to that poor soul, a dreadful shock. His eyes must have bulged out, his brows arched and raised; there, the eyes must have had a look in them which showed the confusion in the mind; probably, there was also a terrific sense of tragedy writ large upon his face! The Master must certainly have noticed all these carefully and hence he hastens to comfort the disciple by saying that the Supreme Knowledge is that which transcends the word-meaning of the Vedas and that which is dealt with after the chapters describing the ritualism, and that the Supreme Knowledge is that which directly deals with the State of Immortality — the satisfying terminus of life's pilgrimage.

There is a beautiful punning upon the word '*akshara*', and probably in no other literature in the world has ever man so successfully expressed two

different meanings of such depth of significance and wealth of import through the literary trick called punning. 'Akshara' means that which has no destruction (Immortal). And also it means the alphabet. Thus, the contents of the *Para Vidya* are that Knowledge which leads the pursuer to a rediscovery of his own true nature being nothing but the immortal Self-hood, and this branch of knowledge is not in the word-bulk of the Vedas but lies beyond the words — in the sacred and secret caves of significances, to reach which the expressions in the Vedas are but narrow footpaths!! Mother Sruthi standing at every turn in the life's thorny paths, not only instils courage to the weary pilgrims, but also significantly points out to them the easy paths which will take them to the Eternal Rest-House in the Land of Perfection. But foolish pilgrims, as we are, intoxicated by our very vanity, we have no leisure to take any note of that message or to understand Her directions. To a drunken driver the warning-posts along the road are mute impediments.

यत् तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णमचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम् ।

नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं नदव्ययं यद् भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति

धीराः ॥ ॥ ६ ॥

*Yattadadresya — Magrahya — Magotra — Mavarna —  
Machakshu-Srotam Thadapani Padam | Nityam Vibhum  
Sarvagatham Su-Sukshmam Thadavyayam Yadbhoothayonim  
Paripasyanthi Dheerah ||* (6)

That which is invisible, ungraspable, unoriginated and attributeless, that which has neither eyes nor ears nor hands nor legs—that is Eternal, full of manifestations, All-pervading, Subtlest of the subtle, that Imperishable Being which the wise perceived as the Source of all Creation.

This stanza represents the most perfect definition of the Indefinable. If it would not be an exaggeration to say that the greatest achievement of the Aryans consisted in their successfully warping out of articulate sounds a language as perfect as Sanskrit, then we may say that Sanskrit has reached its fulfilment in this stanza ! There is no *sastra* in our Hindu literature wherein this *mantra* has not been more than once referred to and quoted. Sankara's pen cannot move down sometimes even a page without scribbling at least a part of this *mantra*. No pundit can open his mouth without expressing the ideas contained in this ! In short, this *mantra* is the summary of the highest said in all the bibles of the world.

After describing the contents of the ' lower knowledge.' here, the *Rishi*, in his infinite kindness, is making a daring attempt to explain and express the Infinite in terms of the finite. Naturally, we who are accustomed to transactions in the finite world, find it difficult to comprehend and grasp the full import of the expressions used. If a statement in higher mathematics is not intelligible to an advocate or a lawyer, he must be certainly mad to pass a judgment thereby and declare that higher mathematics is meaningless. And yet this is exactly what you and I are doing : without equipping ourselves with the necessary preliminary knowledge, we jump into the great Science of Living and Life, as discussed in these text-books, the scriptures, and when we cannot understand them we unjustly criticise it to our own damnation !

I shall try to give you a peep into the unplumped secret caves and treasure-houses of meaning-wealth that lie so beautifully concealed behind some of these expressions. Let us now take the *mantra* phrase by

phrase—

*Invisible* : The Supreme Reality is invisible because what is visible should be an object of seeing. We are seeking the Centre Life Force within ourselves which is the very seer in us. Making use of the instrument-of-vision, the eyes, the seer is looking out to see the seen. With the same instrument-of-vision the seer cannot see himself.

Let me take an example : with a telescope, an observer observes the moon. But with the same instrument, the observer cannot observe himself ! For, when the observer becomes the object, where is the observer at the ' eye-piece ' of the telescope ? Never is it possible in life to make the subject and the object function together at one and the same place. However tired you may be, *you* cannot ride upon *your own* shoulders ! You may see everything with the eyes, but with your own eyes you can never-never hope to see one thing, namely your own eyes ! !

Thus, a seeker who is seeking the subject cannot *see* the subject, because, if he *sees*, it would be only the seen, *i.e.*, the object. And hence the Reality, the Life Spark, is described here as ' invisible '.

*Ungraspable* : If it is not seen, a doubt may arise in our mind—it can, probably, be grasped by the mind ; and this is negated by the *Sruthi* with Her expression, ' *agrahya* '. Mind cannot conceive the Truth, since the capacity to conceive the Truth is lent to the mind by the very Life Centre which it is trying to conceive.

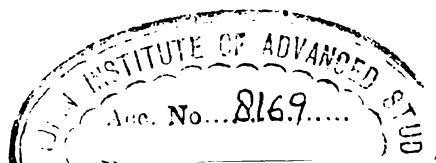
Let us try an example : A driver at the steering-wheel, while driving, cannot be run over by the same car. The moment the driver leaves his seat and rushes to the front of the car, it stops since it has no motion of its own, and so cannot knock him down and run

over him ! Similarly, the *Atman*,— the dynamic power behind the mind that vitalises the mind — that makes it possible for the mind to grasp things — cannot be grasped independently by the mind. Should the mind grasp the Reality, it should stand apart from the object it so grasps ; and the moment the mind divorces itself from its connections with the *Atman*, it becomes a dead inert stuff which cannot grasp any idea anymore. Hence we say that the Supreme is ungraspable.

*Unoriginated* : Everything created or formed must perish or die away because that which has a beginning has also an end. The Eternal or the Immortal is that which has no end ; and if there should be no end it should have no beginning also. Again, the absurdity in presuming a beginning for the Reality would be that we will have then a state of affairs which we will have to describe in terms of a ludicrous paradox ; we will have to say “ *there was a time when Reality was not real !!!* ”

*Attributeless* : Attributes are properties — chemical and physical — noticed by the sense-organs or felt by the mind or deduced by the intellect. In short, attributes can only be in the objects illumined by the subject. Again, a substance or a thing is that which has some attribute, *i.e.*, wherever there are attributes, there are objects too. The world of substance is finite, so then, the Eternal, Changeless Reality could have no attribute, because to consider the Supreme as having attributes is to condemn It to extinction.

*Neither eyes nor ears nor hands nor legs* : Earlier we are told by the *Sruthi* that the Supreme is not visible for us. We may then jump into a misunderstanding that even though we cannot see It, It may be seeing us. This is denied here by the Scripture. The Supreme



has neither the organs-of-knowledge nor the organs-of-action. The eyes and ears, the hands and legs are vehicles which can function only in Him but He needs none of these instruments for His own existence. The All-pervading needs no instrument to recognise Itself. There are no objects in Him other than Himself. There is no ignorance in Him to be discovered with some knowledge newly gained — He is Knowledge *itself*. Again, action is not possible for the All-pervading. When you are already filling up the entire space in a given chair there is no going or coming for you in that very same chair ; for every inch of space in that chair is *paripoorna* with you. Similarly, the Pure Consciousness, which is all-pervading, feels no necessity to act or to move. Again, action is generally nothing but an expression at the fulfilment of a desire. The *paripoorna* Reality in its own all-full-nature can desire nothing and hence there is no action possible in it.

*Eternal, etc.* : The other epithets used in the *Mantra* are all the logical conclusions which one must arrive at when one accepts the above-described ideas. That which is unoriginated must be Eternal ; that which is Eternal must be All-pervading, and if it is All-pervading, then the entire world of matter must be in a sense nothing but Its own manifestation ; and all-pervasiveness indicates a state of the highest subtlety and such a stuff should necessarily be imperishable.

When Angiras thus defined the Supreme in the above exhaustive and supra-mental definition, surely, Sownaka, the disciple, must have got more than confused and confounded ! Under the very weight of significances of this statement, the poor disciple, must have felt himself crushed ! There must have been an expression of disbelief and a confession of his own sense

of hopelessness spreading on his face. As though to reassure his disciple that this Eternal Factor is realizable by every trained and prepared intellect, the kind *Rishi* explains positively that every pure intellect made sensitive for the purpose can discover this Reality. The word used here '*pari-pasyanthi*' is not merely a *sudden vision* or a *hasty glance* but a thorough, intimate, personal, subjective experience of the *entire Truth* in all details and in every part of the Whole. And with this discovery, the *Mantra* states, "the discoverer discovers the Supreme as the source of all the finite world of names and forms."

*Bhuta Yoni* : (As the womb of matter.) Every effect has a cause. There is no effect possible without a cause. Causation-hunting is the very function of the intellect. Where there is no cause-effect-relationship, the intellect is stultified. So, to a disciple, who is in the plane of the intellect, a teacher must talk in terms of the student's own native language, the language of causation. Hence the Scripture here says that the ultimate cause for all the world of perishable and changing names and forms is that Eternal Factor which has been so inimitably defined in the earlier portions of this very same mantra. To say that the Eternal is the source of the finite is something like saying, "the delusory serpent came from the rope, or the ghost came from the post or all the pots came out of the clay-womb!" In fact, my friends, the *Sruthi* would ultimately guide you all to the fact that there never was a finite world except in the brain and intellect of you and me. The Supreme alone Supremely exists — All Alone! There is not even a trace of our sun, moon and stars, our universe, our world, its economic, political and domestic problems, your ego or my

worries, this *Yagna Sala* or this *Yagnadhyaksha*,..... nothing in fact exists. Nobody talks to anybody: There is neither a *sruthi*, neither the teacher nor the taught ; That alone exists, which is at once the centre of the whole and of the part.

यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः संभवन्ति ।  
यथा सतः पुरुषात् केशलोमानि तथाक्षरात् संभवतीह विश्वम् ॥ ॥ ७ ॥

*Yadhorna-Nabhi Srijathae Grihmathae Cha Yadha Pridhiv-  
yam — Oshadhaya Sambhavanthi Yadha Sathah Purushad  
Kesalomani Thadha Aksharath Sambhavathi Ha Viswam ॥*

(7)

As the spider projects and withdraws (unto itself) the web, as the plants sprout from the earth, as hairs grow on the head and body of man, so from the imperishable comes out the universe.

The economy of the scriptural style is flouted here if the three different pictures given are only to emphasise the one and the same point of comparison: The *Rishis* have the unique style of using minimum words with maximum significance in the sacred *mantras*: Certainly, analogies are the only instruments of expressing the inexpressible. But even in the usage of analogies in the scriptures, we never find an extra stroke added to it, just for its own sake, or for mere literary beauty. With this very preliminary knowledge of the style of the Upanishads, if we evaluate the why and the how of this triple pictures painted in the same *mantra*, we come to glimpse through the pictures a triple purpose. The spider creates the web out of itself and withdraws it unto itself—the material of the web becomes the very substance of the spider: In short, the web is nothing but a modified form



of the spider itself. Similarly, the Supreme Reality Itself is the lock, stock and barrel of this atrocious looking mechanism of *samsar* !

The moment we hear of creation in our tradition of associated ideas, we come to picture the Lord as a pot-maker sitting up and creating the world out of a substance which is other than Himself. This is denied, and this wrong concept is re-adjusted in our mind, by this *mantra* with its picture of the spider creating the web, not out of anything other than itself, but out of its own stuff. Herein, the philosophy of the Logicians is positively blasted ; they believe that there is *Pradhan* without which creation is impossible.

If the spider-picture gives us the *how* and the *why* of the entire game of creation, why should *Sruthi* give yet another analogy in the picture of "the herbs sprouting forth from the earth" ? This is to deny a possible false suggestion which is in the previous analogy. The spider creates the web certainly for a personal end, for a personal gratification. Thus, the Supreme Reality must have a personal purpose to create you and me and the scheme of things around us which we call as the world. To deny any purposeful motive behind the creation, we have the second analogy. There is no motive in the earth to produce or nourish the plants. It is without any effort and without any personal motive that the plants come out of the earth. Similarly, the world too comes out of the Real.

Again, the infinite mercy and love of the *Rishis* forecast that even this analogy may in its turn sabotage the spiritual aspirant with yet another misunderstanding that the Supreme is a dead, inert, insentient matter, like the earth, incapable of knowing or feeling. In

order to avert this calamitous fall into a false rut of thinking, we have here the third picture. *Sruthi* says that the finite has come out of the Infinite as hairs grow on the head and body of man. So long as the man lives, as an expression of his life in him we have the hairs sprouting on his body and head. This entails no suffering on the part of the individual. Nobody can get even an hour's leave of absence from his office for the purpose of hair-growing! Effortless, as an expression of the very life in the man, hairs grow and thrive. Similarly the finite is, in its own way, an expression of the vitality in the Reality.

Thus, on the whole, the three pictures distinctly give us three sets of ideas which we must comprehend fully in order to grasp the entire process of creation. They are :—

(i) Out of Him the world has come without the intervention of any other cause other than Himself and in the end the projected world is absorbed back again into the Divine.

(ii) The Supreme has neither the effort nor the purpose with which the spider creates the web. Creation is an effortless, purposeless, projection — a Divine *Leela*.

(iii) The Supreme is not a dead inert matter like the earth, but is a conscious living Vital Personality — a positive Entity — An All-pervading Essence — Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss (*Sat-Chit-Anand*).

तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभिजायते ।

अन्नात् प्राणो मनः सत्यं लोकाः कर्मसू चामृतम् ॥ ॥ ८ ॥

*Thapasa Cheeyathae Brahma Thathonna-Mabhijayathae  
Annath Prano Manah Sathyam Lokah Karmasu Cha-Mritan ॥*

In brooding meditation or continuous thought (*tapas*), the total creative urge (*Brahmaji*) swells (with the very joy of creation). From Him food is produced, from food the *prana*, the mind, the *bhutas*, the world, the *karma* and its fruits.

The word *Tapas* has been very often misunderstood as 'austerity'. The word *tapas* has come to gather in the folds of its various significances austerity also. It is in the true scriptural meaning of 'concentrated thinking' that the word *tapas*, it seems, has been used here. *Sruthi* elsewhere says "*I-kariyam param tapah*" — development of single-pointed attention is the supreme *tapas*.

Here *Sruthi*, after explaining the nature of the Supreme Reality, is now trying to describe the various stages in the process of creation. The theory has it that the creation was never a sudden and accidental out-burst of the entire world of names and forms. It was not a haphazard or a sudden accident that ended at last in a finite world of plurality, but it had an ordered scheme about it. Herein we are told how through various stages of manifestation, the scheme of things that we know of now has ultimately evolved out itself. The creative urge in Reality, in its own potency, swells in an impatience of self-expression, and, then, from that the whole world of objects constituting the plane of matter emerges out. From matter, life as known to us manifests. *Prana* here means life; *prana* is the centre of all activities. That there is a close relationship between the *prana* and the mind is quite well-known. When a mind is agitated the rhythm of *prana* is quick: when the mind is at rest and at peace, the *prana* is smooth and quiet. Where there is no *prana*, there the mind cannot be. Thus, Upanishads

rightly conclude that from the *pranas* the mind springs forth.

When the mind is fully manifest with the *pranas*, from that state of emergence of the finite, we get the five great Elements which are termed here in the Upanishad as *Satyam*, since compared with the finite names and forms in the world, the five Elements are relatively infinite and eternal (*Satyam*). The combination of the five great Elements is the entire world of phenomena that we see around us. Here it may kindly be noted that the word *loka* in its etymological meaning in Sanskrit is not merely this globe but it means a "plane of experiencing". When there is a field of experiencing and when the above-mentioned food, vital-air and mind, are brought to play in this field, the individuals indulge in selfish and egoistic actions. Actions end but in their reactions. The reactions of actions are nothing other than the very actions fulfilling themselves. These reactions or the 'fruits of actions' are termed by the Upanishad as '*Amritam*' (immortal) only, again in a relative sense. The actions may end, but their reactions do not die away till they bring their effects upon the mind and the body. In this sense *Sruthi* calls fruits of actions as immortal.

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद् यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः ।

तस्मादेतद् ब्रह्म नाम रूपमन्नं च जायते ॥

॥ ९ ॥

*Yah Sarva-Gnyah Sarvavid-yasya Gnyanamayam Thapah |  
Thasmadethad Brahma Nama Roopamannam Cha Jayathae ||*

From the Brahman (the Supreme Reality) — who not only is aware of the total happenings in the world but is equally in the know of all the details of every minute

happenings, whose very thought is of the nature of knowledge, — are produced all these : the creator, names-and-forms and nourishment for all.

With this stanza, the first Section of the first Chapter of the *Mundakopanishad* is completed. Naturally, *Sruthi* is trying to summarise the entire chapter in a pregnant statement, at once brief and beautiful.

The Supreme Reality, the Light of the Intelligence, is nothing but Pure Wisdom and as such it is *generally* aware of the large happenings in the entire cosmos, and it being the Light that illumines every mental wave in the vegetable, animal and human life, and it being the Existence-Principle in everything that is, there cannot happen anything which is not directly under the Light Supreme nor can anything exist but in the lap of Pure Existence. Thus, Pure Consciousness, being by nature Absolute-Existence-Knowledge, knows everything, and it knows every detail of all that it knows, says Mother *Sruthi*. The pregnant import of those two expressions, ‘*Sarvagnya*’ and ‘*Sarvavith*’ is not easy for a gross intellect even to conceive readily and all of a sudden.

We have already dealt with the theory of the *Sruthi* that the Supreme Reality through a process of brooding, invoked the creative power that was already there and swelling with excitement and the joy of creation, started the game of creation in Himself, by projecting a dream-world Himself, out of the very substance of Himself!!

Hence the idea in the *mantra* : “ out of this total creative urge are, created, the creator, the names and forms and the nourishment (the energy to sustain the lifeless life of the projected world) to maintain them ”. In Sanskrit it is an idiom, especially in its scriptural

use, to use “name and form,” which means our modern term “individuality”.

OM TAT SAT

End of Chapter I—Section 1

## Chapter I—Section 2

तदेतत् सत्यं मन्त्रेषु कर्माणि कवयो  
यान्यपश्यंस्तानि त्रेतायां बहुधा सन्ततानि ।  
तान्याचरथ नियतं सत्यकामा  
एष वः पन्थाः सुकृतस्य लोके ॥

॥ १ ॥

*Thadetat Satyam Mantreshu Karmani Kavayo Yanyapa-  
syam-Sthani Tretayam Bahudha Samtatani. Thanyacharatha  
Niyatam Satyakama Yesha Vah Pandhah Sukritasya Lokae. (1)*

The various *karmas* which seers found in the *mantras* are true and were much practised in the *Treta* age (or in the three Vedas) ; practise them always with true wishes. This is your way for attaining the fruits of *karma*.

In the last section total knowledge-possibilities were divided under two heads, the *higher* and the *lower*. The *Rishi* also exhausted therein a general hint as to what constitutes ‘*apara vidya*’ and what exactly constitutes the ‘*para vidya*’. In this section, we find, a rough and ready sketch of the entire kingdom of the lower knowledge, between many dots and dashes, scribbled in haste, only to laugh at its inefficacy in bringing about Eternal goodness or permanent happiness.

Thus, the section starts with a call to all *Satyakamas* to follow faithfully the various rituals ordered in all the Vedas. “They are true”, says the Guru — True inasmuch as they give the desired results, in case the *Karmas* are properly done as advised in the Vedas. The particular word used here ‘*tretayam*’ may mean either in the ‘Treta-age’ or in the ‘three Vedas’.

That a seeker should, in his initial stages of *sadhana* follow the rituals diligently is being very emphatically

expressed in this *mantra*. The word 'diligently' (*niyatam*) is very pregnant. It does not merely suggest a faithful and blind performance, but insists upon a regular practice which is continuous, intelligent, fresh and cheerful. Rituals followed as a routine lose all their potency.

A routine in itself cannot constructively re-create a developed human personality. It is only a deliberate intelligent training of the head and heart of an individual, gained through diligent *abhyas* that can bring about this desired effect. A dull habit, or an inert routine pursued under the blind force of a dead faith is ineffectual and quite undesirable as a measure in the spiritual revival of an individual.

Rituals in themselves cannot and will not lead a seeker to his goal. An act, however noble, cannot, in its result, procure the Eternal, the act being itself a finite one. We shall get a more exhaustive discussion on this point later on in the section.

यदा लेलायते ह्यर्चिः समिद्धे हव्यवाहने ।

तदाज्यभागावन्तरेणाहुतीः प्रतिपादयेत् (श्रद्धयाहुतम्) ॥ २ ॥

*Yada Lelayathae Hyarchih Samiddhae Havyavahanae —  
Thadaajyabhagavantarena Ahutihi Prathipadayaeth (Sradhaya  
Hutham). (2)*

When the fire is kindled and the flames begin to move, let the sacrificer offer his oblations (with faith) on the space between the two portions of the sacred fire where the ghee should be poured.

Of the various sacrifices, an explanation is given of the *agnihotra* because of its importance as a daily sacrifice to be practised. There are two readings of this stanza ; one with the last two words (with faith)



and another without these two words. Sankara takes the reading without them.

When the flames of the sacred fire are smoky and dim the oblations are not to be offered. The oblations are offered only *when* the flames are brightly dancing in energetic cheer. Again, the oblations are to be offered at the space between the two points, on the right and the left *where* the ghee is poured. This point is called 'avapasthana' in the ritualistic terminology.

The *mantra* indicates that the *karma*, itself limited, has its own rules ordering *where* and *when* it is to be performed. The aim of the teacher seems to be, when the entire section is read together as a whole, only to point out to the disciple that the *karma* is painful, complicated and difficult. The laboriousness of the rituals which becomes a shackle upon a full-grown seeker, in his flight across the realms of the higher meditation, is vividly brought out in the following stanza.

यस्याग्निहोत्रमदर्शमपौर्णमासमचातुर्मास्यमनाग्रयणमतिथिर्वर्जितंच ।

अहुतमवैश्वदेवमविधिना हुतमासप्तमांस्तस्य लोकान् हिनस्ति ॥ ॥ ३ ॥

*Yasya—Agnihotra—Madarsa—Mapournamasa—Machaturmasya Managrayama—Mathidhivarjitam—Cha | Ahutama-  
vaiswadeva—Mavidhina Huta—Masaptamam Tasya Lokan  
Hinasthi ||* (3)

If a man's *agnihotra* sacrifice is not accompanied by (1) the new moon and full moon sacrifices (*darsa* and *poornimasa*), (2) by the four months' sacrifices (*chaturmasya*), (3) by the sacrifice of the autumnal season (*agryana*); or if it is unattended by guests, or not done in proper time or performed without the worship of *visvadevas* or not performed strictly according to the rules laid down in the Vedas—then such a *karma* destroys his worlds till the seventh.

In this stanza, the teacher by his exhaustive enumeration of all the minute 'dos' and 'don'ts' is aiming at the creation of a desired effect upon the disciple. No man of discrimination with an awakened intellect would need a greater argument to *persuade* him to give up the blind ritualistic path. The *karmas* are limited on all sides. If *agnihotra* is not followed by a strict adherence to all the above-mentioned subsidiary acts of charity and kindness, seasonal rituals and self-discipline, in itself it can, not only not give its promised blessing, but "it shall", says the learned master of the Upanishad, "destroy the seven worlds of the performer".

The seven worlds can be considered as the seven generations; three ancestors and three descendants, and himself. Thus, a ritualistic *karma*, not done properly, would have consequences not only upon oneself but upon one's own father, grandfather and great-grandfather and upon one's own son, grandson, and great-grandson!!!

In short, the Upanishad is severely emphasising the drudgery of rules in ritualism and is trying to win the disciple away from all desire-prompted *karmas*. Only when the mind and the intellect have thus totally renounced their desires and their preoccupation with the desire-prompted action, can we hope then to meditate upon and rise above into the subtler worlds of constructive meditation.

At the same time, I must add that to you and me the *karmas*, as they are now available for us are *very, very* important. Selfless service, *japa*, *puja*, *sandhya*, meditation, etc., are very important to a seeker in his early stages of preparation. It is only through these *karmas* that one gains a well-integrated personality.

It is only then that he comes to feel the cumbersome brutalities of the rigid rules of ritualism. A temple fulfils itself successfully in a *bhakta* when he comes to enquire upon the nature of godhood, the nature of himself, the structure of the world and the relationship between these three. At this moment the integrated personality of the *bhakta* though physically standing in front of the sanctum sanctorum, has grown to such a stature that he no longer can be contained within the confines of any Gopuram, Steeple or Dome.

