

Mundakopanishad

Mantra 3.1.10

The one who has come to recognise the *ātman* as oneself and as everything, gains at once everything. He need not go to heaven to gain something. There is nothing that is separate from him. This is the result of knowledge that is pointed out now.¹⁷⁷

यं यं लोकं मनसा संविभाति
विशुद्धसत्त्वः कामयते यांश्च कामान् ।
तं तं लोकं जयते तांश्च कामान् ।
तस्मादात्मज्ञं ह्यर्चयेद्भूतिकामः ॥ ३.१.१० ॥

yaṁ yaṁ lokam manasā sanvibhāti
viśuddhasattvaḥ kāmayate yāṁśca kāmān.
taṁ taṁ lokam jayate tāṁśca kāmān
tasmādātmaññam hyarcayedbhūtikāmaḥ . (3.1.10)

yaṁ yaṁ -- whatever; *lokam* -- world;
viśuddhasattvaḥ -- one whose mind is pure;
sanvibhāti -- thinks; *manasā* -- by mind;
ca -- and; *yān kāmān* --whatever objects;
kāmayate -- desires; *taṁ tam* -- all those;
lokam -- worlds; *ca* -- and; *tān* -- all those;
kāmān -- objects; *jayate* -- gains;
tasmāt -- therefore; *bhūtikāmaḥ* -- one who desires prosperity;
hi -- indeed; *arcayet* -- should whorship;
ātmaññam -- knower of self

whatever world a person of pure mind thinks to gain and whatever objects he desires, he gains all those worlds and objects just by a thought. Therefore, one desirous of prosperity should indeed worship the knower of *ātman*.

When you say, "I am Brahman," it is equivalent to saying, "I am everything." Nothing is separate from *ātman*, which is you. It is not the *ātman* that simply witnesses, but it is *sarvātman*. You thereby gain all objects; you fulfill all desires. Any world or object desired is no longer away from you.

Yam yam lokam manasā samvibhāti: whatever world a wise person thinks of by the mind. You have to think of a world in the form of 'I want to have this world' and then you gain it. Generally, if you have a desire then that desire engages you in appropriate action, which will produce the desired result, if everything goes well. But here the *śruti* says, "He just thinks of in his mind, he gains it by that mere thought." It does not mean he goes to heaven the moment he thinks of it. If he thinks of heaven, that heaven is he. The idea is, the knower of *ātman* is everything. The thought and the world that is the object of the thought are not separate from him.

Not only does the person gains the world he desires, but also, he accomplishes whatever he wants in the world itself. *Yānśca kāmān kāmāyate jayate tānśca kāmān:* whatever objects of enjoyment he desires, he gains them at once. If he wants to be Indra in the heaven, he will become Indra. If he wants the white elephant of Indra, he will get it. All of them are as well gained.

You may look at the gain this way. You seek objects to gain some happiness. In the gain of the heaven or any object, if there is a degree of happiness assumed, it is included in the fullness that you are. There is nothing outside this wholeness. What you hope to achieve by fulfilling a desire, is already achieved. So all desires are 'as well fulfilled' for you. The knowledge is praised here by praising the one who has the knowledge.

You may wonder why the *upaniṣad* here talks about the gain of *lokas* and objects of desires. Vedanta belongs to the Veda, the bulk of which deals with *karmas*. One who is committed to Vedanta is coming out of the *karma-kāṇḍa*, which is committed to means and ends for fulfilling various desires. Going to heaven or some other world and experiencing pleasures are predominant ends talked about in *karma-kāṇḍa*. The fragrance of *karma-kāṇḍa* and its influence may still persist in a person when he comes to Vedanta. So the *śruti* is praising the knowledge in the same language of the *karma-kāṇḍa*.

The knowledge because of which *Īśvara* is free, is the same knowledge a *jñāni* has. *Īśvara* effortlessly runs the whole universe. To manage 'the whole show' is not an easy job, and definitely involves dealing with countless problems. But it is not so for *Īśvara*. Lying down, he takes care of everything. The *ananta-śayana*, lying down posture, is an excellent symbol for understanding how *Īśvara* runs the show. He gives existence and life to *māyā-śakti* and everything runs automatically. One who recognises one's *svarūpa* as not separate from that of *Īśvara* also becomes free. Sitting under a tree he is fulfilled. Only by one's denial one is not *Īśvara*.