काली कराली च मनोजवा च सुलोहिता या च सुधूम्रवर्णा ।  
स्फुलिङ्गिनी विश्वरुची च देवी लेलायमाना इति सप्त जिह्वाः ॥ ४ ॥

*Kali Karālī cha Manojava cha Sulohitha Yacha Sudhumra-  
varna | Sphulingini Viswaruchi Cha Devi Lelayamana Ithi  
Sapta Jihwaha ||* (4)

The seven flickering tongues of flames are : *Kali* (the black one), *karali* (the terrific one) *manojawa* (the swift-as-mind one), *sulohitha* (the deep-red one), *sudhumravarna* (the smoke-coloured) *sphulingini* (the sparkling), and *viswaruchi*,\* (the variegated one).

The real import and the significance of the various classification and types of flames discussed herein have no parallel in modern science, since the Western world has not taken fire as a topic of enquiry. And yet, to some extent, we know the different areas in a candle-flame discussed in elementary physics-texts. Whether there are any special significances attached to these different types of flames or not, it is not within our knowledge today to declare. However, in this *mantra* we can find not only the scientific approach, but also

\* There is another reading *Viswa-roopi*—of all forms. This is not as happy as the reading we have accepted.

the thoroughness with which the ancient *Rishis* dealt with their topics. The *mantra* is a clear example where science allied with literature begets a knowledge divinely glorious. The terms used for the different kinds of flames have a beauty of their own in their very sound.

Vedic period was a time prior to the beauty embodiments, as in Rama or in Krishna. A seeker who was in the “workshop of spiritualism” had to learn his early meditations upon the different types and kinds of flames that rose from the sacrificial fire during *Yagnyas* and *Yagas*. The fire, you must remember, was the idol of the Vedic period to worship at, and to concentrate upon. It is by concentrating upon the different flames that the Upanishad-students of that Golden age of Hinduism sharpened their minds and intellects to soar to the deathless glory of Vedic perfections and knowledge.

एतेषु यश्चरते भ्राजमानेषु यथाकालं चाहृतयो ह्याददायन् ।  
तं नयन्त्येताः सूर्यस्य रश्मयो यत्र देवानां पतिरेकोऽधिवासः ॥ ॥ ५ ॥

*Yetheshu Yascharathae Bhraajamaneshu Yadhakalam  
Chahuthayo Hyadadayan | Thamnayan-Tyethah Suryasya Rasmayo  
Yatra Devanam Pathireko-Adhivasah ||* (5)

He who offers oblations in proper time into these shining flames,— him the oblations, as sun’s rays, lead to the place where the one lord of the gods (*Indra*) resides.

Earlier, the Upanishad pointed out the strict rule governing the eternal promises of *Karma kanda* or the ritualistic portion of the Veda. Now, this stanza explains that when one has strictly followed, as per all the rules, the *rituals* advocated, he will be the archangel to guide the departed soul to the realms of its

experiences, its own fruits and actions. The scripture says that the very 'ahuti'—potency, in the form of a sun's ray would guide the subtle body. The stanza, without the necessary background for it, would read as though it is some fantastic story, believed by "a humanity at its childhood". The Western readers of our scriptures have often come to this hasty conclusion ; and our young intellects shaped and stamped out in the mill of Western education, will also indulge in parrot-like repetition of these erroneous and absurd conclusions.

Philosophically the sun stands not for the self-effulgent, ever-burning, hot-orb of the heavens, around which the planets and stars make their endless pilgrimage, but it represents the total effects of all the *karmas* done by the entire living generation in the world at a particular period of time. In a very striking manner, this idea has been exhaustively discussed in *Chandogya Upanishad*, during the discussion there on the *Suryopasana* or meditations on the Sun.

There is nothing revolting in this idea ; only we are not accustomed to this novel definition, which is, in fact, nothing but an extension and an amplification of the knowledge we already possess. Our limited knowledge on the behaviour of nature, climatic conditions, etc., has given us enough data to believe that the sun in the heaven is the unquestioned controller of the life on this globe. *Loka* means a field of experiences. If the sun were a few yards away from us or if he is a few yards nearer to us, you all know, what a total revolution it would make on the geographical features of the globe, the climatic situations in the world, and therefore, also the very quality and quantity of the living world upon this globe. Each one of us,

according to the pregnant law of *karma*, is here commissioned to live through and exhaust the fruits of his own actions. In order to live completely and fully the reactions of all *karmas*, done by everyone of us, we must have a world, constituted and planned exactly as it is now. We have already found that the conditions here on the globe are controlled and maintained by the position, intensity, and nature of the sun. Thus, philosophically, sun is but "a bundle of the total fruits of actions". I know the very novelty of this idea will make it slightly difficult for you to swallow it in one gulp. Think independently on this idea, in small mouthfuls, and you can easily digest it fully and completely.

If the sun be thus 'a bundle of our own *karma phalas*,' then, in the greatest of all philosophical text-books the *Upanishads*, the *Rishis* have naturally the right to make use of the idioms and expressions, as they have used in this stanza. In the light of the above, the 'ahuti', in the form the sun's ray, guiding the performer to the realms, where he could enjoy the fruits of his actions, is perfectly scientific and divinely poetic. 'Ray of the sun' would then be a term denoting the very 'good mental impressions', created in the minds of the performer doing the conscious and devoted good actions.

Death is but a total and permanent divorce between the gross body and its subtle content. The mind and the intellect equipment constituting the subtle body, renounces once for all, its claim on a given structure of matter and with reference to that inert matter-envelopment, we say, it is dead. For example, friends, let us all for a moment mentally go from this *Yagna Sala* to China Bazaar. Everyone of you can picture yourself,

moving in the platforms of the crowded bazaar. It is not merely a feeling ; the feeling is well protected by your reasoning capacity. Partially, now you are ‘ dead ’ to the *Yagnasala*.

Now, let us enter wherever we like mentally in that bazaar.....(pause).....Surely, all of us could not have gone mentally to one and the same shop in China Bazaar. One of you might have gone to a book-stall, another to a shoe shop, and still another to a cloth-shop, and myself to a coffee-house, and the ladies all must have gone to the saree-shop.

Every one of us had the freedom to walk into any shop there. What decided in each one that we must go only to that shop we each had gone ? For example, I myself could have gone to the saree-shop as freely as I walked into the coffee-house, and yet, the natural way in which I walked into the coffee-house, had been very powerful, and probably, even a battalion of horses could not have dragged me then to the *saree-shop*. What could have been the force of compulsion in me that dragged me among all the places to the coffee-house ? It could not have been that some other “ total force ” forced me to go there — no destiny intervened between me and my action ! It was nothing but my own mental rut, which gave me a definite turn to my own present thoughts, dragged me to the gates of the coffee-house, irresistibly necked me in, and provided for myself an imaginary cup of strong coffee !!

Similarly, a very sacred act, performed with deep sincerity, moulds the performer’s mental structure and *vasana* contents. This is so beautifully explained in this stanza, when the *Rishi* says, that the very *ahuti*, in the form of the sun’s ray, leads him to the lord of the *devas* ;—

this term also needs a background-understanding of the *vedantic prakriya*. Each sense-organ is believed by the *Sastras* to be presided over by one *Devata* (Element). Thus, they say that the eye is presided over by the sun; the ears, by the space. A modern educated man, even when he is sincere, may come to despair at these antiquated ideas expressed in such a seemingly unscientific language. But, it is all because we fail to understand the style of the *Upanishad* or the scientific background of these expressions.

It is well-known that the organ of vision, the eye, or the sense-organ of sound, the ear, cannot function, unless they are brought into play in a medium of light or space. If the Light-Principle were not in the world, we would not be able to make use of the instrument called the 'eyes'; for, the 'eye' can see forms only when the forms are in a medium of light. If the world is eternally in darkness, the entire humanity would have been blind although we may have the organ of vision.

Similarly, we know the scientific fact that sound can be made only in a medium of space. If there were no space, we could not make sound; and if sound were not, we would have no object to be illumined by the ear, and so, the organ of sound can function only when it is presided over and blessed by the element "space" (*akasa*).

Thus, each *indriya* has its own *devata*, meaning, that it has its own necessary condition to function. These presiding deities are called as 'devatas' or 'devas', in Sanskrit terminology. This term *Deva* has in the scriptural language something like seven different connotations; all of them almost identical; and yet, they have, among them, some subtle distinctions. Thus



*Deva* means : (a) He who shines ; gives light ; (b) He who bestows wealth ; (c) He who causes good health ; (d) He who shows the path ; (e) He who makes others shine ; (f) He who sends out music ; (g) He who imparts Knowledge and Wisdom. In the *Veda Vani* of Prof. S. K. Gupta it is very interesting to read the different meanings of *Devatha*.

We also know that the mind, in its functions of reception and correlation, is the ruling and governing factor of all the sense-organs. In that sense, the scripture accepts the mind as the king of the *indriyas* and naturally, its presiding deity becomes none other than *Indra*, the king of gods. Briefly then, the *mantra* means the conscious actions, performed with a deep desire to gain the fruits thereof, develop the necessary traits and impressions in the mental plane. That the outward actions leave a clear trail upon the mental stuff, seems to be a hint suggested by the secret meaning of this sacred *mantra*, when it is expressed in terms of our modern science and our university vocabulary.

एह्येहीति तमाहुतयः सुवर्चसः सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिर्यजमानं वहन्ति ।  
प्रियां वाचामभिवदन्त्योऽर्चयन्त्य एष वः पुण्यः सुकृतो ब्रह्मलोकः ॥ ६ ॥

*Yehyehithi Thamahutayah Suvarchasah Suryasya Rasmihiriyajamanam Vahanthi | Priyam Vachamabhivadanthyo Archayantya Yesha Vah Punnyah Sukritho Brahma Lokah. (6)*

‘ Come hither, come hither ’, the brilliant oblations say unto him and carry the sacrificer through the rays of the sun addressing to him the pleasant words of praise. “ This is the holy worlds of *Brahman* gained by thy good works ”.

We follow here the same analogy as in the last *mantra*, and the oblations, through the *vasanas* created

by them, " the rays of the sun " literally usher in the worshipper to the world of his enjoyments. In China Bazaar, you reached the saree-shop or I entered the coffee-house, invited by our individual *vasanas*. Similarly, the *vasanas* created in the mind of the performer of the *Yagna*, as it were, guide him after his death to fix his identity with such a form under such a team of circumstances, wherein his total experience would be the exact enjoyment of the fruits of the oblation.

प्लवा ह्येते अदृढा यज्ञरूपा अष्टादशोक्तमवरं येषु कर्म ।  
एतच्छ्रेयो येऽभिनन्दन्ति मूढां जरामृत्युं ते पुनरेवापि यन्ति ॥ ॥ ७ ॥

*Plava Hyaethae Adruddha Yagna Roopa Ashta Dasokta —  
Mavaram Yesu Karma | Yethath-chhreyo Ye-Abhinandanthi  
Mooddhah Jaramrithyum Thae Punarevapi yanthi. (7)*

Undependable is this boat of *Yagna*, manned by eighteen supporters on whom depend the lower ceremonials. Those ignorant persons who delight in this as the highest, are subject, again and again, to old age and death.

Rituals have certainly a place in the technique of self-perfection. They are means to a greater end. But, a majority of Hindus have come to confuse the means to be the fulfilment in themselves. They refuse to rise higher than the rituals, and *Mother Sruthi* is here mercilessly whipping such ignorant devotees to greater endeavour and higher achievements.

Eighteen supporters of *Yagna* are constituted of the sixteen priests (*rithvics*) along with the householder (*yajaman*) and his wife. These eighteen are important limbs in some kind of rituals, which are performed with some given set of selfish desires. Please note that all *karmas*, at all times, in all instances, need not have a householder with a wife to preside over it.

As though not satisfied with merely condemning

such a blind ritualistic fervour in the ignorant fanatics, *Sruthi*, in all kindness, is courting their imagination by threatening them with unending sorrows, in case they refuse to lift their moorings and sail out into the open seas of adventure seeking the self-discovery. She says that, however great the ritual, and however strictly it has been performed, the performer can only hope a comparative success and can reach, at best, only a mid-station in his voyage to Truth. He may gain a more intenser life of acuter happiness in the subtler planes of consciousness, called in the scriptures as the 'higher worlds', such as the Heaven, *Satyaloka* or *Brahmaloka*. But, whatever be one's status and position in the Heaven, it is only a sojourn there ; not an eternal assertion of the immortal Godhood, and as such, the performer of the ritualistic rules, after having enjoyed the heavenly joys, as the fruits of his great and meritorious actions, will have to come back to the mortal coil. Hence, the *Sruthi* says, "again to old age and death". Birth, growth, disease, decay and death are the five great changes that provide the main categories of pain in life. Here, the Upanishad, by mentioning "Old age and death", means all the five modifications in the pain-riddled life of an ordinary man.

अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितं मन्यमानाः ।

जङ्घन्यमानाः परियन्ति मूढाः अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः ॥ ॥ ८ ॥

*Avidyayam Antharae Varthamanah Swayam Dheerah*  
*Panditham Manyamanah | Janghanya-Manah Pariyanthi*  
*Mooddhah Andhenaiva Neeyamana Yadhandhah. (8)*

Ignorant beings (gloating) in the midst of ignorance, but fancying themselves to be wise and learned, go round and round oppressed and miserable, as blind people when led by the blind.

The very scheme of this section is to laugh at fanatical ritual-mongers, and to win those individuals, in whom ritualism has fulfilled, back to the greater endeavours in higher meditations. *Sruthi* has pointed out the enormous responsibility of a ritualist and the terrible difficulty in performing a *Yagna* properly, strictly to the prescription given by the *Vedas*. Not being satisfied with these, the *Sruthi* here, out of her extreme love for mankind, pities and laughs at those who have allowed themselves to be shackled in the little world of desire-prompted actions. The sincerity of *Mother Sruthi* becomes evident beyond all doubt, when we find the same *mantra* repeated\* in *Kathopanishad* and in *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

We must not forget that this *Sruthi*, at the same time, belongs to the *Veda*, and the *Vedas* being eternal knowledge, shall not suffer any contradiction. In the earlier part of the *Vedas*, viz., in the *Karma Kanda*, there is a sincere advocacy of the performance of the *Karmas*; later on, in the *Upanishadic* portion, we find in stanzas like these, a vehement condemnation of the same. This would look as though it is a palpable contradiction; but it is not.

When your son is in the elementary classes, you have to insist that the child should daily read and learn the multiplication table. But, when he has come to the standard of pure mathematics, it would be absurd if you are to insist that he should yet read and learn every day the multiplication-table, even during his post-graduate-studies! In the primary classes, arithmetic-tables were to him, certainly, his bible, but in the college-classes, it is redundant, inasmuch as, the

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\* For further elucidation on this *mantra* refer Discourses on *Kathopanishad* I, II, 5.

student by then has amassed the knowledge. Similarly, rituals have an elementary purpose, without which nothing higher is possible ; but to continue wasting the entire life in mere ritualism, would be a terrible wastage, and hence, *Sruthi* is crying down such wasteful policies, in spiritual *sadhaks*.

अविद्यायां बहुधा वर्तमानाः वयं कृतार्था इत्यभिमन्यन्ति बालाः ।  
यत् कर्मिणो न प्रवेदयन्ति रागात् तेनातुराः क्षीणलोकाश्च्यवन्ते ॥ ९ ॥

*Avidyayam Bahudha Varthamanah Vayam Krithartha  
Ithyabhimanyanti Balah | Yatkarmino Na Pravedayanti Ragath  
Thenathurah Kshecnaloka-Schyavantae ||* (9)

Engrossed in the ways of the ignorant, these people childishly think that they have gained the end of life. But being subject to passions and attachment, they never attain Knowledge, and, therefore, they fall down wretched, when the fruits of their good deeds are exhausted.

This stanza is again a repetition for the purpose of emphasis. She is not angry in the ordinary sense of the term. Her anger is like the anger of a Mother, when her child has not succeeded in life, as she had planned him to. Here the actual word, ‘*balah*’ (children) is used, while mentioning the blind followers of ritualism. In her endless love for the generation, she cannot stand the sight of even one single soul, wandering in the jungles, having lost his way. In this stanza we must hear only the love-call of the *Mother Sruthi* to those who missed the way, to come back to the grand road to Truth.

To such seekers ritualism is but a market-place, where they pay the price to get the thing that they want. Prompted by desires, and wishing to pacify them by fulfilling them, they perform the *karmas*, as advised in

the *Vedas*. We have already seen in the beginning, how desires only multiply as each desire gets fulfilled, unless the sources of the eruption of desires is dried up or choked. Why such learned *pandits*, in spite of their great knowledge, should till death, waste their time, energy and attention only in performing *karmas* and not dare to go beyond the planes of this initial spiritual training, is explained in this *mantra* by the epithet ' *Ragath* '.

It is desire, as we have seen, that generates the flow of thoughts in the mind, and it is again the quality, texture, quantity and the direction in which the thoughts flow, that determine the actions. Thus, the *Karma* cannot be where desires have ended. Thoughts cannot end where desires have not ceased. Where thoughts are bubbling, there the mind must be gross with its dense power. Therefore, *manonasa*, annihilation of the mind, is possible only when desires are annihilated. This is equal to saying that these men, wise, energetic, devoted, and sincere, when in them ritualism has fulfilled itself, pursue this wrong path of wasteful stupidity, only because of the germs of desires that still breed in their hearts. Now the diagnosis is complete ; and the cure is suggested by the scriptures. In every religion in the world is one and the same way, namely, to be intelligently discriminative and poignantly awareful of the world of objects. In the following *mantras*, we have the prescription given out by the *Mother Sruthi* herself.

इष्टापूर्तं मन्यमाना वरिष्ठं नान्यच्छ्रेयो वेदयन्ते प्रमूढाः ।

नाकस्य पृष्टे ते सुकृतेऽनुभूत्वेमं लोकं हीनतरं वा विशन्ति ॥ ॥ १० ॥

*Ishtha Poortham Manyamana Varishtam Nanya-chchreyo  
Vedayanthae Pramooddhah | Nakasya Prishtae Thae Sukrithae  
Anubhoo-Twaemam Lokam Heenatharam Va Visanthi. (10)*

These ignorant men, regarding sacrificial and charitable acts as most important, do not know any other way to Bliss. Having enjoyed in the heights of Heaven, the abode of pleasures, they enter again into this or even inferior worlds.

Never was the world without this bitter controversy between the two principles of life, namely, laborious, extrovert action and peaceful introvert seeking. *Karma* and *Gyana* have been at tug-of-war, unbroken at all times, and this endless controversy itself, we may say, was the main motive-force, which gave *Hinduism* such a perfect and tight science of spiritualism. In the history of the world also, we find that periods of *karma*, yielding place to periods of *Gyana* which, in its turn, give place to *Karma* again. We are now living in an age of *Karma* and that is why we find a general cry against life of retirement and renunciation.

Today, the so-called educated class, in their spiritual illiteracy, cry down the very vital life of meditation, because, with their Mint-house-intellect and Bank-Hearts, they read nothing but their own Cheque-Book-scriptures, and their own sins come to haunt them. Naturally, they cannot understand any life more happy than the life of sighs, tears and sweat. That desire-prompted actions alone constitute life, was a theory as old as the scriptures and this is evident from the *mantra* in the *sruthi*. But, that advocacy of the greater life of meditation is also equally old, is seen in the very fact that the very *Sruthi* is condemning here the life of desire-prompted actions and is advising a greater life in higher meditation.

Meritorious acts are divided into two groups by our ancient *Rishis* on the basis of the text-book that allows it. These noble acts of spiritual merit, advocated

in the *Sruthis* called ' *ishtam* ', constituted the *Yagnas* and *Yagas* ; and those prescribed in the *Smrithis* constituted the digging of a well, opening a path, building of *dharmasala*, feeding the poor, tending the sick, helping education, etc., which is called ' *poortham* '.

The Upanishads say that one should be a colossal fool to claim that these and these alone constitute the supreme-most act of Divinity, and that there is nothing superior to it. This condemnation of the scriptures is because the meritorious acts of both the categories, in their reactions, only provide for us a subtler field of experiences, called the "Heavens". One who has thus gained the "Heavens", as a result of the meritorious acts performed by him here below, will have one day, on exhausting the merit-balance against him, to return back to the lower planes of consciousness, where pain and struggle, failures and successes, appointments and disappointments, loss and gain, death and birth, etc., can be his experience.

*Nakasya*—This word is being used here in a peculiar etymological meaning of it. *Kam* means, in Sanskrit, 'Bliss'; *a-kam* naturally means, then, 'pain'; *na+a-kam*—*nakam* : meaning, that state where pain is unknown. There is a particular reason why *Mother Sruthi* has specially chosen this word to point out the Heavens. She wants us to understand that, though in Heaven there are none of the pains of mortal life, it is only a relative happiness there. The denizens in Heaven, including the *Vaikunta Narayana* are creatures in pain, compared with the Absolute State of Perfection which is the theme of the *Upanishads*. And hence *Mother Sruthi* refuses to define it as a positive place of happiness, but only says that it is a plane of existence where the soul-killing sorrows of life are not present.



In this *mantra*, we have also a positive declaration against the optimistic view, held by some of our *pandits*, including some of the most sympathetic *gurus*. According to them, having once got the form of man, that ego can never go down to any lower plane of existence, whatever be his actions in life. This idea is being blasted into smithereens in this *mantra*. It is also noteworthy here, that a man can, as a result of his vicious, deliberate criminality, come *down*\* upon the ladder of evolution to the existence of even a miserable worm in a dust-bin! In this particular *mantra*, it is said that having enjoyed the fruits of all meritorious acts, the ego-centre may enter again “ this world or a lower one ”.

तपःश्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्षचर्या चरन्तः ।  
सूर्यद्वारेण ते विरजाः प्रयान्ति यत्रामृतः स पुरुषो ह्यव्ययात्मा ॥ ॥ ११ ॥

*Thapah Sradhae Ye Hyupavasant Yaranya Santa Vidwanso  
Bhaikshacharyam Charantah | Suryadwarena the Virajah Pra-  
yanthi Yatramrithah Sa Purusho Hyavyayathma || (11)*

But they who perform *tapas* and *sradha* in the forest, having control over their senses, learned and living the life of a mendicant, go through the orb of the sun, their good and bad deeds consumed, to where the immortal and undecaying *Purusha* is.

Comparing the slaves of ritualism with the men of realisation, *Sruthi* is bringing forth the glory of *Sanyas* to the forefront by this *mantra*. She says that those who perform *karmas* with the desire-born motives reach only temporary joys, from where they will have to come back to this painful finite world of mortality.

\* Refer Discourses on Kathopanishad by Swamiji. It is repeated in Kathopanishad also V-7.

On the other hand, those rare few who have gained the required spirit of renunciation, and who have retired into the life of meditation in solitude, depending for their existence only upon help reaching them in unexpected chances—to them, *Sruthi* promises a perfect success.

*Suryadwarena* (through the path of the sun) : The route taken by the subtle body after its death in the world are of two kinds : (a) the *moon-path* and (b) the *sun-path*. The *sun-path* is called the *Uttarayana* and the *moon-path* the *Dakshinayana*. It is the theory of *Vedanta* that those who merely perform *karmas*, on departing from here, take to the southern path to live in the *Pitruloka* ; and enjoying there for an interval, they come back ; (b) those who, not only perform the *Yagnas* and *Yagas*, but along with them, also meditate upon the great Truth of our philosophy (*i.e.* those who perform *Karma* and *Upasana*), at death, leave the body and take the northern route and, through the corridors of the sun, go beyond and enter the *Brahmaloka*, the supreme-most world of the Creator. There, these lucky souls not only live a life of the highest joy, but also attend to the great discourses given out to them by *Brahmaji*, the first Guru of *Brahmavidya*. It is a belief that they, along with the Creator, at the end of the *Yuga*, during the *pralaya*, get merged with the Supreme Absolute Awareness. This method of liberation is technically called ‘*krama mukthi*’ (or a gradual liberation). But, as far as a *Gyani* is concerned, as in the case of a Buddha, a Sankara, a Ramakrishna Paramahansa, a Ramana, an Aurobindo, there is no going and coming ; they reach what is called as ‘*kaivalya mukthi*’ (pure liberation) or *Sadyo mukti* (immediate liberation).

परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान् ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन ।  
तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणि श्रोत्रीयं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ॥

॥ १२ ॥

*Pareekshya Lokan Karmachithan Brahmano Nirvedamayana-  
nastyakritah, Kritena | Thad Vignanartham Sa Gurumevabhi  
Gachath Samith Panih Srotriyam Brahmanishtam ॥ (12)*

Let a *Brahmana* (an aspirant), after he has examined the worlds gained by *Karma*, acquire freedom from all desires, reflecting that nothing that is eternal can be gained by *Karma*. Let him, in order to obtain the Knowledge of the Eternal, take sacrificial fuel (*Samit*) in his hands and approach that preceptor alone who is versed in the *Vedas* and is established in *Brahman*.

If, as *Sruthi* says that *Yagnas*, *Yagas* and such other rituals cannot in themselves take a seeker to the Supreme state, it is natural that a burning aspirant would wonder what he is to do. Here, in this *mantra*, the duties of a true seeker in whom the rituals have fulfilled themselves, are explained.

*Brahmana* :—It is a tragedy of the decadent Hinduism that this divine word of sacred meaning has come to be misinterpreted and put to endless abuses. Today we have come to believe that *Brahmin* means the son of a *Brahmin*. This interpretation was recognised to some extent, even in the time of Sankara, because of the efficient hold of the *Sanathana Dharma*-scheme of living, which the *Brahmins* then strictly followed. But, once we have fallen away from those values of pure living, we have deteriorated in our culture to such an extent that today no *Agraharam* can, with any sense of propriety to the *Sruthi* declarations, claim *Brahmin-hood*.

The qualities required in a true *Brahmin* are not physical ; they are, to an extent, mental ; to a larger degree, intellectual ; and in the main, spiritual. He

who has all these qualities—purity of thought, clarity of reasoning, sincerity of motives and an insatiable eagerness to realise that spiritual fulness—whether he be in a butcher's seat or in front of a sacrificial fire, whether he be in a *puja-room* or in a railway station, whether he be on the Ganges-banks or on the bazaar streets, he is a true *Brahmin* in the scriptural sense of the term. In short, the word *Brahmin* means a full grown and fully evolved human being who is sensitive enough to feel an urge for a greater existence and is continuously striving to gain it.

Such a *Brahmin* is being advised by the *Sruthi* here, to examine ruthlessly the various fields of results that they can gain, due to the ritualistic acts of piety and ceremony. *Mother Sruthi*, here, is directing the attention of such an enquirer to consider whether he can ever gain the 'unmade' through any known methods of 'making'.

The idea is that *moksha* is not and cannot be the result of any action performed ; for, in that case, like a pot made by a pot-maker, *moksha* also will be a perishable state. The Eternal should be and is ever the unborn ; for, all that are born must necessarily die. When a clearer-thinking intellect thus measures the benefits of ritualism, it becomes clear to him that they are not worth the trouble. And hence he becomes uninterested in the greater joys promised in the higher abodes. Thereafter the seeker shall have a thirst to know only That Knowledge, "*knowing which everything else becomes known*".

In order to know That, in order to realise the Self, the scripture advises that a *Brahmin* must approach a *Guru*.

In this *Mantra*, we get the clearest definition of a

perfect *Guru*. It is noteworthy that nowhere else in the bulk of our scriptures have we such a complete and exhaustive definition of a *Guru*.

A *Guru* should have two great qualifications : (a) a mastery over the entire scriptural literature and (b) a complete personal experience of the Absolute Reality.

This does not mean that we must despair at the thought that we have no mastery over the scriptural knowledge and, therefore, we shall never come to realise the Highest. In order to realise the Self, a mastery of the scripture is not necessary. It is only to become a *Jagat Guru* that we need this education. There are very many realised saints in our sacred land even today who have plunged into silence ; they have no words to express the Inexpressible. *Sruthi* alone is the mighty magical instrument by which the Inexpressible is at least to some extent expressed.

Conversely, we also get hundreds of *pandits*, erudite in their scholarship and perfect in their knowledge of the *Vedas*. They could give us readily the exact word-meaning of any portion of the scripture and give learned discourses on any chapter or verse. And yet, they cannot serve the world as Teachers, leading and guiding their generation, and bringing even a pencil of light into their lives' darkness. These *pandits*, though learned in *Sruthi*, are not educated in the culture of the *Upanishads*.

Thus, a teacher is he who has a thorough knowledge of the science of religion which is in the *Upanishads* and is one who is also rooted in his own subjective experience of that plane of consciousness which is indicated by the *Sruthi*. Such a Master alone can convincingly propagate the *Sruthi* and kindle the enthusiasm of the youth to brave the difficulties and stand the challenges of life, till he slowly reaches the

Eternal goal of life.

*Samidhanih* :—Here is a bit of instruction to the perfect student on how he must approach the Teacher. In olden days, the practice was to carry a bundle of (*Samit*) fuel, or it may be Neem-twigs (used for brushing the teeth) as a symbol of the disciple's readiness to surrender totally to the Master and tune himself through continuous and tireless service. Somewhere, I have seen another interpretation given to this significant sign. According to that author, the twigs may symbolise that the disciple is declaring that he has reached the feet of the *Guru*, after having burnt all his negative impressions, animal tendencies, egoistic vanities and foolish attachment with the sense-world.

Whatever it is, it only indicates that the disciples, in the olden times, sought a Master and reached his feet, not through appointments made by letters or telegrams or telephone-calls! Today, if we are doing so, we are thereby denying to ourselves the maximum benefit which we could otherwise gain out of these Masters, by repeating the old practice and approaching them in that attitude of surrender and true seeking.

तस्मै स विद्वानुपसन्नाय सम्यक् प्रशान्तचित्ताय शमान्विताय ।  
येनाक्षरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम् ॥ १३ ॥  
इति प्रथममुण्डके द्वितीय खण्डः

*Thasmai sa Vidwan Nupasannaya Samyak Prasantha  
Chittaya Samanvithaya | Yenaksharam Purusham Veda Satyam  
Provacha Tham Tathwatho Brahma Vidyam* || (13)

To that pupil who has thus approached him respectfully, whose mind is at rest and whose senses are subdued, let the wise teacher truly teach that *Brahma Vidya* (science of *Brahman*) through which the True Immortal *Purusha* is known.

Here in this stanza, *Sruthi* is giving a direction to the teacher-class. Earlier, she instructed and advised how a true *Brahmin*, having lived intensively the ritualistic life for a long number of years, must come to discriminate the results gained by him ; when he has realised that even *Brahmaloka* is but a subtler form of sorrow and limited perfection, then he should approach a perfect Master for his initiation into the greater secrets of Life.

And, when such a disciple approaches a true *Guru*, here the *Sruthi* dictates that he should explain the Truth, in all its purity, to that student, and consistently encourage him to live that life and reach the goal. A true *Guru* has no right to deny instructing any disciple. But, the disciple also must have the necessary qualifications, such as a complete self-control and a degree of mental tranquillity. To such a disciple, the *Guru* must explain, not merely the word-meaning of the scripture, but also the indicative meaning by which limited words of the scripture explain the inexplicable.

End of Chapter I—Section 2

## Chapter II—Section 1

तदेतत् सत्यं यथा सुदीप्तात् पावकाद्  
विस्फुलिङ्गाः सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः ।  
तथाक्षराद् विविधाः सौम्य भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापि यन्ति ॥ १ ॥

*Thadethat Satyam Yadha Sudeepthath — Pavakath —  
Visphulingah Sahasrasah Prabhavanthe Saroopah | Thadha  
Aksharath — Vividhah Sowmya Bhavah Prajayanthe Thatra  
Chaivapiyanthi ||* (1)

This is true ; as from the flaming fire issue forth, by thousands, sparks of the same form, so from the Immortal proceed, beloved youth, diverse *jivas* and they find their way back into it.

The first chapter gave us a complete picture of the lower knowledge, and *Sruthi*, in order to canvass a true seeker, one in whom the lower rituals have fulfilled themselves, to the folds of a higher knowledge, had there even laughed at ritualism. In this second chapter, the attempt is to paint for us an idea of a Supreme Knowledge with its contents, functions and qualities. The Supreme, being Infinite, will not, and cannot come within the expressiveness of language which is but an expression of the finite. The Infinite cannot be expressed in terms of the finite and yet, no other scripture in the world, we can most assuredly say, has succeeded in pointing out to us the Infinite so successfully as the *Upanishads* have done. Some wondrous expressions pointing to the Infinite and some perfect techniques of explanation are employed in this chapter. In short, we may say that without this chapter *Mundakopanishad* could not have been considered as a scripture at all.



The unprepared Western readers invariably feel confused and confounded, when they directly take up the study of the Hindu scriptures without the aid of a true Master. The opening stanza of this chapter gives us an example wherein an uninitiated would feel an ever-lasting confusion. In the previous section, the *Sruthi* asserted\* that the ritualistic part of religion is the truth. Now, in this chapter, *Sruthi* with equal emphasis is declaring : “ This is the Truth ”—the theme of Supreme Consciousness, which lies beyond all the fields of ritualism. This kind of emphasis, asserting at one point that ritualism is the Supreme and within the same *Upanishad* asserting with equal emphasis that philosophy is the supreme, sends the Westerner screaming mad, and he throws up the sacred text and declares, “ Hinduism is madness systematized ”. The educated Hindus, nurtured and nourished upon these poisonous Western criticisms, also come to repeat with a parrot-like faithfulness the same opinion. Thus, the more educated a Hindu is, the less he has any respect for his own Bible !

There is no contradiction at all here to those who know the technique of the *Sruthi*. The *Rishis* of the *Upanishads* first insisted that ritualism alone is the Supreme, in order to encourage a seeker to go through those initial techniques in self-perfection. Having lived a few years in sincere ritualism the seeker develops his mental and intellectual integration, and then becomes fit for philosophical contemplation and higher meditation. If from the very outset, *Sruti* had declared that ritualism is a subsidiary activity, certainly no seeker would have gone through it, but would have straight-away walked into the halls of meditation only to sit and

\* Refer *Ibid.* 34, Mundakopanishad I, 2-1.

sleep. To avert this calamity, out of sheer kindness, *Sruti* is thus encouraging the rituals.

In the previous chapter, a very complete and broad hint has been given defining the field of the higher knowledge. Out of that formless, Eternal, Unborn, Pure Consciousness, how this finite, mortal, limited, individuals have emerged, would be the greatest of problems in the heart of a seeker. No seeker who comes to seriously enquire into the what and how of the names and forms that he sees around him, can choke this doubt in his mind. There must be some relationship between the Infinite and the finite, since, according to the declarations of the *Upanishads*, the finite is nothing other than the Infinite. An incomparably beautiful and inimitably complete analogy is used here to explain this relationship. The individual is nothing but the Supreme itself inasmuch as the individual, has risen from It, exists in It, and merges back into It. The example of a spark from a big fire is made use of here. The spark has risen from the fireplace, and it floats about and around the very same fireplace — not very far away — and when it has exhausted itself in eating up the material, the ash is thrown out, and the fire in the spark disappears ; and since it cannot go anywhere else, it merges with the very fire in the fireplace.

It is a theory in philosophy, accepted in scientific observations also, that an effect can only perish to become the cause ; the tree dies away to become the tree ; water, when decomposed, becomes but hydrogen and oxygen ; a physical structure made up of the five elements rots to become nothing but the five elements ; all ornaments made of gold can change only to become a mass of gold. Similarly, a spark of fire riding on a

little matter, seems to have wandered away from the main fireplace and exists as such only during such time as it has not finished away with its eating up of the matter. It is only a conditioned fire that comes out as a spark and the spark exists only so long as the conditioning exists. When the consumable matter has been reduced to a speck of ash, the fire-essence in the spark rolls back into the total fire in the fireplace.

Similarly, an individual seems to exist, exhibiting all the qualities of a reality, only so long as the conditioning is not eaten up. A *Jiva* is born only to burn up his fruits-of-actions, and when this is accomplished, the body falls down to perish and the Spark-of-life rolls back to merge with the Total Life.

दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः सबाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः ।

अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो ह्यक्षरात् परतः परः ॥      ॥ २ ॥

*Divyo Hyamoorthah Purusha Sa Bahya Bhyantharo  
Hyajah | Aprano Hyamanah Subhro Hyaksharath Parathah  
Para ||* (2)

Self-resplendent, formless, unoriginated and pure, that all-pervading Being is both within and without, anterior both to life and mind ; He transcends even the transcendent, unmanifested, causal-state of the universe.

If all names and forms are nothing but sparks of that Spirit riding over specks of matter seemingly consuming it, then, what is the exact nature of the pure Spirit? This would certainly be the question that will arise in the mind of every consistent seeker. An attempt at Its definition, descriptive enough to give a direct clue to any sensitive aspirant, is being made here in this *mantra*. He is a mass of light without any form ; not a tapering light, not an orb of light, not a pinnacle

of light—but light without shape, light without form, in short, as Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa has put it, “ It is a Light without any of its qualities ”. Consciousness expresses itself in the awareness we are capable of. When we say that we are aware of any object, feeling or idea, we mean that that object feeling or idea is in a beam of light emanating from us and illumining it for us. Thus the life-spark in us, with reference to its manifestation as awareness in us, the *Sruti* is describing as ‘ *Divya* ’.

From what we have said, it is possible that we may conclude that the Self is a limited speck within ourselves only. In order to remove the misunderstanding, the *Sruti* explains that this Self is equally within and without, and life is possible only in a medium of Truth. This All-pervading light of wisdom should naturally be unborn, since it is eternal.

This All-pervading Reality is described here as without *Prana* and without mind as a driver has no car or even a part of a car in his physical anatomy, mental structure, intellectual apparatus or spiritual personality. And yet, the car cannot and will not move without the driver. Similarly, the Pure Consciousness, the Self, has neither the mind nor *Prana* and yet, neither of them can function without the Pure and the Greater than the Great.

The Supreme is pure because it is but the illuminator of both purity and impurity. The sun neither gains the merits of an *Yagna* performed in his light nor does he gather to himself the sins of a murder committed in his rays ! The sun is but the illuminator of both good and bad actions performed in the daylight. Similarly, Pure Consciousness is eternal and pure, in the sense that our variegated sins have no direct contact

with it. It is said that the Supreme is Greater than the Great only to emphasize the all-pervasiveness of the Pure Consciousness which, in its turn, emphasizes Its supreme, subtle, nature. In saying that the Consciousness pervades it, *Sruti* means that even when the world of names and forms is in a state of unmanifested condition, it exists only in Consciousness.

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।

खं वायुर् ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥ ॥ ३ ॥

*Ethasmath Jayathæ Prano Manah Sarvendriyani ca |*  
*Kham Vayurjyothiraph Prithivi Viswasya Dharini ||* (3)

From Him are born the *Prana* (life), the mind, all the organs, *Akasa*, the wind, the fire, the water and the earth which supports all.

From the Supreme reality, explained in the previous *Mantra*, was created the entire world, knowable and knowing objects. Thus here, we have the enumeration explaining that the five elements, the ten senses, the *Prana* and the mind came out of *Brahman*. It is a *Sastric* declaration that the form-quality of creation has come out of seventeen *Tatwas*. Also, it declares that the entire world of activity (*Prana*), of feelings (*Mind*), of cognition (*sense-organs*), and the outer world of the great *Five Elements* have all the same source in the Eternal Reality as explained in the previous *Mantra*. In case the Pure Existence, *viz.*, the Reality, is removed from created world, we shall find the observed world of plurality, dwindling itself into nothingness or non-existence.

In *Vedanta*, this idea is explained by means of an analogy of a piece of cloth in which some patterns and forms are woven in by the same thread as of the cloth.

So long as the cloth is observed as such, the names and forms represented in it are true and real. But when we draw out the thread we find that all the names and forms merge themselves to form a bundle of threads ; and if the threads are unwound, nothing remains but a quantity of cotton. In the final analysis, the names and forms on the piece of cloth, including the very cloth-piece, were nothing but a seeming transformation of the cotton-stuff.

Removing all the cotton, neither the cloth nor the pattern can remain. In cotton it exists, out of cotton it has come and into cotton alone can it merge back. Similarly the Pure Consciousness, the Eternal Pure Wisdom is That Knowledge, 'knowing which every other knowledge becomes known' ; out of this Absolute Knowledge has all the world of names and forms emerged out, and in it they exist and into it they merge back. It is, in order to make us understand this single idea in all its pregnant imports, that the Mother *Sruti* has started this section with ever so many *mantras*, each in different ways, expressing this one and the same idea.

अग्निर् मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्रसूर्यौ दिशः श्रोत्रे वाग् विवृताश्च वेदाः ।  
वायुः प्राणो हृदयं विश्वमस्य पद्भ्यां पृथिवी ह्येष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ॥

॥ ४ ॥

*Agnirmoordha Chakshushee Chandra Suryow Disah Srotra  
Vaguvrithascha Vedah. Vayuh Prano Hrudayam Viswamasya  
Padbhyam Pridhivi Hyesha Sarva-Bhoothan-tarathma. (4)*

Heaven (sky) is his head ; his eyes, the sun and the moon, the four quarters or directions his ears, his speech, declared *Vedas* ; the wind is his breath ; his mind, the universe ; from his feet came the earth ; he is indeed the inner Self of all beings.\*

\* Refer Discourses on Aitareya Upanishad—I, 1, iv ; and also I ; 2, iv.

Continuing the analogy in the last *mantra*, there will not be any contradiction if we were to describe the cotton as the sum-total shape of all the patterns in the piece of cloth. Here in this *mantra*, we are having a description of the cause in terms of its effects.

Technically the Supreme, identifying with an individual physical structure, as we always do in our waking state of consciousness, is called *Viswa*. And, the reality or the Self, identifying with the entire world of gross forms is, in *Vedanta*, called *Virat*. In this *mantra* is the description of *Virat* form of the formless Reality.

It is the realisation of every great saint or prophet in all religions of the world that the individual separative concept of a self-arrogating ego, is a myth and a false glory. From the beginning to the end, the one continuous labour in *Vedanta*, is to prove to its faithful followers that the microcosm (individual) is nothing other than the macrocosm (the total). Here, this idea is slightly developed in saying, "the heaven is His head, His eyes are the sun and the moon, space His ears," etc. In *Vedanta*, in its own technical language, it says that the eye is presided over by the deity, the Sun; the ear is presided over by the deity, the Quarters. It is such statements that upset the Western reader and their Eastern products, *viz.*, ourselves. When the *Vedanta Sastra* says that the eye is blessed by the grace of the sun, it only means that in a medium of light alone can the eyes function; so too, only in a medium of space can sound travel and only where sounds are, can the ears function. The entire *mantra* is thus the description of the Infinite in terms of the finite.

तस्मादग्निः समिधो यस्य सूर्यः सोमात् पर्जन्य ओषदयः प्रथिव्याम् ।  
पुमान् रेतः सिञ्चति योषितायां बह्वीः प्रजाः पुरुषात् सम्प्रसूताः ॥ ॥ ५ ॥

*Thasmad Agnih Samidho Yasya Suryah Somath parjanya  
Oshadhayah Prithivyam | Puman Rethah Sinchathi Yoshitayam  
Bahweehi Prajah Purushath Samprasootha. ॥ (5)*

From him are produced the sky (which is the first fire) whose fuel is the sun ; from the moon, the clouds (the second fire) ; from the clouds, the herbs that grow on the earth (the third fire) ; from these, the man (the fourth fire), who sheds his semen into the woman (the fifth fire) ; thus, many living beings are produced from the *Purusha*.

It is such stanzas that confuse and confound the library readers of the scriptures. From every way-side-book-stall, cheap editions of all scriptures in the world, temptingly invite the passers-by. The publishers also see to it that the editions are within the reach of all. And yet, none of the editors have cared to see whether the stuff printed in them is intelligible to the man-in-the-street or a casual railway-passenger. And thus, when one with no preliminary knowledge plunges into these great scientific text-books, he finds himself lost and confounded. It is at such moments that we need a guide who is well-versed in these *Sastras* and who is also well-established in these experiences of Truth.

In order to understand the stanza, we must know that in *Chhandogya Upanishad* a method of meditation has been advised called "the Meditation on the Five Fires". Herein, Mother *Sruthi* is talking in the language of that *Upasana*.

*Sky.....whose fuel is the Sun* :—The statement made is to facilitate the student's meditation for the purpose of his own self-purification. Here, the word 'sky' means the very concept of space. We know that our mind



and intellect can function only in a medium of space, time and causality. The concept of space (and the consequent sense of limitation) has come on us as a reaction of our past actions, for the enjoyment of which each one of us has taken this incarnation. The moment anyone of us transcends the bondages of space-time, no more can this world and the experiences of this world assert themselves in our cognition.

We have already found earlier that the physical Sun has its own philosophical import. Philosophically, the Sun represents the sum-total of reactions of all the actions done by the total living world — from worm to man. As such, it is a wondrous analogy, poetry at its best, to say that sky is the fire whose fuel is the sun. The difficulty in understanding it is in this : here Plato has taken the pen of Shelley to paint Cleopatra in order to represent the mighty beauty of the universe !! In India alone we find philosophy and poetry, moulded together into one idol of beauty and perfection.

*From the 'moon', the clouds — the second Fire :—*  
This is to be considered as the second Great Fire. The moon is considered as that which causes the essence in the herbs and the seeds. Probably we will have to wait for some more years for the West, to discover and declare to us, that moonlight has a definite function in nourishing the seeds and fruits with their vitamin-contents. However, it is known all over the world among the agriculturists that seeds dried up in the sun during the day and exposed to the moonlight in the night become very healthy seeds for sowing.

That from the rain, the seedlings grow, needs no commentary. When these vegetables are eaten, the male secretes its seeds which are thrown into the womb of the female where germination takes place. This is

the pedigree or the sequence by which from the Supreme, the multiple plurality of created beings come to exist, says the *Sruti*.

तस्माद्दृचः साम यजूषि दीक्षा यज्ञाश्च सर्वे ऋतवो दक्षिणाश्च ।  
संवत्सरश्च यजमानश्च लोकाः सोमो यत्र पवते यत्र सूर्यः ॥ ॥ ६ ॥

*Tasmat Richah Sama Yajumshi Deeksha, Yagnas-ca Sarvæ  
Krathavo Dakshinasca | Samvathsarasca Yajamanasca Lokaha  
Somo Yatra Pavathæ Yatra Surya || (6)*

From Him are the Vedic verses, the sacred chants, the sacrificial formulæ, preliminary rites, sacrifices, ceremonies, sacrificial gifts, the time of the sacrifice, the sacrificer and the works, purified by the sun and the moon.

तस्माच्च देवा बहुधा सम्प्रसूताः साध्या मनुष्याः पशवो वयांसि ।  
प्राणापाणी त्रीहियवो तपश्च श्रद्धा सत्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं विधिश्च ॥ ॥ ७ ॥

*Tasmat-Cha Devah Bahudha Samprasoothah, Sandhya  
Manushyah Pasavo Vayamsi | Pranapanow Vrihiyavow Thapasca,  
Sradha Satyam Bramcharyam Vidhisca || (7)*

From Him also the Gods are variously born, the celestials, the men, the cattle, the birds, the in-breaths and the out breaths, the corn and barley, thought, devotion, truth, self-control and values of life.

In these two *Mantras* we have the details showing how from the subtler, grosser things have evolved, ultimately to make up our known world of things and feelings. The first *mantra* is clear in itself, due to the various sacrificial rites which in this connection may be considered to incorporate in its scope, the entire world of actions. According to the actions, we create our fields of activities to live therein and gain experiences. And hence here is the hint in the phrase, "the world purified by the sun and the moon". The modern

world knows sufficiently of the influence of the Sun and the Moon upon the available aspects of nature, which directly governs our experience, as natives of this Planet.

In the second *Mantra*, we have the continuation of the sequence of creation, to emphasise the fact, that every living creature and its activities of life have come from that Supreme Soul, the Eternal Pure Consciousness. After the corn and barley in the above list, the Rishis enumerate, thought, devotion, etc. A few well-known critics seem to stumble here not finding a real connection at this place. In fact, there is no confusion of thought here. Corn and barley stand for food, and food is the nourisher of thought : if one were to fast continuously for some forty days, one would experience that one's mind refuses to entertain any thought. On the other hand, when one starts taking in small doses more and more food, one would find that, in proportion to the amount of food consumed, the volume of thoughts and the frequency of their movements also increase.

Thoughts, when directed towards a great ideal with reverence and love, gain for themselves a greater potency, and such thoughts are together called devotion. He who is thus devoted to a great ideal, divine and spiritual, cannot but take on himself vows of truthfulness, and self-control. He who has these qualities will naturally have a new code of high values in life and with severe alertness, he shall always endeavour to live up to them.

सप्त प्राणाः प्रभवन्ति तस्मात् सप्तर्चिषः समिधः सप्त होमाः ।  
सप्त इमे लोका येषु चरन्ति प्राणा गुहाशया निहिताः सप्त सप्त ॥

*Sapta Pranah Prabhavanthi Tasmath Sapta Archishah  
Samidha Sapta Homah | Sapta Imā Loka Yeshu Charanthi  
Prana Guhasaya Nihilah Sapta Sapta.* (8)

From Him are born the seven pranas, the seven flames, seven-fold fuel, the seven-fold oblations, as also the seven worlds where the Pranas move in the cave of living creatures; seven and seven.

On a rough reading, this would naturally confuse anyone, for, in its literal meaning, it has no sense at all. But it is the style of the scriptures to use such code-language. The *Sruti Mantras* are, as it were, very brief lecture-notes taken down by the most intelligent students while listening to the discourses of the *Rishis*. If anyone were to read the classnotes of a College student, he is sure to get himself confused, unless he himself has attended the lectures. Similarly, this *mantra* looks as though it is a short formula only to bring to the memory all that the student had heard in the lecture theatre.

From the Supreme Self are born the seven sense-holes in the head : two eyes, two nostrils, two ears, and one mouth.\* The seven Flames mentioned are the seven powers of cognition that beam out, as it were, to illumine their respective objects. Thus through the eyes, intelligence beams out to perceive form and colour. Through the ears, vitality shoots out to illumine sound. Each sense-organ can illumine only its objects. With the ears we cannot recognise form ; nor can we see sound. A flame can be maintained only when there is fuel for it. Here the fuel for these cognition-rays are nothing but their objects themselves.

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\* Sankara explains these seven *Pranas* as the seven sense-organ-spots localised in the head. These seven flames are probably referred to in DISCOURSES ON PRASNOPANISHAD III-5.

If there were no sound at all, naturally, we would not have recognised that we have an organ called the ears that can perceive sound. In this sense, sound is the fuel that maintains the flame of sound-consciousness shooting through the ears.

The oblations referred to here must naturally mean the knowledge gained, when the power of cognition shooting out through the senses, comes in contact with their respective objects. Oblation is that which is thrown into the Flames and which sinks down into the very source of the Flame, there to get itself digested and burnt down.

*The seven lokas* :—In this beautiful metaphor, maintaining the general spirit of poetry in the stanza, we must take the word “ *Loka* ” here to mean the sense-centres in the intellect. It is known to the scientific world that there are definite nerve-centres controlling the sense organs.

The vitality of these centres retires and takes rest, as it were, in the cave of the heart (where intelligence remains) when the individual is in the state of deep sleep. That the word ‘ *Prana* ’ here cannot be the vital-air is clearly shown by this suggestive description that they move and function in the cave of the heart.

The pictorial language, though it adds a beauty and extra joy to the very glory of the scriptures, is to us a stumbling block in understanding the correct meaning, because we are not used to it in these days of commercial literature and cable-gram poetry ! !

अतः समुद्रा गिरयश्च सर्वेऽस्मात् स्यन्दन्ते सिन्धवः सर्वरूपाः ।

अतश्च सर्वा ओषधयो रसाश्च येनैष भूतैस्तिष्ठते ह्यन्तरात्मा ॥

*Atha Samudra Girayasca Sarvæ, Asmath Syandhanthæ  
Sindhawah Sarvaroopah. Athasca Sarva Oshadhayo Rasasca  
Yenaisha Bhoothaith-Sthishtathæ Hyantharatma. (9)*

From Him, all the oceans and mountains ; from Him, the rivers of every description ; from Him, too, all herbs and saps by which the subtle body exists encircled by the gross elements of matter.

In the previous *mantras* we have been told that from the Supreme Reality came all the dynamic aspects of nature and the entire kingdom of living organisms. This enumeration might leave in the minds of the readers a doubt that the inert matter may have a different source of existence altogether. In order to remove any such fallacious conclusions, *Sruti* is here indicating that even the mountains, oceans, rivers, are all manifestations of the same Eternal Truth. Earth, when watered by the rivers becomes a favourable field for plant-life, and then plants grow. In the plant is the sap and by digesting the sap the beings preserve and maintain themselves ; they grow and cultivate their bodies. Food in its subtlest potency, nourishes the mind and intellect which constitute the subtle body.

The *Antaratman* mentioned in the *Mantra* is to be understood to refer to the subtle body and not to the seat of Consciousness. In short, the labour of Mother *Sruti* is to hammer into our understanding the idea, that all the names-and-forms recognised by our senses, all the mental emotions and intellectual capacities, in short, the entire world outside and within ourselves, have risen from the one Eternal Principle, the *Atman*.

पुरुष एवेदं विश्वं कर्म तपो ब्रह्म परामृतम् ।

पतद् यो वेद निहितं गुहायां सोऽविद्याग्रन्थि विकिरतीह सोम्य ॥ ॥ १० ॥

इति प्रथममुण्डके द्वितीयः खण्डः

*Purusha Evædam Viswam Karma Tapo Brahma Paramritam | Ethadyo Veda Nihitam Guhayam So-vidyagrândhin Vikiratheeha Sowmya ||* (10)

The Purusha alone is all this Universe, Karma and Tapas. All this is Brahman, the highest and the immortal ; and, O good-looking Youth, he who knows this, as seated in the cavity of the heart, he unties the knot of ignorance even here.

Summarising these *Mantras* mentioned above, *Sruti* is here declaring the scriptural conclusion that the entire world of names, forms, feelings and ideas is but a manifestation of the dynamic whole, the *Purusha*. Action and thought when combined together provide us with the different fields of activities called the Universe.

To know that this *Purusha* is the vital centre in the individual-man is to gain the true Knowledge of the Self. Today, to each one of us, our centre is the false-ego which is the seat of our total identification with the false envelopments of matter that seemingly veil the spirit. We think that we are the body-mind-intellect-equipment and this constant thought is the ego which is the hornet of pains and limitations. To rediscover ourselves to be not the body, mind and intellect, that we are nothing but the Spirit-centre — the *Purusha*, is to end all our self-made shackles, the chains of ignorance.

The knot of ignorance is the primal bondage under which the spirit seemingly commandeers a delusion to dream its own finitude and mortality. Hence the *Sruti* says here that one who recognises himself to be nothing but the *Purusha* and thereby fixes his entire identification with it, ends all his thralldom of ignorance and comes to live the Godhood which is his birthright.

With this heartening message of hope, freedom and liberation, the scripture closes its first Part.

End of Chapter II—Section 1



## Chapter II—Section 2

अविः सन्निहितं गुहाचरं नाम

महत् पदमत्रैतत् समर्पितम् ।

एजत् प्राणन्निमिषच्च यदेतज्जानथ सदसद्वरेण्यं

परं विज्ञानाद् यद्वरिष्टं प्रजानाम् ॥

॥ १ ॥

*Avih Sannihitam Guhacharam Nama Mahath Padama-  
trailhath Samarpitam. Ejath Pranannimisha-Ca Yadethath-  
Janadha Sadasad Varenyam Param Vignanad Yad Varishtam  
Prajanam. (1)*

Bright, existing very close, moving in the heart, great and the support of all ; In Him is all the Universe centred round ; what moves, breathes and winks. Know it— which is both with form and without form, the most adorable, the Highest of beings, the One beyond the understanding of creatures.

In this section *Sruti* proposes to give her readers a complete picture of Truth and a direct method of flight for this glorious destination is also pointed out. As such it is only just in the fitness of things that she should open this Section with such a pregnant stanza indicating in its phraseology a wealth of meaning and a host of significance.

*Bright* :—Consciousness is considered to be bright in the sense that it is the light that illumines for us our thoughts and ideas. Ordinarily a man would say without knowing much of philosophy that he can see the emotions and ideas rising in him. If he could recognise them, there must be some light-principle that should brighten the things seen. This light, that illumines, that is within, is certainly the light of

intelligence, in the intellect. This is not the physical, ordinary light as known to the scientists ; it is the Consciousness, the Life-Principle in the individual.

*Existing very close* :—The *Atman* or the Divine Spark in us is considered to be the closest to us, since it is the very centre of our entire personality. Compared to its nearness to us, even the body is a distant object. We use the pronoun ‘*that*’ to indicate something which is, farther from another object which is nearer to us indicated by the term ‘*this*’. Compared to the *Atman*, even the intellect is but an object distant from it ; and so it has to be indicated by the term ‘*that*’. The centre, the nearest one, is ‘*this*’, the *Atman*. The object is the nearest to us because in our real nature we are the subject, and everything other than the subject constitutes the world of objects. The *Atman* is the centre, and the objects constituted by the world of ideologies, feelings, and matter, are all widening circles of concentric circumferences round the same centre. Hence *Sruti* is perfectly scientific in indicating the Spirit as the nearest to us.

*Moving in the Heart* :—In the love-heart is the Cave of Intellect in which Intelligence resides ; and, according to the Vedantic language, *Atman* or the Spirit is the central light in the intelligence. The best part of a potato-puff is certainly that piece which is in the core of it. The Heart in man is universally accepted as the seat of all that is humane. And Intellect honeyed by the sweet contents of a love-heart alone has the divine qualities and the required subtlety to seek and find the spirit in us. The consciousness is to be realised in the intelligence when it is integrated completely through a harmonious process of balanced development of both the head and the heart.

*Great and the support of all* :—The Eternal, we have already found, must be formless and the formless must be all-pervading. Elsewhere, in the *Sruti*, we have the statement, that Truth “pervades all, and nothing pervades it”. Naturally, the extent and the dimensions of Truth must be greater than the greatest, since it is the Infinite. It is the support of all, in the sense, that, if consciousness is removed nothing exists ; if existence is removed from a table, the table should become non-existent. The Self being the very source of all, it becomes the cause for everything perceived or felt. The cause is the support of all the effects — clay is the support of all clay-pots ; gold is the support of all gold-ornaments ; ocean is the support for all waves, ripples, foam and bubbles in the ocean. In this sense the *Atman* or the Self is here described as support of all.

*Moves, breaths and winks* :—Under these three classifications one can bring the entire Universe. Rivers, waves, trains and cars though inert in themselves fall under the category of those that move. So too, the concept of Time. The entire kingdom of living-beings breathe and with intelligence the winking starts. So that, on the whole, Mother *Sruti*, here includes in Her definition the entire Universe constituted of inert bulks that move the entire kingdom of living organisms and intelligent beings.

This Supreme Reality is to be known not in the ordinary sense of knowing, whercin, we, through the help of our sense-organs, know the objects which are other than ourselves. Here, the knowing is the subject knowing itself to be the subject, which means the awareness experiencing itself. Thus, to know the truth is to ‘experience the truth to be nothing other

than ourselves'. This experience makes us aware that we are nothing but the 'Truth' itself.

This Self includes and incorporates in itself the essence behind all that has form and all that has no form — all the world of objects and the world of thoughts and ideas. Here is a subtle hint that mere withdrawing our identifications with a world of objects and revelling in the inner world of our own thoughts and emotions cannot make us reach the Reality. Thus to meditate upon the forms of the Lord or to repeat his glory and thereby to get into a state of blissful unawareness of the outer world is not in itself the goal ; one will have to transcend even the formless world of thoughts and ideas to reach the No-man's land of our Eternal nature.

*The one beyond the understanding of creatures* :—This is not a statement of despair or hopelessness. Nor is it a declaration that the Upanishads are merely pointing out a beautiful idealism of dreamy nothingness which is not within the scope of any man's actual experience. This is a way in which the gross mind and intellect or the idle materialists interpret this sacred expression in the scripture. This is a false and sad misunderstanding of a great Truth. When the *Sruti* says that the spirit is beyond the intellect, She only means to say that the spirit is the subject which is the Thinker, in the intellect. The instruments of thinking have no vitality of their own to think themselves without the thinker behind them. To accept that the intellect can through its thinking know the thinker would be an absurdity in logic and a shameful dream in philosophy. Nobody can ride on himself ; in that case, the rider and the ridden are to become one and the same. It is in this sense that the *Sruti* declares here that the spirit is beyond the understanding of creatures, because the

Spirit is the understanding-principle behind all instruments of understanding.

यदर्चिमद् यदणुभ्योऽणु च

यस्मिँल्लोका निहिता लोकिनश्च ।

तदेतदक्षरं ब्रह्म स प्राणस्तदु वाङ् मनः

तदेतत् सत्यं तदमृतं तद् वेद्व्यं सोम्य विद्धि ॥ ॥ २ ॥

*Yadarchimad Yadanubhyo-Anu Ca Yasmin-Loka Nihita Lokinasca | Tadaetadaksharam Brahma Sa Prana-Sthadu Vang Manah Tadetath Satyam Tad-Amritam Tad-Waedhavyam Sowmya Viddhi ॥ (2)*

Luminous, subtler than even the subtlest, that imperishable Brahman is the abode of the world and all its inhabitants. He is life, speech, mind, reality, Immortality. That is the mark which should be penetrated by the mind. Penetrate it, O my friend.

In the light of the exhaustive treatment we had of the previous *Mantra*, this statement shall not in any way be very difficult for any one to follow. Subtlety in philosophy is measured by its pervasiveness. Thus, solid is the grossest ; it is grosser than the liquid, and the liquid is grosser than the gas. The Truth is, as we have seen, All-pervading and, naturally, It must be subtler than the subtlest we can think of.

*Abode* : It is that from which we walk out for our activities and into which we go back when tired or when the work is over. Brahman is here described as the abode of the Universe and the creatures living in it, in the very same sense. Out of Truth came life and matter ; in It they exist ; and into Truth they shall all go back ultimately.

This Centre of Life reigning in us, this Seat of Consciousness, is to be *penetrated*, says the *Sruti*, by ourselves, with our mind. In *Vedanta*, mind and intellect

are considered to be of one and the same stuff and it has different names, only to indicate its different functions. With the intellect, to discriminate and separate the dead matter from the dynamic spirit, is the *Vedanta Sadhana* for the intellect, which is fulfilled only when we seek and establish our identity with the spirit. Feel, Feel, Feel—Feel the Eternal nature of the spirit, which is All-pervading, All-perfect and All-full. This is the method of *Vedanta* meditation — know, feel, expand and realise. How to penetrate is explained below in the subsequent two famous *mantras*. The voiceless enthusiasm and irrepressible anxiety of the Guru is palpably evident in his emphatic repetition when he says, “*penetrate It, O my friend*”.

धनुर् गृहीत्वौपनिषदं महास्रं शरं ह्युपासानिशितं सन्धयीत ।  
आयम्य तद्भ्रावगतेन चेतसा लक्ष्यं तदेवाक्षरं सोम्य विद्धि ॥ ३ ॥

*Dhanur Grihitwoupanishadam Mahasram Saram Hyupa-*  
*sanisitham Sandhayeeta | Ayamya Thathbhavagatena Cethasa*  
*Lakshyam Thadevaksharam, Sowmya Viddhi || (3)*

Having taken the bow furnished by the Upanishads the great weapon—and fixed in it the arrow rendered pointed by constant meditation and having drawn it with the mind fixed on the Brahman, hit, O good-looking youth! at that mark—the Immortal Brahman.

प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते ।  
अप्रमत्तेन वेद्धव्यं शरवत् तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ ४ ॥

*Pranavo Dhanuh Saro-Hyathma Brahma Thallakshya—*  
*Muchyathae. Apramathena Vedhavyam Saravath Thanmayo*  
*Bhaveth. (4)*

The *Pranava* is the bow, the *Atman* is the arrow and the *Brahman* is said to be its mark. It should be hit by one who is self-collected and that which hits becomes, like the arrow, one with the mark, i.e., *Brahman*.

In these two inimitable *mantras* we have one of the many examples in Hindu philosophy where poetry and thought are welded together. Literary Art, nowhere in the world, has so far outshined as it is here ; for here, we have an example of exquisite rhythm, choicest words, pregnant suggestions, endless significances, and the most striking picture, all brought to work in the *seva* of philosophy at its best. In these two *mantras*, we have the entire Vedantic *Sadhana* explained to exhaustion. No wonder then, we observe this stanza at the lips of every Master, at the tip of the pen of every writer, in the throat of every speaker ! !

The method of penetrating the Truth-centre in us with our mind, is the theme of these two *mantras* for which no better metaphor could have been employed than that of a Bow-and-Arrow. The Bow here is the chanting of ' OM ' with a knowledge of the significance of ' OM '. The arrow is the Life-centre in the individual. The Awareness in us, propelled by the motive-force generated in voiceless ecstasy, during the thoughtless meditation, " flies " to touch the Total Awareness, the *Brahman*, the All-pervading Reality.

Here, the picture is more than significant to one who contemplates over it. When the arrow is fixed to the bow and pulled towards us, though the arrow is facing outward, the bow-string bends itself to represent an arrow head turned towards ourselves. Thus the ' OM '—chanting is to be done in the heart and its significances are to be meditated upon and experienced in the innermost vaults of our own personality. When the string is strung to the maximum the bow-man is only to relax his firm grip on the arrow—the Self—and the flight of the instrument pointing through space is automatic, immediate, and instantaneous.

Having reached its goal, the Bull's-eye, the *Brahman*, the *Sruti* says that the individual Self merges with the Total Self to become one with it.

If the arrow is sharp and the bow-man shoots it with a steady grip, the flying arrow can penetrate its goal and get itself embedded completely in the very object which it strikes. Similarly, the individual Soul which had its sense of separateness, because of its wrong identifications with its matter envelopments, loses its sense of individuality when it gets completely detached from its contacts with matter, during its meditations upon the pregnant formula 'OM'. Once it is devoid of its preoccupations with the false, it rediscovers itself in its true native glory to be nothing other than the Supreme, All-pervading, Reality Itself. That the realization at its best is the experience of oneness, is nowhere so clearly and pointedly hinted at in the entire Upanishadic literature as it is in these two *Mantras*.

*Apramathena Vedhavyam* :—To the generation of Hindu philosophers a mere idealistic dream is not a sufficient goal of life. However great the goal may be, the practical-minded Hindu always wanted to see that he could personally come to experience it. Thus, in all our philosophies we have also detailed prescription of the means by which the 'idealistic' goal can be personally experienced. Even in that narration, if details are insufficient or vague, we may again reject that philosophy. Here in this *mantra*, we get a wealth of detail about the *Sadhana* by which we can reach the Vedantic perfection preached. The term under annotation gives a minute but very important direction to the seekers. If the arrow trembles in the hands of the archer before it leaves the bow, to be sure, the



arrow must miss its aim. The more steady it is at the string, the surer it shall fly to its goal. In meditation the more the mind is steady and undeflected, the surer it will reach its goal. That trembling of the mind before its flight is mainly caused by its attachments with a host of sense-objects in the outer world and also because of its own vanities and thoughtless wrong identifications. Renouncing and rejecting them all through the process of discriminative analysis, the seeker makes his mind steady and single-pointed. Such a prepared mind takes to meditation as duck to water.

यस्मिन् द्यौः पृथिवी चान्तरिक्षमोतं मनः स ह्प्राणैश्च सर्वैः ।  
तमेवैकं जानथ आत्मानमन्यो वाचो विमुञ्चथामृतस्यैष सेतुः ॥ ॥ ५ ॥

*Yasmin Dhyowh Prithivi Ca-Anthareeksha motham Manah  
Saha Pranaisca Sarvaih | Thamevaikam Janatha Athmanamanyo  
Vaco Vimuncatha Amritasyaisha Sethu ||* (5)

He in whom the heaven, the earth and the interspace are centred, together with the mind and all life-breaths (*pranas*),— know Him alone as the one Self of all, and desist from all other talk. This is man's bridge to the shore of Immortality (across the ocean of life).

*Are centred* :—The cause is the very substance of the effect ; Mud is the very essence of all mud-pots. It is in this sense that the *Sruti* says that the entire world of things and beings including the mind and their activities is in essence nothing but the Supreme Consciousness.

Not realizing this, we identify ourselves with a finite world of objects and our own ever-changing mind, and thus come to sorrow :—feelings of frustrations, imperfections and limitations. The *Sruti* here

gives us a sure method by which we can end all pains and sense of limitations by knowing the seat of our Consciousness in ourselves.

*Know Him* :—Here the term “ Know ” does not mean the ordinary meaning of knowing the object through the intervention of the instruments of knowledge. Here, the object-of-knowledge is but the Subject itself and, as such, here the word ‘ know ’ means only a re-discovery, a recognition. This re-discovery or Self-realisation is not possible so long as the seeker is preoccupied with the world of external objects and their problems, and hence the *Sruti* advises every seeker to “ *desist from all other talk* ”. So long as a seeker is worried about the world or its problems—social, communal or national—his attention will be always extrovert. So long as even a ray of his attention is turned outward and is engaged in cognizing the objects there, he cannot have the joy of Self-discovery. This is a law which is very well known to all of us in our own limited experience. So long as I am aware of even the minutest portion of my dream, I cannot come entirely to my waking-state-consciousness ; once in the waking-stage, the dream is entirely transcended. Similarly, unless we transcend entirely our waking, dream and sleep state of consciousness, we cannot hope to peep into the blissful abode of the Self. Thus, during the period of seeking, it is a binding law that we must entirely give up our preoccupation with the outer world.

Across the ocean of life, across mounting waves of the ever-changing inconsistencies in the welter of the delusory, finite world of plurality, *this alone is the bridge* to the shore of Immortality. So long as we have not realised the Self, the sense of finitude and

imperfection will choke us and in order to realise the Self, the way is to relax completely from our activities of cognition of the worlds, both without and within. In short, the mind and intellect should be transcended. In other words, the ego is to be eliminated ; the ego being the awareness conditioned by our mind and intellect. To transcend the mind is the same as to surrender the ego.

अरा इव रथनाभौ संहता यत्र नाड्यः

स एषोऽन्तश्चरते बहुधा जायमानः ।

ओमित्येवं ध्यायथ आत्मानं

स्वस्ति वः पराय तमसः परस्तात् ॥ ॥ ६ ॥

*Ara Iva Radhanabhow Samhatha Yatra Nadyah Sa-Esho-Anthascharathe Bahudha Jayamanah | Om-Ithyevam Dhya-yadha Atmanam Swasthi Vah Paraya Thamasah Parasthath ||*  
(6)

Where all the nerves meet like the spokes of a chariot-wheel in the hub,—there within the heart He moves, becoming manifold. Meditate on that Self as Om. Godspeed to you in crossing to the farther shore beyond darkness.

Hub is the point that is in contact with every point in the circumference and it is that which equates all the different tensions working in the entire wheel. Similarly, the *Mantra* says that in the centre of the love-heart is the seat of Pure Consciousness which is the Centre of Life from the toe to the tip of the hair. Every part of the body is in contact with the centre through the eighty-two thousand 'subtle nerves', called the *Nadis* in the *Yoga Sastra*.

The medical profession need not rise up to protest against this statement. It is true that scalpel and

scissors cannot expose and discover these nerves ; *Nadis* are, according to our *Sastras*, rays of psychic forces radiating from the centre as channels of Consciousness to every conceivable part of the body controlling and directing it and, as such, no operation-theatre can ever expose them. Though we all know that there is in man a ' mind ' functioning, no doctor has yet brought out even a single ' mind ' to bottle it for the vulgar crowd to gaze at !!

Meditate upon this Hub of Life in us, the Self, as OM. How meditation on OM ultimately fulfils itself in experiencing the Self to be nothing other than the Total Self has been already described in the famous metaphor of the " Bow and Arrow ".

After thus explaining the goal and the way, the Master in all enthusiasm and with an inexpressible joy, cries, " *Godspeed to you* ". No Master can bless a seeker more than by explaining the Goal and the Path. In fact, there the Master's job ends. Thereafter all that he can do for the Seeker is to encourage him now and then with repeated wishes of *Godspeed* to him on his path. The pilgrimage is to be pursued by the seeker himself and every step is to be taken by himself.

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद् यस्यैष महिमा भुवि ।

दिव्ये ब्रह्मपुरे ह्येष व्योमन्यात्मा प्रतिष्ठितः ॥

मनोमयः प्राणशरीरनेता प्रतिष्ठितोन्ने हृदयं सन्निधाय ।

तद् विज्ञानेन परिपश्यन्ति धीरा आनन्दरूपममृतं यद् विभाति ॥

॥ ७ ॥

*Yah Sarvagnyah Sarvavid Yasyaisha Mahima Bhuvi |  
Divyae Brahmapuræ Hyaesha Vyomnyathma Prathishtitah ||  
Manomayah Pranasareeraneta Prathishtiithonae Hridayam  
Sannidhaya | Thad Vignanena Paripasyanti Dheerah Ananda-  
roopamamritam Yad Vibhathi ||*

(7)

He is “ all-wise ” and “ all-knowing ” and His, verily, is this Glory (Manifest on earth). In the sky of the heart,— the luminous city of *Brahman* — He is established, clothed in mind and guiding life and body. With His seat in the heart, He lives in the whole body of man. In the perfect knowledge of Him, the wise realise the state of blissful Immortality.

In the previous *Mantra* the Seat of Consciousness was only generally indicated as the Hub of Life in the body. Here, we have now a clear explanation of where it can be most clearly perceived. The terms “ all-wise ” and “ all-knowing ” have already been explained.

“ *His is verily this Glory.* ” There are very many statements repeatedly emphasising this idea in almost all the Upanishads. It is His Glory, might or power, that is behind every law of nature. Nowhere do we find the laws of nature transgressed by nature. The law is inviolable and unbreakable. The sanction behind the law is the glory of the Law-giver.

*Brahmapuri* : The term is to indicate the spot where *Brahman* or the Total Self resides. It is only a figurative explanation in terms of the finite to indicate the Palace of the Infinite. This Land of the Self is described as *luminous*, because Consciousness is the very illuminator of all the objects and the illuminating-principle in all the planes of consciousness. This is considered to be located in the cave of the heart because it is there, among the vibrations of the intellect and the waves of thought, that a seeker can struggle to discover the Pure Consciousness. Though seated in the heart, he is the very substance of all the activities of the body, the vital airs, the mind and the intellect.

To know this, is to realize the *Brahman*, to fulfil the supreme goal of life. Here the doubt may come in the

mind of the seeker whether by realizing the spark of life in us we will be at once realising the infinite glory of the All-pervading. This doubt is removed by the firm assertion given here by the *Sruti* that by realizing the Self in us we will be realizing at once the Total Self. Hence the word “ *Paripasyanthi* ” is specially used in the *mantra* here. When a bottle is broken, the bottle-space in realizing its own nature, realizes at once the nature of the total space, not only the vast space unconditioned but even the nature of every space remaining now within limitation and unconditioned.

In order to gain this Self-discovery, the unavoidable quality to be developed is discriminative intellect. An intellect when it functions through the instrument of the Heart develops in itself the divine quality termed as discrimination. Boiled milk, on cooling, gathers the cream on its top ; a noble heart steaming over a well-lit smokeless intellect, when allowed to cool down after a time of boiling, gathers out of its own very essence the cream of discrimination. The process of bringing discrimination to the surface is the process of *Vedanta Sadhana*. Study of *Sastras* and *Sat-Sanghs* make the heart's contents boil up over the ignited intellect. When the contents cool down through meditation, discrimination creams up. Such seekers who have thus gathered a wealth of discriminative intellect are termed in *Vedanta* as ‘ *Dheerah* ’. Such a pilgrim, rich in this rare wealth, fulfils the pilgrimage and comes to enjoy the State of Perfection which is his eternal heritage.

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिः छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे ॥

॥ ८ ॥

*Bhidyathae Hridaya Grandhi Cheidyantae Sarva Samsayah |  
Ksheyantae Casya Karmani Tasmin Drishtae Paravarae ॥ (8)*

When he has seen both the higher and the lower, the knot of his heart becomes untied ; all doubts are solved ; and all his *karma* is consumed.

That Infinite cannot suffer the finite in itself ; from the stand-point of the Infinite, the finite is not. The Sun knows no darkness since light cannot suffer darkness. The rope knows no serpent ; the post is no friend of the ghost. Nor can a deluded one afford to see the post so long as he is in his delusion. He is not recognising even a minute portion of the post. But at the end of all delusions the post is recognised, the ghost goes out of its existence by itself. From the standpoint of the true knowledge of the post, we can certainly say that the post is the essence in both the post and the ghost, the ghost being but a trick of the mind.

In this sense the Pure Consciousness is the essence behind the *real* and the *unreal* ; Truth is the essence behind the *true* and the *false*.

It is with this idea in mind that Mother *Sruti* says in this *Mantra* that having realized Him “ *who is both the High and the low* ”, there shall thereafter be none of the experiences of ignorance with that seer of wisdom. The knots of the heart (ignorance, desires, actions) are broken asunder ; all doubts as to which is real and which is unreal, as to what is true and what is untrue, as to what is *Dharma* and what is *Adharma*, all such doubts get themselves solved with the experience of Reality. Such a one cannot be caught within the web of past actions and the present reactions and thus brought to be bound to the wheel of life and death. The ego alone is responsible for the egoistic actions. Naturally it was the ego that was suffering the consequence of its actions. But when the Ego got merged with the Reality there is no actor any more and so

there can be no enjoyer of the reactions.

The dreamer in me while dreaming, becomes the dream-father of the dream-son born to my dream-wife ; but on waking up, the dreamer has ended and so the awakened me shall have no botheration of looking after my dream-wife, nor the blessedness of having been served by my dream-children. Thus on realizing our real nature to be the Self, all egoism ends and thereafter even if that Saint acts, he will not be acting with egoistic self-arrogation. He thereafter is but a mute instrument of the Lord to work through. Thereafter the Seers' work is technically called in Vedanta as *Karma Abhasa* : A prophet is responsible for his actions as much as you are responsible for the murder you have committed in your dream.

हिरण्मये परे कोशे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम् ।  
तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिस् तद् यदात्मविदो विदुः ॥ १ ॥

*Hiranmayae Parae Kosae Virajam Brahma Nishkalam |  
Tat-Chubhram Jyothisham Jyothis-tad Yadatmavidoh Viduh || (9)*

The stainless, indivisible, *Brahman*, the pure, the light of all lights, is in the innermost sheath of a golden hue. That is what the knowers of the *Atman* know.

Here we begin a three-stanza peroration with which the *Sruti* is concluding this section and, naturally, we have here a glorious repetition, deliberate and purposeful for emphasising the meaning already explained in the section.

*The Golden Sheath, the highest* :—We have already seen that the human personality is, for purposes of philosophical apprehension, taken to be the Spirit enveloped by five concentric circles of matter ;—the Food-sheath, the Vital-air-sheath, the Mental-sheath,



the Intellectual-sheath and the Bliss-sheath. The attempt of the seeker is to withdraw his entire attention in and his identifications with the outer layers. When a seeker has thus renounced his attachments to the body, the vital-air, mind and the intellect, spiritually he transcends them all and this state is considered to be unearthly, the blissful and divinely peaceful, because all our peace and joys are shattered due to the play of the pain-giving instruments such as the body, the mind and the intellect. Thus, the Bliss-sheath is in fact a state of *negative* happiness, *i.e.*, it is a state wherein there is *no* pain. *No-pain* is not joy ; no agitation is not peace. This Bliss-sheath is considered 'golden' because it is nearest to the Awareness, the seat of all Consciousness. The Sheath is considered the highest or the subtlest, again because, it is the inner-most realm which is reached while transcending both the mind and the intellect.

It is in this *Kosa* that the great seeker rediscovers himself to be nothing other than the Pure Consciousness, the divine in him, described here as 'stainless'. Truth is without stains and yet we, as individuals, behave as sinners not because nature is sinful, but because our mind and intellect are stained. If my bed-room lamp is giving out a blue light it is not because electricity in my house is blue ; it must be because of the colour of the bulb. The Life-force that runs through every name and form is one and the same but according to the constitution of the individual mind and intellect, the different personalities manifest ; here, a criminal ; there, an honest man ; here, a sinner and there, a saint. If we can by consistent pursuit revolutionise our mind to modify its constitution through a process of diligent, self-discipline and right understanding, even the worst

of us can, from that moment onwards become best men. The sun is stainless ; the reflected sun in the mirror may have some stains, which are sure to be the stains on the surface of the mirror. Even in an age when we have not even a single saint anywhere and even in an age of criminality, the Supreme Lord is perfectly stainless. All other epithets of glory used here for *Brahman* have been already discussed in the earlier *mantras*. We only invite your attention to them.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।  
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥ १० ॥

*Na Tatra Suryo Bhathi Na Chandratharakam Naema  
Vidyutho Bhanti Kuthoyamagnih | Tamaeva Bhanta-Manu bhathi  
Sarvam Thasya Bhasa Sarvamidam Vibhathi ||* (10)

There the sun does not shine, nor the moon nor the stars ; these lightning; also do not shine—how then (can) this earthy fire ? Verily, everything shines after Him who shines. This whole world is illumined with His light.

No ritualism of a Hindu is concluded without chanting at least once this glorious stanza of our scripture.

It is generally chanted soon after the offering of camphor flame in the *Arathi*. When the devotee has in an extremely worshipful attitude shown a tiny speck of a flame to the Lord as ' light ', the great declaration of the Rishis comes to the mind of the devotee. He is reminded of the glorious seat of all illuminations, and he sings the great song of realization of the above *mantra*.

There, in the heart-centre, where is seated Pure Consciousness, not even the sun shines. This is not because in the realm of the *Atman* there are some lightless

gases like carbon dioxide that put out even the sun. The statement is made in the sense in which we would say that a lighted match shines not in the midday sun in Madras. Compared with the brilliance of the midday sun in a tropical country in summer, the tiny illumination of a match-stick flame deems itself insignificant. Similarly, compared with the *Atman*, the All-illuminating Principle, even the sun, the light-giver in the world, itself cannot shine.....*does not shine*.

If not the sun, probably, the moon or the stars may have some illumination ; even this is denied by the *Sruti*. And this is but natural ; when even the sun does not shine how can lesser lights or the borrowed light of the sun shine at all? Again, if neither the sun nor the moon nor the stars shine there, the devotee is reminded of the utter futility in his showing a tiny piece of comphor-light to the Lord ; hence the question here, “ *How could then this fire ?* ”

Though, here the *Sruti* has taken examples of objects, luminous in the physical sense, the statement is applicable to the whole process of knowing. All objects become available for our knowledge when we live by the light of the *Atman*. When once the Life-centre has rolled out of an individual body, that individual can no longer gain any more knowledge of the outer world of objects or the inner world of feelings and thoughts.

ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्ताद् ब्रह्म पश्चाद् ब्रह्म दक्षिणतश्चोत्तरेण ।

अधश्चोर्ध्वं च प्रसृतं ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम् ॥ ११ ॥

इति मुण्डकोपनिषदि द्वितीयमुण्डके द्वितीय खण्डः

*Brahmaiveda-Mamritam Purasthad Brahma Pascad Brahma  
Dakshinata — Schotharena | Adhaschordhwam Ca Prasrutam  
Brhamaivedam Viswamidam Varishtam ॥* (11)

Verily, all this is the Immortal *Brahman* above, below, in front, at the back, on the right, on the left. It is everywhere : All this world is indeed the Supreme *Brahman*.

Concluding the section, the mother *Sruti* here says in her inimitable language that the ultimate cause for this world of objects, feelings and thoughts, is the *Brahman* alone. In a mud-pot, mud is on the top, mud below, mud again on the right and mud on the left. In short, the pot is nothing but mud ; from mud it came, in mud it stays, into mud it goes back on being destroyed. Mud is the cause and its effect. The pot can be nothing but mud. Similarly, here, *Brahman*, the cause of the world, is said to be the All-pervading, homogeneous Truth, in all the perceived things of the world.

End of Chapter II—Section 2

### Chapter III—Section 1

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।

तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥ १ ॥

*Dwa Suparna Sayuja Sakhaya Samanam Vriksham Pari-  
shaswajathae | Tayoranyah Pippalam Swadwathya-Anasnan-  
Annyo Abhicakaseethi ||* (1)

Two birds bound one to the other in close friendship, perch on the self-same tree. One of them eats the fruits of the tree with relish, while the other looks on without eating.

This is one of the famous *Mantrās* in the entire Upanishad, and at the same time it is most controversial. It is controversial, because, very few *pundits* actually understand the exact significance of the term ‘*Jeevatman*’ and ‘*Paramatman*.’ This famous metaphor of the two birds sitting upon the self-same tree, one eating and the other only witnessing, is one of the best examples where philosophy has married poetry to bring out a child of perfection in this statement !!

The two birds, mentioned here as living in great friendship upon the self-same tree, are the ego and the Divine Spark of life in us. The limited ego-centre identifying itself with the mind and the body comes to believe that it is the sufferer and the enjoyer. Thus, the ego suffers the joys and sorrows of life. The ego has all the appointments and disappointments of life. All successes and failures belong to the ego and not to the *Atman*. The Divine Spark of life neither performs any action nor has the vanity that it is the enjoyer or the sufferer.

Taking another obvious example, let us try to

understand this. The sun in the sky never trembles. It knows no movement. But the reflection of the Sun in the mirror can tremble and will do so whenever the mirror is shaky. Similarly, the agitations of the mind cause the sense of agitations in the ego, the ego being Awareness reflecting itself in "the pool of moving thoughts." We, identifying ourselves with this Ego-centre, delude ourselves to be agitated when the ego-reflection formed in the mind is agitated. This agitation in the ego-reflection, again, is caused by the agitations in the very thought-flow.

The two birds the real I and the false-I, live in one and the same tree, the body. The ego, in its delusions, goes on pecking at the hanging fruits and comes to suffer joy or sorrow, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, according to the taste of the fruits pecked. Some are ripe, some are unripe ; the ripe ones are sweet, the unripe ones are sour. But, the other bird who all alone remains in undisturbed tranquillity merely goes on witnessing the joys and sorrows of the bird busy with the fruits !

Here, the fruits are the *Karmic* fruits—the reactions of one's own past actions. The past *Karmas* act on us only when we identify ourselves with our matter-envelopments, and, through them, with the world outside. An outer circumstance or an inner mental attitude cannot in itself give us either joy or sorrow, unless we get deluded and attached to it. The witnessing bird, though it lives in the same tree, comes to suffer neither the sourness nor the sweetness, because it has no desire to taste the hanging fruits, nor does it entertain any hopes to gain happiness from those fruits. It only goes on witnessing.

To remain as a pure witness rooted in our own

Real Nature, as the All-perfect All-Blissful Pure Consciousness, is to transcend all pains, limitations and sufferings. So long as we are standing on the escalator, we shall be moving in spite of ourselves ; in case the one standing on the escalator wishes to take rest on the *terra-firma*, he can do so only if he steps off from the moving escalator to the way-side footpath. Similarly, so long as we are living and working on the ever-moving and ever-changing material plane, peace and joy shall not be ours ; in case, we, from our false identifications, can step off from the moving medium to the Infinite Eternal Unchanging Plane of Pure Consciousness, we shall have the unchanging peace and death-less glory.

Identifying ourselves with the changing finite, we become the sorrowing bird ; identifying ourselves with our Eternal Nature as Pure Life, we shall re-discover the peace and dignity of the witnessing bird. In the next *mantra* this idea is more clearly brought out.

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नेऽनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः ।  
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः ॥ ॥ २ ॥

*Samanae Vrikshae Purusho Nimagno-Aneesaya Sochathi  
Muhyamanah | Jushtam Yada Pasyathyanyameesamasya Mahi-  
manamithi Veethasakah ॥* (2)

Seated on the self-same tree, one of them — the Ego — sunk in ignorance and deluded, grieves his impotence. But when he sees the other — the Lord, the Worshipful — and also His Glory, he becomes free from dejection.

This *Mantra* throws a flood of light on the previous one since this *Sruti* is pointedly declaring what the two birds stand for. Ego is the Supreme Awareness

expressed through the mental agitations and the intellectual throbbing in man. This evil has come to exist due to its own ignorance of its real nature, as Pure Consciousness. Identifying itself with the equipments, it entertains desires and strives to fulfil them in the outer world of sense-objects. Thus the ego-centre, perplexed as it were, continuously grieves in its own state of impotence and helplessness.

Is it the destiny of the ego to suffer thus eternally in its own delusion? The *Sruti* here answers most pointedly that this game in ignorance is only a temporary, passing one and that at any given moment a *Jiva* could reach the state of peace and perfection by merely discovering its own real nature to be nothing other than that of "the witnessing bird".

The crawling form, the shiny skin, the horrid patches, the terrible hood, the deadly fangs — all belong to the delusory snake and not to the rope which is the only reality behind it. The one who in his delusion has come to be threatened by the disturbing aspects of the snake has only to seek and discover the rope behind it ; the vision of the rope means the total cessation of the vision of the snake and the total regaining of his own permanent state of normality.

Similarly, the various false values ; wrong notions, attachments, lusts, greeds, passions, fears and despairs are all for the *Jiva*, because, it has started dreaming of the reality of the body, mind and intellect !! These have a seeming reality and a terrible aspect to tyrannize over only so long as the ego seeks not and, therefore, fails to discover the True and the Real which is Eternally there behind itself. Hence, the scripture says, "when he sees the other, the Lord, and realises His glory he becomes free from dejection."



यदा पश्यः पश्यते रुक्मवर्णा कर्तारमीशं पुरुषं ब्रह्मयोनिम् ।  
तदा विद्वान् पुण्यपापे विधूय निरञ्जनः परमं साम्यमुपैति ॥ ॥ ३ ॥

*Yada Pasyah Pasyathae Rukma Varnam Kartharameesam  
Purusham Brahmayonim | Thada Vidwan Punnyapapae Vidhuya  
Niranjana Paramam Samyamupaiti || (3)*

When the seer realizes the self-effulgent Being — ruler, maker and source of the creator even — then that wise one, shaking off all deeds of merits and demerits, becomes stainless, and attains the supreme State of Equipoise.

An aspirant, during his seeking, is but a deluded ego striving hard to discover for himself the Reality behind the unreal, the True among the false. But every aspirant of truth-seeking is the seer of tomorrow. When the aspirant, through meditation, has successfully and completely withdrawn his entire attention from the outer world of sense-objects and his inner world of thoughts and feeling, he releases within himself a mighty power of energy free for application. It is the job of the seeker to make use of this newly generated energy in discovering the very bowels of Truth that lie within himself.

On redeeming himself from his preoccupation with the world, both without and within, to some extent he experiences a state of vacuum or zero which is experienced as a blank or void only with reference to his own previous experiences of mental agitations and intellectual disturbances. With reference to the dream, which the dreamer was seeing, when he wakes up, he can certainly say his mind is void (of the dream and his dream-experiences). A seeker observing within, at this moment discovers for himself that this void is a fact *positively* known and realized by him, and therefore, there is a positive Awareness which is making it possible

for him to be conscious of the very state of blankness. Thus, to a seeker the *mental void* becomes a serene object for contemplation and at this moment he becomes aware of Awareness Itself.

The scripture here says, "when such a diligent and lucky seeker successfully rediscovers himself to be nothing but the All-pervading, the Light of Lights, the Pure Awareness, which is the Reality, the source of light behind every name and form, in him all mortal agitations end and no more dare the sense of limitation and finitude reach his bosom to make him choke with the agonies of his spiritual unrest. He reaches a state of absolute and unshakable equipoise. No circumstance in the world can thereafter upset him. No independent thought-wave within can rise to overwhelm him. Under all conditions, within or without, he becomes a serene and mighty light-house of wisdom and peace, sending out messages of hope and security to those who are struggling in the rough bosom of the stormy sea of egoistic life.

Such an one, in his realization of his own supreme dignity, no more hopes or craves to gain merits or dares to get himself upset by the soul-killing fears of demerits or sins. The sins or merits are all qualities of the mind ; they are the toys of man in his evolutionary childhood. When he grows up and grows beyond the second womb-existence as an ego, he throws off these egg-shells (mind and intellect) and comes out to the realization that he is the All-Pervading Pure Awareness. Such an one alone, is the *Dwija*—the twice-born or Brahmin. The first birth of a God is in the form of a man from his own mother's womb, but the growth is not complete and the cycle is not full until the man grows in the warmth of his own intellectual discrimination and

meditates in peace till, out of the limited confines of his own mind-intellect-egg he has to hatch himself to come out to be the true God-Man.

प्राणो ह्येष यः सर्वभूतैर् वीभाति विजानन् विद्वान् भवते नातिवादी ।  
आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिः क्रियावानेष ब्रह्मविदां वरिष्ठः ॥ ४ ॥

*Prano Hyæsha Yah Sarvabhoothair — Vibhathi Vijanan  
Vidwan Bhawatæ Nathivadæ | Athmakrida Atmarathih Kriyavan  
Esha Brahmavidam Varishtah ॥ (4)*

Knowing Him, the wise man stops all his blabberings. Sporting in Self, delighted in Self and doing acts (enjoined), this man is the best of those who know the *Brahman*.

“ *He, who is prana* ” :—‘ *Prana* ’ is here used as the Total *Prana* which in *Vedanta* is called ‘ *sutratma* ’, which is the God-principle or *Easwara*. On realizing the Pure Consciousness the seer at once realizes that it is in truth the creator, the maintainer and the annihilator of the entire world of finite objects and feelings. Knowing this, a fulfilled seeker no more blabbers ; no more wastes his thoughts on this finite. He has no more any interest in a world of earning and hoarding, competing and gaining, striving and suffering, gathering and spending. After having awakened from a dream, the awakened one does not any more continue earning and spending for the maintenance of his dream-wife and children ; although, while the dream lasted, the dreamer in him might have honestly sweated in the dream-world to earn the dream-money to fulfil his dream-duty towards his dream-wife and children !!!

Thus, when a seer in his supreme wisdom realizes his own Self and gets thus fully awakened from the dream-world, he stops blabbering ! Thereafter to him nothing is of as much importance as the Self and Its

glory. Thereafter his only occupation would be to sport in the Self and to delight in the Self, *Krida* (sport) and *Rathi* (delight) — two words of almost the same meaning in Sanskrit, — and, yet, they have a very subtle difference in the texture of their meaning. The word *Krida* is used when the joy gained by us is due to our coming in contact with things in the outside world ; and *Rathi* is joy gained by us in ourselves without the interference of any object or objects outside. The seer having realized in himself his true nature has thereafter only one occupation — to experience his Godhood within himself and to observe the tranquil play of the Self in all the names and forms around and about him. Thus, a Seer experiences Selfhood both within and without and lives on the eternal life of Light-Power-Wisdom.

Half-understanding of a bible or a scripture is more dangerous than not knowing it at all. It is probably, the half-learned book-worms that have brought about in India, the tragic tradition that the realized saint has, after the Self-discovery, no work to perform. There are, no doubt, statements to that effect in the scriptures, but therein, any one who is well initiated into the truth of the literature can understand that *Sruti* has meant only the renunciation of all desire-prompted egoistic actions. This statement cannot and should not be taken to mean a licence for inaction or a merciless indifference to the needs of the times and to the sufferings of the generation. It is only in the interpretation of decadent Hinduism, given out by a self-indulgent *Pandit-class* mainly to an audience who are themselves idle and ineffective, that such a distortion of our noble philosophy has come to be perpetrated and perpetuated. Renascent Hinduism cannot and will not willingly allow such a dangerous

and ugly ideology to muddy the serene waters of the Upanishadic philosophy.

Here, in the *mantra*, this absurd idea of sleeping-saints and idle-masters has been atom-bombed by the term ' *Kriyavan* '. He must be active ; and he alone can, in the true sense of the term, be active. His selfless action alone can bring in any enduring cultural uplift for the society of animal-men. If we have today anything to be congratulated upon in terms of our own mental and intellectual purity, and in any sense if we can claim any nobility or superiority over the animal or the brute, it is all entirely due to the blessings of the men of God-realization. It is not the sword of the warrior or the might of the Emperors or the intellect of the scientists that has given us the enduring polish of culture and civilization both in the worlds outside and within. From the rudimentary and early lessons of taming the brute, to the highest philosophies and practices which guided men to the very seat of Godhood, every bit of human redemption has been the contribution of God-Man. Therefore, when seers in India took to physical retirement, the nation and the culture fell into disuse and misuse ! Even Sankara, who cried down desire-prompted actions, was himself one of the most dynamic, political, social and religious worker of his own times. *Sruti* denies to the seeker only selfish actions and not selfless actions of benediction.

*Sruti* here sanctions and applauds such selfless actions and prescribes it as the natural occupation of all saints of true realization.

सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम् ।  
अन्तःशरीरे ज्योतिर्मयो हि शुभ्रो यं पश्यन्ति यतयः क्षीणदोषाः ॥ ५ ॥

*Satyena Labhya-Sthapasa Hyaesha Atma Samyag-gyanena  
Brahmacharyaena Nithyam | Anthsareere Jyotirmayo Hi Subhro  
Yam Pasyanthi Yathayah Ksheenadoshah ||* (5)

The Self is attained through veracity, concentration, wisdom and continence, Cultivate all of them constantly. When impurities thus dwindle, the ascetic beholds Him — stainless, resplendent — within his very body.

*Satyam* (truthfulness) *Ahimsa* (non-injury) *Brahmacharyam* (self-control) are the three main-corner-stones of the Temple of Hinduism. Even when our scriptures enumerated these three fundamentals for a purely godly life, they took pains to see that *Satyam* (Truthfulness) has been mentioned as the first. '*Satyam*' is that which is not false. In ordinary transactions of life we mean by truthfulness a complete faithfulness between the thoughts in the mind and the words expressing them. If, for example, we are thinking that a thing is bad and we say that it is good, we have committed an adultery of conscience and in this instance we are said to be false or untrue.

But in the spiritual sense of the term, '*Satyam*' should play in the field of the intellect. When the external impressions of the world gathered by the mind are filtered through the intellect, the thinking-principle in man, they come to certain judgments and thus evaluate the minds, men and institutions, events and incidents. Having thus come to a discriminating judgment, if he were to compromise himself in his thoughts and actions, and thereby come to think or act against his own intellectual convictions, he will be doing, spiritually, a great falsehood. Thus, when one is convinced of the God-theory and the Divine Nature of the One-Self through observation, analysis, study and self-thinking, to act thereafter in terms of animal

thoughts and undivine emotions, is to commit "a rape of the soul" which is a sinful criminality, inexcusable in a spiritual seeker. It is in this sense we have here in this *Mantra* the word ' *Satyam* ' used.

*Tapas* is brooding-thought — This is not the un-intelligent gross *Tapas* of the body which is, to some extent, good to a certain type of men in teaching them self-control both for body and mind.

When one has practised the vow of truthfulness and meditation (*Tapas*), one becomes more and more fit to delve into the secret caves of the scriptures and understand the real import of the *mantras*. Thus, the student who had his own initiation into the sacred texts earlier comes to gain brighter and greater glimpses of an ever-increasing prospect of newer significances and ampler imports in the text of the *Sruti*.

Truthfulness, meditation and intense study of the Scriptures are all possible only when the individual has taken unto himself the principle of *Brahmacharya* in life. In the name of *Brahmacharya* misguided aspirants have often wrecked their lives. *Brahmacharya*, in all its completeness both in body and mind, is practised successfully only by full-time seekers and perfected masters. All the others have their own limitations. Thus, to a householder, perfect *Brahmacharya* is to live in self-control, indulging not more than three times a month. Many a young family has been wrecked by disorder and discord because, one of the parties becomes all of a sudden over-enthusiastic and suddenly takes to the vow of self-control without caring to train his partner also in the Divine Path. Again, a sudden and rash embrace of *Brahmacharya* has its own psychological and physical repercussions. Unless the mind and body are slowly trained to this great task, instead of their

flowering forth into greater powers, they succumb and die away to perish.

Truthfulness and meditation, exhaustive study and continence, must all be practised continuously all the life through. These are not rules for seasonal enthusiasms. When continuously thus practised for a long period, the individual gains thereby more and more poise of personality and develops his powers of understanding and application. These powers are termed in Hinduism as *Anthakarana Sudhi*.

Our capacities, mental and intellectual, are at present ineffectual because of their grossness ; and the denseness of the mind is directly proportional to the amount of animalism in us. Once, through the above practices, one starts living the life of self-control, truthfulness and meditation upon the spiritual contents in him, the animalism slowly dies away and when he thus becomes purified (*Ksheena-Dhosha*) his mind and intellect become more and more subtle and, therefore, capable of greater Awareness. And ultimately he comes to realize in himself the seat of All-Awareness himself.

सत्यमेव जयते नानृतं सत्येन पन्था विततो देवयानः ।

येनाक्रमन्त्यृषयो ह्याप्तकामा यत्र तत् सत्यस्य परमं निधानम् ॥ ॥ ६ ॥

*Satyameva Jayathā Na-Anritam Satyena Pandha Vithatho  
Devayanah | Yenakramantya Rishayo Hya Aptakama Yatra Tath  
Satyasya Paramam Nidhanam ॥ (6)*

Truth alone wins, not untruth. By truth is laid out the Path Divine along which the seers, free from desires, ascend to the supreme abode of Truth.

The necessity for truthfulness as explained in the above stanza can never be over-emphasized in spiritual



life and hence Mother *Sruti*, noted ever for Her brevity and economy in expression, is again dedicating yet another stanza to bring home to us the importance of this intellectual honesty born of heroism. Very pertinently Sankara in his commentary says that as the *mantra* stands, though we read "Truth alone wins, not falsehood," the scripture means that "Truth alone wins and not the untruth". In fact, no great quality, however noble and divine it may be, has itself any strength or capacity to do or to undo the man living his life. It is only when we lend our own personality in our identification with the noble qualities, that they gather in themselves an energy potential to bless us. It is not the chisel that shapes the forms ; it is not the brush that lends light to the canvas. No doubt, the chisel and the brush are necessary, but they can produce the art pieces only when they are in the hands of a master-sculptor or a great painter. This is true with all ideologies. The greatness of an ideology is not, in fact, in the ideology ; but it is in the subject who lives that ideology.

This extra importance is given to truthfulness because the *Sruti* declares that not only is truth the goal and truthfulness the path, but the very path is laid with "slabs" of truthfulness!! A consistent way of living, on the values of intellectual truthfulness, says Sankara, widens the path and makes it an easy grand-trunk road to spiritual success.

*Devayana* will be taken to be, in the most general sense, a life of intelligent spiritual striving. The Path Divine runs through truthfulness and is laid by the concrete acts of truthfulness. Technically however, *Devayana* is the path which stands in contrast with the other technical name given to the other path by

which the ego-centres pass after death, the *pithruyana* or the path of the Manes. The path of Hope is the special path by which those who are entitled to gradual liberation go after death ; and *pithruyana* is that by which the meritorious souls go, and they will again be reborn after a short sojourn in the joyous worlds of the Manes.

*Apthakamah* :—Those who have fulfilled all their desires—We all know that life would have been a holiday in a pleasant island if only we can get freedom from the agonizing tortures inflicted upon us from moment to moment by our own desires. Desires erupt from the mount of ignorance in us and flow out in boisterous lava of unending thoughts and they reach the outer world as our actions, scorching ourselves and our neighbours. The State of Perfection can only be there where we shall not be a cause for suffering either to others or to ourselves, either in the outer or the inner world. This state of peace and perfection can naturally come only when we destroy the very mount of ignorance.

With the knowledge of the Reality, the entire amount of ignorance (about It) in us must automatically end. Thus, when ignorance has ended the source of desire also gets choked ; naturally the flow of scorching thoughts end, and the devastating acts and competitions exhaust themselves. The term *Apthakama*—for which there is no equivalent or even a powerfully expressive term in the English language—clearly indicates the Perfect State Tranquillity in a seer, both within and without. The seekers, free from deceit and delusion, pride and vanity, criminality and falsehood, and having no desire, enthusiastically seek and surely discover the Realm of Truth. What this Realm

is and what are its specialities will be explained in the following *mantras*.

बृहच्च तद् दिव्यमचिन्त्यरूपं सूक्ष्माच्च तत् सूक्ष्मतरं विभाति ।  
दूरात् सुदूरे तदिहान्तिके च पश्यत्स्वहैव निहितं गुहायाम् ॥ ॥ ७ ॥

*Bruhacha Tad Divyam-achintyaroopam Sukshma-Cha Tad  
Sukshmataram Vibhathi | Durath Sadure Tadihanthikæ-Cha  
Pasyatsu-Ihaiva Nihitam Guhayam || (7)*

Vast, divine, beyond all imagination, shines the truth of *Brahman*, as subtler than the subtlest, farther than the farthest. It is here within the body. The sages realize It verily in this life as fixed in the heart.

*Brahman*, the Supreme Reality, is great or vast because it is All-pervading. The very term *Brihath* means in Sanskrit vast or great ; and hence the term *Brahman* for the All-pervading to mean, “ that which pervades all and which is pervaded by nothing. ”

Here, the reader is warned that since explanations of many of these terms have already been given in all details in our early discussions we shall only hint here at the significance of these terms. Those who are doubtful of the full import are requested to refer back.

*Divyam* and *Achintyaroopam* :—Self-luminous and inconceivable or unknowable. The Spark of Life in us is certainly the illuminating principle behind our sense-organs and our mind and intellect. It lights up everything, including the light-giving objects such as the sun, the moon, the stars and the fire. In fact in its very nature it is nothing but a mass of light ; not ‘ light ’ in the ordinary sense in which we know it, but as Sree Ramakrishna Paramahansa would say, “ Light without its physical properties and known qualities. ” In short, it is Awareness or Consciousness. If Truth

be Awareness, it is evident how our intellect cannot understand the Awareness behind it. We have already discussed these points in the earlier sections most exhaustively.

“*Farther than the farthest, it is here within*”—Here is another example wherein those who are foreigners to the Aryan tradition of thought and those who are Aryan by birth, but foreigners by education, find themselves dumbfounded and outwitted. To them, here is a palpable contradiction, a madness of thought, a lunacy praised to the level of the genius! Or else, they argue, how can any great saint or seer dare define anything in the world as to be located at one and the same period of time, at once at the farthest point and also at the nearest. It is at such instances that the scriptural texts need the great benediction of a living saint who can, standing firmly upon the pulpit of his own realized experiences, explain these words of secret imports.

In fact there is no contradiction here. Mother *Sruti* is here trying to find an expression to express the Unfathomable, the Vast, the All-pervading. Naturally she has to say that Pure Awareness or Consciousness is a “circle whose centre is everywhere”. It is at once at every point in the heart within us, as well as outside us — at the farthest imaginable or conceivable point in space or time or thought or imagination. Wherever and whatever we are aware of, be it through the medium of seeing or thinking or feeling, we can be aware of things only when they are within the frontiers of our awareness. Thus, Pure Consciousness in its Absolute Nature is equally here within us and also at the farthest imaginable point.

If truth be thus such a vast unimaginable and inconceivable one, at once here, there and everywhere,

it would be the legitimate doubt in every seeker as to how and where he can realize this vast Divine Factor. True to the Aryan culture, imagination and mere theory have no hold upon the people and unless they are practical, they are rejected. So the great *Rishis* of old have given us in this stanza the method of making their great theory a practical experience. The scripture says that the Truth is realized here, in the "cave of the heart". The technique has already been discussed earlier exhaustively in more than one place.

न चक्षुषा गृह्यते नापि वाचा नान्यैर्देवैस्तपसा कर्मणा वा ।  
ज्ञानप्रसादेन विशुद्धसत्त्वस्ततस्तु तं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः ॥

॥ ८ ॥

*Na Chakshusha Grihyathæ Napi Vacha Nanyair Devai-  
Sthapasa Karmana Va | Gyanaprasadena Visuddhasattwa-  
Sthatastu Tam Pasyathæ Nishkalam Dhyayamanah ||* (8)

The Self is not grasped by eyes or words, nor perceived by the senses, nor revealed by rituals and penances. When the understanding becomes calm and refined, then in meditation, one realizes Him, the Absolute.

Words are symbols of experiences lived by the mind, and so words cannot express deeper experiences or trans-mind joys. Even when experiences are rather intimate and deep, words fail. Naturally, the experiences in the white-heat of intense meditation cannot be expressed in terms of a frail language which is insufficient even to express my love for my own beloved ! Hence the scripture says, "*Self is not grasped by words*". It is only through mutual feelings that one can understand love ; a real lover can appreciate the depth of sincerity even through silence. So too, it is in the silence between the stanzas, as it were, that the *Sruti* takes Her courtiers

into Her ample bosom where they experience the joy and glory of Godhood !

That the Truth cannot be perceived by the senses, has already been explained. Here, the *Upanishads* add that Truth cannot be gained through rituals and penances. It is ordinarily the belief with all the faithful that worship and sincere penance do reveal, for the worshipper, God or Truth. This is a fallacious statement in the Science of Religion, and is a logical absurdity in thought. Action by finite individuals making use of the finite objects, cannot result in an achievement which is Infinite and Eternal. Out of a ball of mud we can never make a chain of gold ; ‘ as the cause, so the result ’.

And it is also true that all the Scriptures in the world indicate, advise and insist upon the glory of *Tapascharya* and the rituals. Surely, they cannot be a combined conspiracy against the faithful.

In the Science of Religion, rituals are insisted upon as preparatory lessons for a Seeker, and *Tapascharyas* are preparations for a training of the mind and intellect of the meditator. When one has practised for sufficiently long, worship, etc., and has undergone a certain amount of intelligent *Tapascharya*, one becomes well integrated in one’s inner personality. Such an one becomes tranquil in his inner life and gains a certain amount of single-pointedness of application with his intellect. Only when the mind and intellect are thus tuned up, can the individual successfully live in the world of meditation and maintain his equilibrium in that world. But to believe that these are an end in themselves, is a tragic mistake and the Scripture is lovingly indicating to us the fallacy of such a belief.

Meditation is the means, Realization of the Self is

the goal, and between meditation and Self-realization there is no relationship as *cause* and *effect*. Meditation only removes the veil over the Self, and the Self is realized by Itself in its own light. The cloud rolls away with the breeze and the sun shines from behind it, of its own accord, in its own light. Meditation is as much responsible for Self-realization as the breeze is responsible for creating the Sun! Meditation ends *Avidya* ; *Vidya* is our real nature.

Hence it is that the *Sruti* says, *When the understanding becomes calm and refined*, then, while engaging himself in the great vocation of man, *viz.*, meditation, the individual realises the Supreme Self within himself. The purity of the mind is the most important factor for this great achievement, and hence the emphasis on "*Visuddha-Tatwa*". During the endless pilgrimage of each individual, during his travail through the womb of time-space-and-causality-confusion in the lower equipments, such as inert stones, living vegetables, knowing animals, and thinking man, he the seeker has gained in his inner composition thick layers of animalisms and instincts. To rub them off and to purify the *anthakarana* is the process of spiritualism.

Herein we are against the pessimistic belief in the Western philosophy which hesitates to accept that "man is not a helpless victim but a master of his instincts". They, on the other hand, would like to accept that man is a victim, as much as any animal, of his instincts, and they, the materialistic West, seek to discover in this cosy philosophy a palpable excuse for their indulgent nature and constant wooing of carnal pleasures. In contrast with this, the East heroically declares, "man is a Master of his instincts and his greatness lies in his capacity to release himself from the

soul-killing chains of instincts”. This, in the East, is not merely a theory, but the Seers and Sages of India had literally lived these perfections and in their victory over their instincts they had gained the world of Godhood.

Thus, the more we renounce and get over the negativities in us, the more purified we become in our mind and intellect, and the purer the mind, the greater the divinity which that mind comes to reflect. And it is this that is meant here by “*Gnana Prasada*”. The dualists have claimed for this a meaning almost amounting to a “descent of Grace from the Lord”. In bringing such a meaning out of this stanza they had, to some extent, to crush the *mantra* into an ugly discord.

When reading “*Gnana Prasada*” or “*Atma Prasada*” or “*Sattwa Prasada*”, etc., a true student of *Vedanta*, striving in the path honestly to follow the Eternal footprints of the *Rishis*, should understand it to mean, “the purification gained by his mind-intellect-equipment through a renunciation of his false values, wrong attachments, delusive vanities and low animal instincts”. The more a mind is redeemed from its psychological aberrations, the more such a mind becomes subtle and pure. A pure mind agitates the least. In the still pool of the mind a clear reflection of Pure Awareness comes to play. Realisation thereafter is immediate and fruitful.

एषोऽणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यो यस्मिन् प्राणः पञ्चधा संविवेश ।  
प्राणैश्चित्तं सर्वमोतं प्रजानां यस्मिन् विशुद्धे विभवत्येष आत्मा ॥

॥ ९ ॥

*Yesho Anu-ratma Chetasa Veditavyo Yasmin Pranah Pancadha  
Samvivesa | Pranais-Cittam Sarvamotam Prajanam Yasmin  
Visudha Vibhavatyesho Atma* ॥ (9)



By means of the Light of the Intellect one should know the subtle truth of the Atman within the body which is pervaded by the Life-force in a fivefold way. Man's intellect is interwoven with the senses. When that intellect is purified, the Self shines forth.

The instrument in making an all-out and sincere effort at the rediscovery of the Self is declared here to be a purified intellect. *Chetas* is the "illuminating principle" in the intellect; it is the intelligence in the intellect. Thus, one can realize the *Atman* through a process of knowing. Certainly, this is to be very carefully understood or else this *mantra* would be contradicting the earlier *mantra*\* where the supreme Reality has already been discussed as "inconceivable and unmovable". Aspirants of all classes have been raising this question from the beginning of time as to how, through *Sadhana* and meditation, can human mind and intellect, which are themselves finite, realize the Infinite *Atman*.

This doubt, has raised itself only in the confused understanding of an half-educated Upanishad *Pandit*. The *mantra* becomes perfectly clear when we understand what all the intellect has to enquire into and judge. When once the pure intellect has discriminated the finite matter envelopments, identifying with which, we have come to forget our Real Nature and have come to act and strive as though we are the seekers, the meditation, with the intellect, has ended. Thus when the Upanishad says here that the instrument of realizing the Self is the Light of the Intellect, we only mean that when we have become fully aware of all the items in us which "we are not", what remains is our own Resplendent Nature of Divinity. It is thus, by a process of

\* *Ibid.*—III-1-7. 'Achinthyaroopam' note the discourse upon this term.

discriminative analysis and reasoned elimination, that we come to recognise in the vaults of our beings the Truth or the Reality.

Ordinarily, though we are intelligent, our entire attention is always employed with the sense-organs and their respective objects. When that intellect is purified, *i.e.*, when withdrawn from its playful preoccupation with the toy-world, outside and within,—the Self shines forth in Its own resplendency. That which makes us a stranger to ourselves is our own drunken preoccupation with our false identifications and our wasteful play with the senses. Once we withdraw ourselves from them, as the sun from behind the clouds, the Self emerges to assert and shine Itself.

यं यं लोकं मनसा संविभाति विशुद्धसत्त्वः कामयते यांश्च कामान् ।  
तं तं लोकं जयते तांश्च कामांस्तस्मादात्मज्ञं ह्यर्चयेद् भूतिकामः ॥

॥ १० ॥

इति मुण्डकोपनिषदि तृतीयमुण्डके प्रथमः खण्डः

*Yam Yam Lokam Manasa Samvibhathi Visuddha Sattwah  
Kamayathæ Yam Scha Kaman | Tam Tam Lokam Jayathæ  
Tham Scha Kamam-Sthasmad Athmagnyam Hyarchayeth  
Bhoothikamah ||* (10)

Whatever sphere the man of purified nature desires, whatever objects he fixes his heart upon, he obtains those worlds and those objects. Therefore he who is desirous of prosperity should honour the man of Self-realization.

Here, in this *mantra*, is the great secret of success, discussed for everyone who chooses to make use of it in all his activities. Probably, this was exactly the secret behind the unforgettable success the ancient India had in all fields of activity, including the material. "Mind is the man" is a truth accepted by Western psychology also, and yet its obvious corollary has been

missed by them. The Hindu seers not only declared, "As the mind, so the man", but also lived up to this philosophy and discovered in it an answer to all our deficiencies and incapacities. Here in the *Sruti*, we have their final declaration based upon their deep—rooted conviction, born out of their own lived personal experiences.

If, with a single-pointed devotion we could harness our entire mental capacity and wish for or will for a thing to happen, it must necessarily come to pass immediately—this is a certain law in life. But, unfortunately, none of us has a fully-integrated mind which can exclusively wish for one thing powerfully enough. Before we wish for a thing, a hundred other desires and contrary thoughts crowd the mind and loot away its powers. Thus, in a welter of self-cancelling thoughts, we remain, the impotent worm that we are, without a strong will or power of suggestion or capacity to plan, to act and to achieve. Here, in the *Sruti*, we have the secret initiating us into an era of irresistible success.

*Sadhana* or spiritual training, develops in the *sadhaka* a mental capacity to think or to wish, to feel or to determine, to reject or to desire, one solitary idea, to the total and complete exclusion of all other dissimilar or even complementary thoughts. Thus a man, who was ordinarily ineffectual and helpless, comes to rise above the circumstances of his life and even rule over them when he develops in *yoga*. The devotees would call this (mental capacity) as *Iswara kripa*, while the *Vedantins* would call it as *Atma-sakthi*, and the Yogis would name it as a glory of the *kundalini*. In fact, all of them are talking of one and the same phenomenon; when an individual gets more and more integrated in his physical, mental and intellectual personalities, more and more he becomes a power to be reckoned with, a

potency most irresistible. Out of even the worst of us such a genius can be brought out through the divine technique of *yoga*.

The Supreme Perfection in personality is reached only by a full-grown *Gyani*. And hence the *Sruti* advises that those who are desirous of worldly gains and material successes should revere and respect, adore and worship, a Seer of Knowledge. With the blessings of a *Gyani* nothing is impossible for us to achieve in this world or in any other. But it is also equally a fact that, if there be anything that a *Gyani* knows not, it is only the art of blessing one to the exclusion of others!! In fact, a master's only life is to live the blessedness of the "One in All," and "the All in One," ever blessing all, ever serving all, ever loving all!! This is the glorious life of a seer who has the living experience of the intimate identification with everything and everyone. Therefore, in this *mantra* the sons of the Aryans are not recommended to go about helping *Gyanis* to build *ashramas* or to submerge them in puddles of almonds-and-milk!! A true master craves for nothing, needs nothing, except the seeker's mental and intellectual purification and spiritual glory!!

Live in continuous and unbroken God-remembrance and intelligent detachment, in self-control and purity, always cheerful and always happy, regular in meditation and in charity, ever playing the allotted part in life, but never taking it seriously to heart—this is the secret way of serving a true man of realization. To him, flowers are a criminal waste, *pada pujas* are painful nuisance, *namaskars*, a burning botheration, and crowds of devotees cringing and begging, praising and fondling, a terrible agony!!!

End of Chapter III—Section 1

## Chapter III—Section 2

स वेदैतत् परमं ब्रह्म धाम यत्र विश्वं निहितं भाति शुभ्रम् ।  
उपासते पुरुषं ये ह्यकामास्ते शुक्रमेतदतिवर्तन्ति धीराः ॥ १ ॥

*Sa Vedaitat Paramam Brahma Dhama Yatra Viswam  
Nihitam Bhati Subhram | Upasathæ Purusham Ye Hyakama-  
Sithæ Sukrametat-Athivartanti Dheerah ॥* (1)

The man of Self-realization knows the radiant Supreme *Brahman* to be Him on Whom the world is based. And those men of discrimination, who without any wordly desire are devoted to such persons, go beyond all chances of rebirth.\*

In this *Mantra*, as contrasted with the last one, we have a description of the benefits accrued by service to a great man of realization by a person who is himself without any material desires. Earlier, in the last section, Mother *Sruti* promised that all those who worship a Revered Master of perfect Self-realization can, in His grace, come to gain for themselves all their material desires. Naturally, a doubt would arise in the mind of true seekers, who entertain no desires for the flimsy finite world of sense-objects, as to what would be the benefit if a great Master be served faithfully and worshipped devotedly, for a length of time, by such a *viraktha* seeker.

Here, the Scripture answers it in the most clear terms that such an aspirant thereby gains the sacred spiritual wealth called *the purified inner equipments*. Without *anthakarna sudhi* neither a correct grasping of the pregnant imports of the Scriptures, nor a graceful

\* May be compared with DISCOURSES ON KATHOPANISHAD III, 1.

flight into the higher planes of meditation, will be possible. Thus, here, the *mantra* says that by serving a master faithfully, for a period of time, the individual would thereby reach the State of Perfection which is Immortal and Eternal.

In this, there is certainly a palpable contradiction with the accredited and noted declarations of the Hindu Scriptures. The Upanishads are never tired of repeating that without the knowledge gained through the discovery of the Self the whirl of life and death will not end, and yet, here it seemingly says, in its literal meaning, that the wise and discriminating intellects by serving such Perfect Masters of realization, without any worldly desires in their minds, would gain thereby a state of existence beyond the tumultuous disturbances of birth, growth, disease, decay and death !

This is not altogether inexcusable. In ordinary conversations, we often name the goal for the very means. If a man in the town is asked, "where are you going," he would certainly answer, "to the office am I bound," and yet, after another ten minutes we may meet him round the corner waiting at a bus-stand. Herein, we do not generally call that man a liar because he did not tell us earlier that he was going to the bus-stand !! Similarly, the service of the master is explained here by the *Sruti* as directly responsible for the Supreme Realization. In fact, *Vedanta Sastra* declares it in the most unequivocal terms that *Guru Seva* makes the aspirant only more and more fit for greater exertions and higher flights through meditation.

The *Brahman* here mentioned is the conditioned *Brahman* and not the unconditioned Supreme Reality—

here mention is made of the *Brahman* which is the material cause for the world of names and forms, that bang upon our cognition at every moment. In short, it is the *Brahman* conditioned in *avidya* that is meant here, and not the Pure Knowledge-Absolute, beyond all traces of both *Vidya* and *Avidya*. In this connection, it is profitable to note that Knowledge or Pure Consciousness is the light that illumines within us both the ideas of ignorance as well as the concepts of knowledge. Just as in the sun there is no darkness, it being nothing but a mass of light, so too, in Pure Wisdom there cannot be any trace of ignorance.

कामान् यः कामयते मन्यमानः स कामभिर् जायते तत्र तत्र ।  
पर्याप्तकामस्य कृतात्मनस्तु इहैव सर्वे प्रविलीयन्ति कामाः ॥ ॥ २ ॥

*Kaman Yah Kamayathe Manyamanah Sa Kamabhir  
Jayathe Tatra Tatra — Paryapta-Kamasya Kritatmanasthu  
Ihaiva Sarvæ Praviliyanthi Kamah ॥ (2)*

Whoever desires for objects, brooding over them, they are born here and there for the fulfilment of those desires. But in the case of a Seer whose longings have found their final consummation and who has realized the Self, desires vanish even here in this life.

Herein we have a clear statement explaining the technique and the law behind human rebirth. It is an uncontradicted law of life, accepted by all the schools of philosophers in India, that “*As you think, so you become*”. Thought is the expression of the creative urge in us and the creation depends entirely upon the quality and mode of desires in us.

We have already discussed the genesis of action wherein we found that the ignorance of our Real Nature which is all-perfect and all-full, generates in us vague

and fantastic desires and makes us feel that it is but a mad attempt on our part to come to our own Real Nature. We also found that desires disturb a hornets' nest of stinging thoughts, and that the thoughts, expressing themselves in the outer world of sense objects, are the actions of the individual. The total field of actions thus created by the multiple individual ego creates what we generally term, the 'world'. In Sanskrit '*loka*' means a field of activities or a field of experiencing.

Self-realization is the ending of every trace of ignorance in us. In the vital moment of experiencing the Selfhood, the God-man, drops for ever his unawareness of his own All-Perfect Nature and, therefore, he cannot have thereafter any more desires in him. In the words of the *Sruti* he becomes thereafter a *parayathakami* : it is indeed very difficult to find an equivalent in English for this term without hampering the vitality and force of it.

The modern atheists, the secularists, the materialists etc., have often come to discuss with me, with a seeming dignity of wisdom and a boastful intelligence, that it is the glorification of *desirelessness* in our Scriptures that has wrought material havoc to the quick prosperity in this country. Strange are the arguments that the wolf could give when it is impatient to make a meal of the lamb !

To these comrades, *vairagya* or desirelessness is that negative state of mental coma, into which a person falls when poisonous fumes rise in the bosom as his disappointed desires putrify there !! If it were so, the great Masters of the world could not have recommended it as the Supreme State of Perfection.

There is a lot of difference between the disappointed-fox proverbially crying "*the grapes are sour,*"



and a Nero rejecting his golden plate of grapes declaring it to be *not really perfect*!! Desirelessness and the state of mental poise gained therein by the Master are because of his realization of the Self and the state of Absolute Bliss. After a complete dinner and plenty of dessert, a fully satisfied glutton will certainly cry 'no' to any loving offer of yet another slice of toast and butter as far as he is concerned ; for the time being at least, he is desireless in the kingdom of food. Similarly, a moment of total satiation comes, in experiencing the perfection of the Self, so that the Master of realization cries 'no' to all material sense-objects ; not because they do not contain any glitter of joy, but, because, from his standpoint, these tiny toys-of-life have no more any joy-contents when they are compared to the Infinite treasure of joy which has already become his. A millionaire would rarely go to a poor-feeding, with hopes of getting a glorious feed,—even in his dream.

Thus, if the Hindu philosophers glorified 'the state of desirelessness' as the end-all and be-all of life it was because they knew a technique of making us reach a greater State of Perfection, from where, when we look down, the flimsy toys of life would all look ridiculous, stupid and childish. How far they were wise is clearly noticeable and fully realizable to any one, who can read the signs of the times in the passing events of modern history—except, perhaps, the uneducated Indian atheists. In the perfect knowledge that we have already with us all the things that we desire for, to be desireless is certainly a much more glorious state of fulfilment and happiness than to eternally strive and struggle to produce and accumulate the changing demands of the mad and uncontrolled desires.

Here in the *Sruti*, the great Masters, when they

talk of the State of Desirelessness, mean that state of full and conscious Awareness, in which the individual has no more any regrets at not having things which he should desire for because, with knowledge, all ignorance ends and also because where there is no ignorance, there desires cannot erupt.

In short, according to the texture of our desires, we think, and as we think, we are born into various situations identifying ourselves with various forms—now born and now dying and now reborn again. The Seer who has rediscovered himself to be no more the body-mind-intellect entity leaves off all desires, and, thereafter, to him there is no more any cause for making his appearance again in the world, for gaining or fulfilling any of his unfulfilled desires !!

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।  
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनुं स्वाम् ॥      ॥ ३ ॥

*Nayamatma Pravacanena Labhyo Na Medhaya Na Bahuna  
Srutena—Yamæ-Vaisha Vrinuthæ Thæna Labhya-Sthasniisha  
Atma Vivrunuthæ Thanum Swam. (3)*

The Self is not attained through discourses nor through memorizing scriptural texts, nor through much learning. It is gained only by him who wishes to attain it with his whole heart. To such an one the Self reveals its true nature.\*

If a realization of the Self is the end of all our desiring and the thralldom of birth and death, naturally, the student of the Scriptures would be anxious to know how this state can be attained. The first instinct would surely be to reach the truth through study. Here the *Rishis* are negating all those paths which ordinarily our intellect, with its instincts; would suggest to us.

\* This stanza recurs in DISCOURSES on KATHOPANISHAD—II-23.

Thus, the *Mantra* says that no *Pandit* should think, that because he can give an elaborate and learned discourse upon the *Atma Tattwa*, he can realize or has realized the Supreme.

Again, there are scholars who industriously commit to memory stupendous volumes of spiritual literature and *vedic* texts. There are in North India *Chathurvedies* and *Trivedies*, which were titles once upon a time given to Brahmins who could repeat out of memory all the four or three *vedas*. Alas, today they have become surnames, the significance of which is unknown even to many of them! The *Mantra* clearly says here that by merely committing to memory a large volume of the literature, no one can attain the perfection indicated therein by the *Rishies*.

Again, there are some seekers who are never tired of hearing the same Truth repeated by hundreds of masters. They believe that in their huntings they would come across, somewhere a rare master who, while explaining the *Sruti*, will secretly hand over to them the experience of Godhood also!! With this idle hope in mind many a sincere seeker is running all over the place in this country enriching none other than, perhaps, the railways and hotel-keepers! Any amount of hearing even from the best of teachers will not *actually* take the seeker to the halls of experiencing the Self.

If none of these accredited methods of knowledge—such as extensive reading, intense study, and perfect tuition—can make us realize this Supreme Knowledge and take us to the spiritual perfection, does it amount to saying that the *Sruti*-declarations are but beautiful paintings of an unrealizable though perfect Utopia? In the second part of the *Mantra* this doubt is completely cleared.

The *Rishi* says that the *Self* can be gained by him who yearns for It with his entire inner personality and the experience shall be in all its Immortal and Eternal fullness.

In the second half of the *Mantra* there is a construction in Sanskrit which is available for two interpretations, and the great *Acharyas* have taken them both to establish their respective philosophical theories of *Dwaita* (dualism) and *Adwaita* (non-dualism). The two words used here ‘*Yam*’ and ‘*Yesha*’ can both be interpreted in two different meanings and, hence, the possibility of two seemingly opposite suggestions. In order to make it clear we may tabulate them, as below :

		<i>Adwaitin</i>	<i>Dwaitin</i>
<i>Yam</i>	...	Which Atman	Whom
<i>Yesha</i>	...	This aspirant	God

Thus according to the *Adwaitin*, “*which Atman this aspirant longs to gain*” ; and according to the *Dwaitin* it would mean, “*The aspirant whom the God chooses!!*” In fact, there is no contradiction between the two stand-points taken by the two *Acharyas*. It can confuse only the muddled intellects who are steeped in their own prejudices. To a pure heart, striving sincerely in the Life Divine, slowly and steadily perfecting himself by eradicating the vulgar animalisms in himself—to such an one the *Acharyas* in their different arguments are but pointing to one and the same Truth.

To Sankara, Godhood is an ascent of man to the highest pinnacle of his revolutionizing possibility! To Ramanuja and Madhwa, God descends into man and by His Divine Touch of Grace divinizes the individual devotee !

In fact, whether the river *reaches* the ocean or the ocean *receives* the river the effect is the same. Truth remains uncontradicted. In both the cases, of the river reaching the ocean or the ocean receiving the river, the river in its final stage loses its separate qualities and merges to become *one with the ocean*. I am here only anticipating a metaphor which *Sruti* Herself makes use of in the same section a few *Mantras* ahead.

नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यो न च प्रमादात् तपसो वाप्यलिङ्गात् ।  
एतैरुपायैर्यतते यस्तु विद्वांस्तस्यैष आत्मा विशते ब्रह्मधाम ॥ ॥ ४ ॥

*Nayamatma Balaheenana Labhyo Na Ca Pramadat Tapaso  
Vapyalingath | Yethai-Rupayai-Ryatate-Yastu Vidvam-Stasyaisha  
Atma Visate Brahmadhama ॥ (4)*

The Self is not gained by men weak in (body, mind, intellect or spirit), nor by the insincere, nor by those practising (unintelligent) austerities, But wise men who strive with vigour, attention and propriety attain union with *Brahman*.

The technique of negation used in the previous *Mantra* is continued here also. Earlier, in removing some of the ordinary misconceptions, the Scripture declares that the Supreme Truth cannot be realized by mere discourses, nor by memorizing, nor by repeated hearing. Here *Sruti* again denies some more of the ordinary misconceptions about the Life Divine.

The majority of seekers have a great belief that a seeker should be an almost useless individual in society, an utter failure in life, and a cursed desperado, who had had more disappointments in life than successes! Again, they have an idea that any amount of spasmodic, irregular, unintelligent and excessive austerities are good for spiritual progress. There is yet another very

dangerous and tragic misconception especially in Hinduism, that a God-seeking and a God-fearing life is the special vocation of a certain class of men who move about in special garments with special outfits ! These absurd notions are all contradicted here by the Scripture in as positive a manner as one could hope for.

‘ *Weak in spirit* ’ means weak in the steady pursuit and faith. He who is still in delusions and yet seeking spiritual progress only to serve as a handle to life, certainly would be weak in intellect, mind and body judged from the spiritual standards of perfection. Again in a blind over-enthusiasm, if any fool hopes to scramble up the altars of spiritual perfection through self-persecution and severe *tapascharya*, he again is condemned here by the *Rishis*.

“ *Neither by mere excitement nor by tapas without linga, can one hope to climb the ladder of spirituality.* ” After meeting a great Master or soon after listening to a great discourse, one may get his enthusiasm fired up and in that excitement it is possible that one comes to take certain hasty decisions on renunciation and sacrifice. But this temporary warmth of spirituality cannot sustain itself, but will soon cool itself down to an ineffectual luke-warm-idle-hope !!

Again, excessive austerity such as too many fasts, too many sleepless nights, very long and painful pilgrimages, endurance-feats in the pooja-rooms, etc., are all undertaken and diligently pursued by some aspirants in the hope of gathering a large return of spiritual development, in a very short period, at compound interest ! The Science of Self-Perfection denies all such blitz movements any chance at all in storming the Citadel of Truth.

‘ *Alingath* ’ :—On this term, “ without proper *linga* ”,

a massive structure of ugliness has come to be built upon our culture by unintelligent pundits who have come to prepare in it the very tomb of true Hinduism !! Recently I had received a letter from a *Pundit* in Madras, who, of course, had not the guts to sign himself, but raised an owl-cry from this sorrowful tower of misconceived notions !!

‘*Linga*’ means, in fact, a symbol or sign at the sight of which an awakened intelligence can deduce certain reliable truths. Seeing some smoke rising from the valleys of a distant hill any sensible man will deduce that there is fire. Here the smoke is the *Linga* from which we have come to the knowledge of the fire. Similarly, *Siva linga* means a particular sign at the sight of which we deduce and infer the presence of the Mighty Lord of Kailas.

*Sruti* here is thus using the term ‘*linga*’ in its largest scope of its implication. Or else, we will have to accept the modern Brahminic interpretation and understand the *Mantra* to mean that even intelligent *tapascharya* has no spiritualizing force unless the one performing the austerities is clothed in the ochre robes or has a shaven head or carries a *Kamandalu* or, conversely, it would mean that if one wears this special dress and has gone through “the barber’s treatment” he can come to claim all the best reactions even to his most unintelligent and excessive *tapas* ! A Text-book of Wisdom cannot thus be made a Bible of Stupidity if there is yet any sense of reverence for the great Upanishads left with us !!

The *linga* here does not, therefore, mean the colour of the robes or the condition of hair on the head, or the kind of utensils or mattress used. In short, it is not the external symbols of a *sanyasin*, as some would have it.

In the days of the Scriptures, the Aryan descendants of the *Rishis* placed a greater emphasis upon the mental and intellectual conditions and qualities in a seeker, than upon the mere external marks of spirituality which the disciple may with convenience carry about him.

Every intelligent young man of today, who has a wide-awakened discriminative intellect, and who lives the world of his circumstances and emotions intelligently, has all the equipments necessary for being taught the ideal way of living in self-control and healthy self-denial. When such awakened intellects pursue a life of renunciation and self-sacrifice, with a view to gaining a greater amount of self-mastery, their *tapas* becomes certainly fruitful and immensely profitable to them.

Therefore to insist that the term '*linga*' here means the external symbols of renunciation will not help us in these days, when the majority of even the so-called *sanyasins* have become animals in disguise !

Just as in the previous *Mantra*, the Scripture here not only denies and refutes any success to foolish and stupid methods but also at the same time in all kindness points out the right path and the correct methods of self-perfection. Here she promises sure success to all those who are healthy in body, intellect and spirit, and who have the necessary amount of discriminative understanding to differentiate the true from the false, and thus live in self-denial.....denying themselves the false pleasures gained in courting the delusions. She says that intelligent men who strive with vigour and sincerity, and practise with propriety shall rediscover themselves to be the Supreme Truth and thus end all their false notions about themselves and become Infinite and Omnipotent in their True Immortal Nature as the Self.



संप्राप्यैनमृषयो ज्ञानतृप्ताः कृतात्मानो वीतरागाः प्रशान्ताः ।  
ते सर्वगं सर्वतः प्राप्य धीराः युक्तात्मनः सर्वमेवाविशन्ति ॥ ॥ ५ ॥

*Samprapyainamrishayo Gyanatruptah Kritatmano Veetharagah  
Prasantah | Tæ Sarvagam Sarvata Prapya Dheera Yuktatmanah  
Sarvamevavisanti. (5)*

When the sages have attained the *Atman* they become satisfied with their knowledge, their purpose is fulfilled, they become free from desire and they gain tranquillity. Having attained the All-pervading *Atman* on all sides, they, thereafter devoted to the Self, enter into everything.

If, as we have been told in the last two *Mantras*, the realization of the Self is so very difficult and the technique of accomplishing it so delicate and exacting, a doubt may arise in the minds of the uninitiated as to why they should, after all, launch themselves into such a danger-ridden pilgrimage. This is answered here.

The seeker having realized the Self becomes completely satisfied in his own knowledge of his own rediscovered Self-hood. A beggar in the street was by accident discovered to be the only surviving member of a family of chieftains who ruled a neighbouring tribe. The mere discovery of himself to be no more the beggar, homeless and destitute, but is in fact a chieftain of a tribe, is sufficient to give the beggar a joyous satisfaction. Herein the beggar is satisfied in the very knowledge of his own new identity and its corresponding status in life. Similarly, when the seeker who was having till now the dreadful feeling that he was an impotent, mortal weakling, rediscovers himself to be the Spiritual Centre of the entire universe, the very knowledge is more than sufficient to give him all happiness !

“ *Their purpose is fulfilled* ” :—Life is a struggle and an agitation, because, each one of us has at every

moment an honest regret at not having fulfilled ourselves in one or the other of our endless desires and plans. A complete sense of fulfilment would be reached when all our desires dry up and all our plans end. This state of *krithakrithyatha*, yielding for us a steady satisfaction of having gained all that is to be gained, known all that is to be known, seen all that is to be seen, etc., is gained immediately at the ending of our ignorance about our own Divine Nature. With the discovery of our true identity as the Self, the accomplished seeker gains the state of complete fulfilment discussed here in this *Mantra*.

Naturally, in that sense of complete fulfilment there cannot be any desire ; and when desires have subsided, there in that bosom, peace must necessarily come to reign !!

Supreme Awareness, when it gets identified with a particular body-mind and intellect, becomes in its new-born vanity a finite and suffering mortal-soul called the Ego. When the ego renounces all its identifications with its enveloping wrappers of matter, it regains its native glory of the All-pervading Life-force. This is best explained in the Science of *Vedanta* by the analogy of the eternal space (*Akasa*) and the pot-space. Space conditioned by the pot assumes for itself a separate ego-sense and comes to be known as "the pot-space." But the moment that conditioning is destroyed, as for example, when the pot is broken, the "pot-space" becomes at once one with the all-pervading space ! In fact, even inside the pot the space was never limited but was ever the all-pervading space. Only, it assumed for itself a separateness and, there after, it played the game of *Samsar*.....the pains of limitations.....even the life of attachment and hatred !

In the world of pots the spittoon-pot-space covets the luck and glory of the sugar-pot-space ! On realizing, " I am Pure Space," even the very stuff of the spittoon-pot and sugar-pot are realized to exist but " in Me, the Eternal Space." Even the wretched spittoon-pot-space can come to experience the contact of its immediate oneness with the Space everywhere !

Similarly, when the seeker by rejecting his identifications with his mind, intellect and body, rediscovers himself to be nothing but Pure Awareness, he becomes one with the All-pervading Self, and thus, finds in himself the entire world of names and forms—he becomes the inner ruler in every name and form existing in the time-space-world !!

वेदान्तविज्ञानमुनिश्चिन्तार्थाः सन्न्यासयोगात् यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः ।

ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे ॥ ॥ ६ ॥

*Vedantavignana-Sunischitartah Sanyasayogat Yatayah  
Suddha-Satwah | Tæ Brahamalokeshu Parantakalæ Paramritah  
Parimuchyanthi Sarvae ॥ (6)*

Having well ascertained beyond all doubts the exact import of the Upanishads and having purified their minds with the ' *Yoga of renunciation* ' all anchorites attain the world of *Brahman* and at the time of death become fully liberated.

" *Having well ascertained* " :—There is a difficulty in understanding correctly the Scriptures. Though many of the *Mantras* are obviously clear, the exact meaning is very deep and, naturally, very difficult to grasp. This should be so, because, the Upanishads are the best literature in the world that have successfully explained or defined, the inexplicable or the indefinable Infinite. If the finite words have defined

the Infinite it could not have been because of the words' own meaning-contents ; if at all words could express that which is beyond speech they can only do so by means of their 'suggestiveness.' In fact, the Upanishadic *Mantras* have their achievements only in their play of suggestiveness.

Hence, a personal study of the Scripture may not be *always* sufficient to help the *Sadhaka* to go beyond the literary meaning of the language used, and reach the Realms of Truth indicated by the Texts. To a large extent, a master of experience (*nishtha*) is needed to complete the study of the *Upanishads*. Hence it is that the *Mantra* here qualifies a great Seeker as one who has well-ascertained, beyond all traces of doubt, the true import of the sacred *Mantra*. Misunderstandings, half-understandings and non-understandings, can blockade the real fulfilment of a sincere study of the Scriptures.

“*By the Yoga of renunciation*” :—Not only is it sufficient that a vigilant and sincere seeker should first of all ascertain the true import of the declarations in the *Upanishads*, but he must also through the *Yoga of renunciation*, purify both his psychological and intellectual personalities. The word ‘*Sanyasa Yoga*’ is not to be taken to mean in its literal meaning of “having taken to *Sanyas*,” for, in that case, it would mean that *Vedanta* is applicable only to a rare minority of men clothed in a special garb, etc. The “*Yoga of renunciation*” is more an internal revolution of the values of life entertained and lived rather than a vast advertisement-board declaring externally that one is a *Sanyasin* ! It is true that the external symbols have their influences ; but what I mean is that a mere external show will not take us even by an inch

nearer to our great goal of perfection. In short, a mere fence round a plot of ground will not yield us a crop, however long we may wait for it ; but a cultivated land can be well protected with a fencing round it.

Thus, “ *Sanyasa Yoga* ” is to be understood as the mental *sanyas*, with all our emphasis in the internal attitude of the mind, rather than upon the external physical show or a *Sanyasi*-garb and a *Sanyasi*-status. Therefore, the “ *Yoga of renunciation* ” indicates our mental renunciation of all the grossness and animalisms in us. Renounce all the negative tendencies such as lust, greed, passions, appetites, egoism, vanity, cruelty, hatred, etc., and replace them with their opposite good ethical qualities such as love, tenderness, mercy, tolerance, kindness, purity, nobility, patience, self-control, selflessness, etc. This, in short, is the “ *Yoga of renunciation* ”.

Thus, having ascertained well the Upanishadic imports, when the aspirant has successfully carried out the abovementioned inner revolution in character, attitude, and values of life, he is fit to meditate upon the scriptural text. Such a purified mind and intellect alone can with poise and ease fly in the dimensionless Realms of the Self. The *Sruti* here is giving a positive promise that all such seekers shall certainly reach their goal without being blockaded by any obstacle on the way. If at all any one of us is meeting with obstacles, either from outside or from within, they are all because we are not established in the true “ *Yoga of renunciation.* ” Without it, no progress is ever possible. There is no compromise or by-lanes in this great Pilgrimage to Truth.

“ *Attain the world of Brahman* ”:—If the Supreme Reality is One-without-a-second as the Nondualists

would have it, how is it possible for the *Sruti* to make this statement of “*world of Brahman*”, which certainly indicates a plurality? This is a seemingly wise question that has often been raised by the champions of plurality or the advocates of Qualified-monism. Sankara answers them both in the most convincing manner; as Sankara alone can.

According to him, *Sruti*-declarations are explanations of Truth addressed to the imperfect, and the great *Rishis* have explained the Infinite in terms of the finite, and this delusive world and its experiences which are at present real from the seekers' imperfect standpoint! To the seeker at the feet of the master, the world of plurality is real. To him existence means “existence of the various names and forms”. He is certainly convinced intellectually by the various philosophical arguments that there is a Spirit behind every material form. But it is not very easy, for even the best of students, to get intellectually convinced that the spiritual centres, seemingly encased in the various matter envelopments are all one and the same, and that Pure Consciousness in its Absolute state is a homogeneous mass of Pure Consciousness.

Thus, the Upanishad here says that one who has realized his Self attains or successfully finds his identity with all the spiritual centres in every name and form. In short, the ‘*Worlds of Brahman*’ mean only the spiritual centres presiding over every known mass of matter or every known thought or emotion. Though it is expressed here as different, in actual experiencing, a seeker cannot but have the (*Advaitic*) realization of the Oneness of Truth: “*Brahman alone exists*”.

From the Infinite, when viewed, the finite exists not: the finite is but a super-imposition upon the

Infinite. From the standpoint of the post, the ghost never existed, cannot exist and shall never exist. Considered from the reality of the rope no serpent has ever emerged out to frighten the deluded.

“*At the time of death become fully liberated*”—We have already discussed the great controversy in the Hindu philosophic discussions on whether a mortal can experience fully Godhood in this very life or not. There is a School of thought which, on the literal interpretation of texts, like the one here under discussion, believe and declare that complete and full realization of *Brahman* is not possible so long as we exist in this physical form. There are yet others who believe and declare that full and complete God realization is possible *even here and now* and a realized soul can yet continue to live enjoying the *Jeevan Mukthi* status.

In this interesting controversy, to every impartial intellect, the arguments of Sankara and his conclusions should be convincing beyond all traces of doubt. According to Sankara, *Jeevan Mukthi* is possible and it is exactly that state that is meant by the *Sruti*, for, if such a status is not possible, Sankara argues, we could not have a perfect *Guru* in this world to teach us the immortal *Brahma Vidya* ; since, according to the very Upanishads “a perfect *Guru* is he who is at once well-versed in the scriptural literature and also fully established in the experience of Godhood.”

According to Sankara, then, the death mentioned here is only the death of the false vanities and the delusive ego-sense. When the little-I dies, what remains is the Godly and the All-pervading Spiritual-I. “Die to live the life Divine”, seems to be the non-stop call of Vedanta to every generation. Where ego ends, there Godhood starts.

God becoming egoistic is the deluded mortal ; a mortal from whom the cloak of vanity has fallen off stands out to shine in resplendent glory of its own Eternal Divinity.

गताः कलाः पञ्चदश प्रतिष्ठा देवाश्च सर्वे प्रतिदेवतासु ।  
कर्माणि विज्ञानमयश्च आत्मा परेऽव्यये सर्वं एकीभवन्ति ॥      ॥ ७ ॥

*Gathah Kalah Panchadasa Pratishtha Devasca Sarva  
Pratidevatasu | Karmani Vignana-Mayascha Atma Pare-Avyaye  
Sarva Yekee-Bhavanti ||* (7)

The fifteen *Kalas* (Parts) enter into their elements, their *devatas* into their corresponding *devas*. Their deeds and their 'self-full-of-knowledge' become all one in the highest and imperishable *Brahman*.

“ Fifteen *Kalas* ” :—In the *Prasnopanishad*\* we have this discussion about the *kalas*. There, while giving a complete answer to the question of Sukesha, the Pippalada *Rishi* had explained the sixteen *kalas* as follows :—Prana, Faith, *Akasa*, Air, Fire, Water, Earth, Senses, Mind, Food, Strength, Thought, *Mantras*, *Karmas*, Worlds, and in the worlds Names also. This above enumerated list may read a mad-man's diary unless we read it with plenty of philosophical thinking and ultimately discover their interrelationship. Though this is not very essential for our direct understanding of our *Mantra* under discussion, I feel that you would not be satisfied without some explanation. Hence, in haste I shall try to indicate their sequence.

The Lord first created the *Prana* : ‘ *Prana* ’ meaning, the total *Prana* — technically called in Vedanta as “ the *Sutratma* ”, or the “ *Hiranya Garbha* ” (Brahmaji,

\* Here is the description of the merger of the microcosm back to the macrocosm in the DISCOURSES on PRASNOPANISHAD—VI—5.



the Creator). Thus, subjectively *Prana* stands for the Creator in us, meaning the creative urge in man's physical, mental and intellectual personalities.

Without a certain amount of faith, none of us can conceive of or act in or accomplish anything in this world. Even to be a typist, and get a job somewhere, the individual must certainly have a certain amount of faith in his own capacities and capabilities. A lunatic is he who has no faith even in himself. When walking on the road he probably would avoid and walk round even a pebble, for he has no faith that he can walk over it without stumbling over it!! In brief, the Creative urge in us must first of all create in us a quality of faith before it can express itself. When the Creator gains faith, the grosser five great elements are born as Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth. The perceivers of the qualities of these five elements are the five sense-organs. Ear to perceive the quality of *Akasa*, the sound ; skin to perceive the qualities of air, the touch ; the eye for the quality of fire, the form ; tongue for the quality of Water, the taste ; and the nose to smell the quality of earth.

When we have thus the five different sense-organs to perceive the five independent and heterogeneous qualities, unless there is a synchronizing and co-ordinating factor, we could not have the organised and synthetic knowledge of objects ; hence, the mind. Mind is produced out of the subtler aspects of the food taken in.

Food yields strength or vitality in us. When a mind is thus well fed and full of vitality, thoughts manifest ; and a very controlled and regulated thought-flow over a chosen subject-matter is called reflection (*Mantra*). *Mantra* is a formula or symbol repeated

often in order to facilitate the abovementioned process of reflection. And *Mantras*, chanted in a certain sequence accompanied by the various rituals, constitute the *Karma*. 'As the *Karma*, so the world', is very well known to us. A world is impossible without names and forms. Thus, the sixteen ring-lets constitute the chain of bondage-and-sorrow provided by the delusive world which is the creation of the very creative urge in us !

This explanation of Pippalada has become very famous in the Hindu Scriptural tradition, and we have very many repeated references to the spiritual entity in us as "the sixteen-faceted *Purusha*".

In the *Mantra* under discussion, the *Sruti* is trying to explain what happens to the Parts (*Kalas*) when the *Purusha* is realized by the *Yogin* in *Samadhi*. "The *kalas* enter into their elements" just as the serpent enters into the rope and when the rope is under the light of a torch, the true knowledge of the rope ends the delusive serpent !

"*The Devatas enter their corresponding devas*":—We have already seen that in the vocabulary of the Upanishads, when they say 'the presiding deities of the sense-organs', they mean only the powers of receiving the sense-impulses that are located in the respective sense-organs. For example, the eye is considered in *Vedanta* to be presided over by the Sun. This only means that the vision of the eye can function only when its sense-objects, such as form and colour are in a medium of light ; and Sun being a mass of light, in the poetic language of the *Rishis*, they say that the instrument of vision is presided over by the Lord of Light, the Sun. Thus, each sense-organ has its share of grace from the various Lords of the Elements. In the case of an individual who has realized the Self, the

*Sruti* here explains that these various faculties in the organs, in perceiving their respective objects, roll out of the sense-organs into their respective macrocosmic elemental powers.

“*Deeds and the Self-full-of-knowledge*”.—When a man with all his organs of knowledge and organ-of-action intact, lives the life of experiences, he cannot but live without performing actions. The one who does actions is but the ego-centre in the individual. The ego, we have found, is but the light of Awareness expressed through the conditions of the mind and the intellect. Hence, the expression used here in the *Mantra*, the “*Self-full-of-knowledge*”, stands for the ego in us.

To a realized sage, there is no more any of the effects of the previous *Karmas* to live through. And again the realization of the Self is gained only when the sense of separative egoism is completely and totally annihilated. Thus, the *Mantra* declares that the deeds with their reactions and the ego-centre with all its false vanities merge to become one with the Supreme Imperishable being.

यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रेऽस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाय ।  
तथा विद्वान् नामरूपाद् विमुक्तः परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥ ॥ ८ ॥

*Yadha Nadyah Syandamanah Samudræ Astam Gacanthi  
Namaroopæ Vihaya | Tadha Vidwan Namaroopad Vimuktah  
Parathparam Purusha-Mupaiti Divyam || (8)*

As flowing rivers get themselves disappeared in the ocean losing their special names and distinct forms, so the wise man free from all his identifications with names and forms goes unto the highest of the high — the Supreme Divinity.

The waters of the *oceans* in another form become

the *cloud* in the sky, and they falling down in *showers* gain for themselves a different name as *rain* ; and again, when the *rain-waters* collected together flow down continuously in a *stream* from the higher levels to the sea-shore they are called by a different name as the *river*. Again, even among the rivers according to the lands through which they flow, the condition of their waters and their mineral contents, they all have separate personalities and different names. So long as they are rivers, certainly each of them has a distinct personality of its own : Ganges is not Mississippi ; Jumna is not Godavari. But once they all reach the ocean and get themselves merged to become one with the ocean, they lose all their separate forms, distinct qualities and different names, and become one with the homogeneous vast expanse of the ocean.

This natural phenomenon is made use of in the Scripture to explain to us the state of Pure Awareness gained by a seeker in the fulfilment of his goal of life. As long as a seeker has a concept of separateness, which he maintains in his false identifications with the matter-wrappings about him, so long in him exists the *samsaric* ego-centre. This ego is the painful mortal, suffering the limitations of the material world. The moment he realizes, through discriminative analysis and consistent meditations, that he is in his Real Nature nothing but the Spiritual Factor and that even the very delusive matter envelopments as the body, mind and intellect, can come to exist and threaten his peace and quietude only when blessed by the very Divinity that he is, all his egoistic concepts end once for ever. Where ego has ended, there one experiences pure God-hood. "The Highest of the high, the Supreme Divinity".

स यो ह वै तत् परमं ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवन्ति  
नास्याब्रह्मवित् कुले भवति ।

तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं गुहाग्रन्थिम्यो

विमुक्तोऽमृतो भवति ॥

॥ ९ ॥

*Sa Yo Ha Vai Tath Paramam Brahma Veda Brahmaiva  
Bhavanti Na-Sya-Abrahmavit Kulē Bhavati | Tarati Sokam  
Tarati Paṅmanam Guha-Grandhibhyo Vimukto-Amrito Bhavati ॥*

(9)

He who knows that highest *Brahman* becomes *Brahman* ; and in his line, none who knows not the *Brahman* will be ever born. He crosses grief ; crosses sin, and from the knots-of-the-heart, becomes immortal.

Here the word 'knowing' is to be understood as "subjectively experiencing". A Vedantic seeker strives to end his entire negative way of living and to renounce all his animal-values of life, which he pursued and encouraged during his days of ignorance. As he develops in meditation, he comes to rediscover himself to be the Supremely Divine, the Omnipotent and Omniscient Lord Himself!! All the *Vedantic Sadhana* is only to annihilate our entire false ego-sense. When once the false ego conception has been broken down through our discriminative analysis and deep meditations upon the truth of the Upanishad declarations, the seeker comes to recognise the spiritual centre in himself.

Rediscovery of the spiritual centre within one self is at once the experience of the Total Divine Spiritual Presence everywhere. To taste a piece of jaggery in any part of the world is sufficient to give us an experience of the taste of all the jaggeries of every part of the world, in all the periods of time.

Thus, the Upanishads declare that "a knower of *Brahman* becomes *Brahman*"; a drop of sea water, so

long as it is trembling at the tip of my finger, is certainly separate from the ocean : but the moment it tumbles off the tip and falls into the bosom of the ocean, thereafter it cannot claim any separate name or form or personality, but certainly becomes one with the entire ocean. Similarly, so long as the Spirit in us chooses to identify itself with the delusive superimpositions on matter, it certainly has the dreamy experience of a separative existence. This conditioned *Atman*, or the ego, has certainly its own sorrows of limitations suffered — sense of limitation caused by the conditionings. The moment the Pure Awareness, as the spirit in us, becomes aware of itself, and thus, gains a knowledge of its own All-pervading Nature, it certainly becomes one with the Supreme Divinity.

This positive declaration of the *Rishis* that “*the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman*” has come to be the very corner-stone of the *Advaitic* philosophy. The *Mantra* under discussion is the very statement which has raised this *Mundakopanishad* to the dignity of being recognised as one of the most important ten Upanishads upon which the great Acharyas in Hinduism have chosen to give their serious thought and well-thought out and considered commentaries.

“*In the very family lineage of such a perfected Master there shall be born no one ignorant of this Vedantic culture*”. This is the confidence of the Hindu *Rishis* who provided for their Aryan children to live such a purely scientific and divine scheme of living in the sacred *Sanatana Dharma*. There is no fantastic exaggeration in this statement, since it must be the every day experience of every one of us in this world of today that a cultured man has a cultured family and an untutored and illiterate man has an equally uncultured family.

When in the ancient days, a member of a particular lineage, had climbed the ladder of evolution and had reached the roof of existence in the realization of the Self, there will certainly be in that family a Vedantic tradition and a spiritual civilization for generations on end. The preservation of this civilization of the higher values of life and the culture of the soul, were facilitated by the guarding rules of ethical and moral living, which were enforced upon the society by the benevolent Masters through their *Dharma Sastras* and social rules of behaviour and family orders of living.

“*Goes beyond sorrow and sin*”—One tired of the sorrows in the finite world is the seeker in spiritualism. Every seeker is a conscientious revolt against pain and death. *Moksha*, which is the goal of life, is a state where pain has no entry, and joy is the only experience. Thus, when we are told here that the seeker who has come to realize the Spiritual Centre in him goes beyond the frontiers of pain, the *Sruti* is indicating the Domain of Liberation.

Sin is the record etched on the mental equipment, left over by the wrong actions committed in the past. Such ugly scars make a mind disabled and deficient in meeting efficiently the present challenges of life, and they can yield for it only a harvest of sorrow.

Ego is the needle that plies through the channels of thought, stitching on the mental stuff during the mind's earlier thought-reactions to its external world of happenings. If those lines are rightly made, today when the ego, plays upon it, a perfect music of joyous peace can be had. If the scratches were made due to negative and animal thought-currents, the pattern so made on the mental 'record' would be such that the ego playing upon it can sing only sobs and sighs, failures

and disappointments, fears and agitations ! It is in this sense that the reactions of actions done in the past binds us in its relentless enslavement.

A man of Perfection is he who has ended his ego and has come to discover his Selfhood. When the needle is off from the ' record ' in a gramophone-box, even if it is playing upon the disc, it cannot any more give out even a single note of its song-of-joy or cry of pain.

Similarly, whatever be the past actions and their consequent reactions registered upon a given mental equipment, unless the mental instrument as such is in contact with the false ego-needle it cannot act upon the individual. Thus it is that a realised Saint is said to be beyond all reactions of *Karma*. This State of Freedom from the past encumbrances rising from sins, and past heritages accrued from merits, is indicated here by the term, " *he goes beyond sin* ".

Such an one knows no mortality ; for, mortality is a necessary condition through which the finite ego should pass in its dream of continued separativeness ! When a man has realized his spiritualhood, that man can know thereafter no death, since he becomes a witness of the very process of the decay of the body, which in the terms of our every day life we call, ' death ' !

This '*amritattwa*' or immortality is never the status of the body. There are many deluded souls who run after quack saints and quaint sages enquiring for some secret process by which they can reach physical immortality ! This is an absurd hope and a pleasant contradiction in terms. Body is material ; and matter is finite. ' Immortalising Mortality ' is an attempt which is literally a ' continued death '. But the state of Immortality is a state which can be reached and



experienced vividly, when the Knots-of-the heart are bombed out of existence. What constitutes the knots-of-the-heart and how we can redeem ourselves from their bondage have been very exhaustively discussed earlier.

तदेतद्चाभ्युक्तम्—

क्रियावन्तः श्रोत्रिया ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः स्वयं जुह्वत एकषि श्रद्धयन्तः ।  
तेषामेवैतां ब्रह्मविद्यां वदेत शिरोव्रतं विधिवद् यैस्तु चीर्णम् ॥

॥ १० ॥

*Tadetad-Richa-Abhyuktam : Kriyavantah Srotriya Brahma-  
nishtah Swayam Juhwata Yekarshem Sradhayantah | The-  
Sha-Mevaitam Brahma-Vidyam Vadeta Sirovritam Vidhivad  
Yaisthu Ceernam ॥* (10)

This very doctrine has been explained in a *Veda Mantra (ric)* as follows :—“ To them alone, let one teach this knowledge of *Brahman*, who perform rituals, who read and study the Vedas, who pursue the meditations upon *Brahman*, who have faith and offer themselves oblations to the fire called *Yekarshi* ; and who have observed strictly the *sirovritha* ”.

Though the declarations of *Veda* given out in the *Karma-kanda* portion, have no authority over the Upanishadic declarations, yet, when they are uncontradictory or even complementary, they are generally quoted in the *Vedanta* section as a supporting reference. Here we have an instance where a *Ric* (meaning a Vedic verse) is quoted in support of a statement of the Upanishadic seer.

Scientifically no prescription is complete without a detailed direction as to the dosage and other details of administering the medicine to the patient. Similarly, in scientific experiments, without a statement of the precautions to be taken no prescription is ever complete.

So too in the Science of Perfection which the *Sruties* explain. Thus, though *Mundakopanishad* as a text-book dealing with the Science of Self-perfection has ended with the last stanza, we have here two more stanzas appended to the main text-book as a necessary precaution or warning.

The qualifications necessary for a profitable study of this Upanishad is enumerated here. In all such statements, explaining the fit *adhikari*, the Hindu *Sastras* never imagined that a decadent and diseased Brahmanic class would at any time misinterpret them and make use of them as chains of slavery upon the Aryan children. The *Rishis* only meant that unless one has all the qualifications enumerated herein it would not be fully to one's profit to come and attend discourses in *Vedanta* or to spend one's time and energy in pursuing the practices advised thereunder.

Kindness was the motive in the heart of the *Rishis* when they in detail explain, "the necessary qualifications". It was only in a decadent era of Hinduism that a profit-seeking community came to read a cruel meaning in the love statements of the *Rishis*. The priest-class, at one time in the history of Hinduism, started the heartless mischief of making use of these and similar statements in the *Srutis* to classify the Hindus into two main air-tight compartments of 'haves' and 'have-nots' in the spiritual world. The 'haves', the *adhikaris* (the Brahmins), could alone have the right to read, hear, understand, teach and practise this Divine Wealth of Man, the Eternal Bible of the Soul — the Upanishads. The *have-nots*, the *un-adhikaris* (Non-Brahmins) were not allowed even to hear or even to read for themselves the Sacred Book of their religion.

This disintegration of the *Vedic* culture has culmi-

nated in the present-day decay and disaster wherein the large majority of Hindus are still seeking their spirit through the by-lanes of superstition and false beliefs, through foreign ideologies and Western religions, through putrefied institutions and social festivals, while the indolent priest-class, who have the sanction to make a thorough study of the Scriptures and practise them exclusively, such as the Brahmins and the *Sanyasins*, also came to neglect the Life Divine and the Scripture dealing with it. In short, these are days when we can call ourselves a 'Hindu' only by the sanction of a long tradition. The entire world of non-Hindus in Hindustan are today waiting to be converted to the true Hinduism !

Now taking up each of the qualifications enumerated here by the *Rishis*, we shall try to understand, in the true spirit of the Hindu culture, the pregnant imports of the terms used by the Masters.

(1) "*Who perform the rites*":—Rituals have a place in the spiritual *Sadhana*. Rituals, when performed with devotion and without any desires for their fruits have a\* unique capacity of integrating the personality of the seeker.

(2) "*Well-versed in the Upanishadic literature*":—When a seeker has practised for long the ritualistic worship, he develops, by his life of self-control, concentration and purity, more and more in his capacities of the mind and intellect. These are to be brought into full play in the study of the *Gnana-kanda*, meaning the Upanishads. Mere spiritual practices, without a thorough study of the Scriptures, would be as criminal a wastage as an engine kept running all day through

\* The details of its working have been explained thoroughly in the introduction in DISCOURSES ON ISAVASYOPANISHAD.

without harnessing its horse-power to turn out work.

(3) “ *Who pursue the meditation on Brahman* ” :—The word used here is “ *Brahmanishtha* ”. Because here we are having a description of the qualities necessary in a seeker, we must understand this term not as “ one established in the Awareness of *Brahman* ” but as “ one who is meditating upon that goal of life pointed out by the entire *Sruti*-literature ”. In short, a seeker should spend all his leisure-time in reflecting upon the one great Truth discussed in all the immortal Upanishadic declarations. This alone is what is meant by the term “ *Brahmanishtha* ” here.

(4) “ *Who possess faith* ” :—The power of faith and the necessity of faith for any great achievement have already been exhaustively discussed previously by us.

(5) “ *Who offer oblations himself* ” :—Here the emphasis is entirely on the word ‘ himself ’ (*Swayam*). There are a lot of people who claim themselves to be ‘ Hindus ’ today and who have taken to convenient and cheap methods of God-worship and merit-hoarding ! A very educated and cultured Rotarian recently dumb-founded me by boastfully declaring that “ in my house we have Gita-reading everyday for the last twenty-eight years ”. I believed him first and admired that young man’s wonderful chance and luck in life. And as the conversation warmed up, quite innocently he declared, “ but I don’t know a line of Gita or anything about its contents ” !!

You could have at that moment brushed me down with a feather ! In utter despair I heard myself asking him, “ Why.....how is it Sir ?.....28 years ?..... ? ? ? ” Then came the explanation. “ Of course I didn’t read it nor do the members of my family. We have arranged

it all with a *Sastri* who comes to the house every day, round the year, and does the reading for us ; and we pay Rupees Seven a month for the Brahmin for his troubles !!!”

And this is modern convenient and comfortable Hinduism ! Quite modern and very convenient too !! But the *Rishis* of old did not recognise this as a part of their term ‘religion’. This is only a creation of our own idiocy, the birthright of fools living through an age of superstition ! In order to avoid such misunderstandings, here the *Sruti* quotes the Vedic verse which puts all its emphasis in its declaration, “ he alone is a fit student for spiritualism who has for some time performed worship of a deity *himself*”

(6) “ *Sirovritha* ”:—He who has performed the observance mentioned in the *Adharva Vedha*, the chief feature of which is the, carrying of a bowl-of-fire on the head. A local *Pandit* in one of his endless anonymous letters to me during the *Yagna* has argued that I have no right to teach the *Mundakopanishad* unless the students are ready to carry pots of fire on their head ! Certainly, the *Pandit* who wrote the letter must have had a heavy pot of fire on his head to write such vulgar stupidity with his dark ink of bottled wisdom !!

Too literal a translation has brought about such fantastic interpretations, ridiculous and laughable, not only into Hinduism but into almost all the religious literature of the world today. A true and discriminate understanding of this expression could never be that one should learn, and of all things the most difficult Science of Sciences, the *Brahma Vidya*, with a pot of fire on one’s head !! This prescription can be given

out only by an illiterate who knows not what it is to learn and master a science.

This, in fact, can only be a figurative expression to explain that a student of the Upanishads must have a burning desire to intellectually grasp the meaning of the panorama of life. Only an *intellect that is on-fire*, demanding to know immediately a way out or an escape from the realized limitations of life, that can ever hope to understand and live the divine values of the inner life as advocated in the Upanishads. It is this intellectual quest, this *intellect on-fire*, that is meant here as a qualification for a true student of the *Mundaka Upanishad*. All other explanations are only ugly misrepresentations of the spirit of the *Sastra*.

A modern translator makes an intelligent guess that this may be a reference to the *Sanyas* ceremony and his guess seems to have another support in the suggestive meaning of the very name of the Upanishad, *Mundaka*, which indicates the shaving of the head\*. This too is a gross and ugly meaning read into a beautifully scientific statement of the *Rishis*.

Thus, to all those who have the abovementioned six great qualifications, this Upanishad is an ideal text-book to indicate to him the goal of life, the meaning of the struggle and strifes of our present life and the way by which this great goal can be achieved by every one of us.

तदेतत् सत्यमृषिरङ्गिराः पुरोवाच नैतदचीर्णव्रतोऽधीते ।  
 नमः परमऋषिभ्यो नमः परमऋषिभ्यः ॥                    ॥ ११ ॥  
 इति मुण्डकोपनिषदि तृतीयमुण्डके द्वितीयः खण्डः

\* MUNDAKA has therefore names as the "SHAVING UPANISHAD" or the "UPANISHAD of the TONSURED".

*Tadetat Satyam Rishirangirah Purovacha Naitadaceerna  
Vrito Adheetæ | Namah Parama-Rishibhyo ; Namah Parama  
Rishibhyah ||* (11)

That is the Truth. *Rishi* Angiras communicated this to his disciples in ancient times. No one, who has not observed any vow (renunciation), is fit to study this. Our salutations to the great Sages ; our prostrations to the Seers.

“ *That* ” and “ *This* ” :—It is very often a peculiar usage in the Upanishads, which is nowhere else so frequently seen in the entire Sanskrit literature. And whenever such a usage comes up in the Upanishads, Sankara is never tired of repeating the meaning in it which is very significant, since it declares in itself the very technique of *Vedanta*—the most practical religion of the world.

A disciple reaches a master after living a life of perfect vitality, intense appetite, full awareness, and insatiable thirst. In spite of his brilliant and full living of the varied circumstances in life, he comes to discover that among the impermanent, he cannot hope to gain a joyous state of permanency and peace. Seeking thus for a goal of life, that seeker reaches the steps of his master’s *Ashram*. Naturally, his question can only be, “ Is there not, O Master, a possibility of an existence which is Eternal and Infinite, which is divine and blissful, which is perfect and satisfying ? ” To this query, the Master’s answer throughout the Scripture is “ *Tat Twam Asi* ”—“ That Thou Art ”—meaning, *that* which you are seeking is really Thy Own Eternal Nature ; you have only to realise it by awakening yourself into that Plane of God-Consciousness.

So far the theory and discussions were about a goal of life, pointed out at a distance, to be achieved by the

seeker, and so, naturally, it is to be pointed out by the pronoun ‘*that*’ : Here in the Upanishad we have the statement that ‘*this*,’ meaning the goal that was pointed out as an Utopia, which has now become so near to us in our intellectual grasp as to be pointed out by the pronoun ‘*this*.’

Thus, according to Sankara, this construction of the *Rishis* is to indicate that the theory of the *Vedanta* has been now brought within the penumbra of the student’s understanding.

The statement “*that this is the Truth*” is only a direct statement by the *Rishi* to indicate to the student that he has explained all that has to be explained, and that there *is* nothing more for the Master to explain on this topic to the student. *Rishi* Angiras is the Guru who gave this discourse in the ancient times.

The Upanishad is advised by the teacher to the disciple with the warning that the disciple in his turn should not make this Knowledge cheap and give it out to anybody who has not the necessary mental qualities and intellectual qualifications to profit by this Great Knowledge.

“*No one who has not observed any vow.*”—‘*Vritha*’ means a practice of some self-denial which necessarily implies a spirit of renunciation in the individual who has undertaken the vow. Without a mental attitude for ready self-sacrifice and self-denial of the fleeting charms of the sense-life, a seeker cannot have the necessary amount of mental poise and intellectual sharpness to understand, and then with single-pointed concentration meditate upon the deep significances of the scriptural declarations. Hence it is that the great *Rishi* has left for posterity this clear rule that nobody who has not the required mental calibre should be initiated



into the Vedantic Truth.

Here again we must carefully note that this injunction is given out not to serve as a handle to the whip of persecution, which one section of the society may use to tyrannize over another less-developed community, but it is mentioned only as a guidance to all. It is given out only to bring before our attention always the great necessity of maintaining a continued and consistent "sense of renunciation" of the false and the base if we are to seek and ultimately discover that Truth—the Self.

Our Salutations unto the Immortal *Rishis*.

Our Adorations to the Godly Men of the Vedas.

End of Chapter III—Section 2

Here ends the Mundakopanishad

( OM TAT SAT )

OM OM OM







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