Viśuddha-sattvaḥ: one whose mind is pure. Here we are talking about a wise person. So, the pure mind not only implies freedom from the spell of *rāga-dveṣa*, but also, from self-ignorance and ignorance-born errors, including false notions. The word '*viśuddha-sattvaḥ*' is a very significant word. It talks about the qualification as well as the accomplishment. Being qualified, he is accomplished.

Further, it is not only the wise person who gains the objects of desires that he entertains; others can also gain the objects of their desires through his *saṅkalpa*. Therefore, the *śruti* says, *tasmād ātmajñānī hyarcayed bhūtikāmaḥ*: may one who is desirerous of achieving various ends, worship the knower of self. The one who knows the self is able to fulfill others' desires because he no longer has a self-serving *ahaṅkāra*; he is Īśvara. His *saṅkalpa* becomes real, *satya-saṅkalpa*. Any *saṅkalpa* that occurs in his mind because of someone's prayers becomes true if the *prārabdha* of that person is not totally against it. So the person becomes an altar for invoking Īśvara. We find this expression in other *upaniṣad* also. Here Śaṅkara says¹⁷⁸ that he is as though *para-devatā*.

Even today we find a *sannyāsin* is respected in India. There are no specific features to identify a wise person. A *sannyāsin* is one who is committed to the pursuit of this knowledge and therefore the benefit of doubt is given to him, but under some conditions. It is given not because he is sitting under a tree, or has a long beard, or is observing silence, but because he is a *śrotriya* which is possible to find out. You have to be a student for some time to find out whether he knows or not. If he knows he will be able to make you see what he knows. Another condition is that he has no commitment to anything else, which is easy to find out. It means he is committed to the pursuit of Brahman. Since he is pursuing this knowledge, perhaps he knows. The basis for the respect given to *sannyāsin* is the *mantra* under discussion. People may not know about the existence of this *mantra*, but they know by convention, tradition, that a *sannyāsin* has to be respected and his *saṅkalpa* accomplishes things. It neutralises the obstacles in your effort to accomplish what you want. You seek the grace of the Lord by worshipping him for the success of your efforts. So too, you seek the grace of wise person by worshipping him.

If a wise person is engaged in teaching and shares his knowledge with others, it is considered to be an act of *punya*. Any sharing, like sharing wealth with people who deserve it, is an act of *punya*. So a wise person gathers a lot of *punya* every day. But that *punya* will not go to him because he has no sense of doership. It will go to those people who serve and worship him, and materialise in the form of their desired objects.

Īśvara has no *ahaṅkāra*. For a wise person, *ahaṅkāra* is sublated. The sublated *ahaṅkāra* belongs to Īśvara's creation; in fact, it is the manifestation of Īśvara. Therefore, a wise person becomes an altar of worship. Worshipping him amounts to worship of Īśvara.

We make an idol out of stone and worship Īśvara in that stone. Before sculpting, a sculptor meditates on the form of the Lord with the help of the *dhyāna-śloka*s, verses involving meditation, and then sculpts. Once the installation is complete, we invoke Īśvara in the idol. We may wonder why we invoke Īśvara in a stone. It is because the stone does not have an *ahaṅkāra*. A piece of wood or stone is the best altar for invoking the Lord. stone is preferred to wood because wood is subject to decay more quickly than stone when regular *pūjā* is performed.

An exception to this is Lord Jagannātha, in Puri, who is invoked only in a piece of wood. What is important is that we choose an object that does not have a notion about itself. A wise person is free from the notion about himself. He no longer thinks that 'I am so and so,' that is, he does not alienate himself from Īśvara. He is as good as Īśvara. Therefore, we can invoke Īśvara in him.

Lord Kṛṣṇa also says in the *Gītā*, "In whichever way people invoke me, in that form I bless them."¹⁷⁹ It is Kṛṣṇa's appreciation of his own *svarūpa*. He is a form of Īśvara, which is why his form is available even now for our worship. So too, the form of any wise person is also Īśvara's form. One who is interested in getting wealth, prosperity, fame and so on can worship a wise person just as one does *pūjā* to the Lord. The word '*bhūtikāmaḥ*' can also include one who wants *mokṣa*, but *mokṣa* is separately mentioned later. Therefore, here it is restricted to one who wants material prosperity only.

One may have the following doubt about this statement, 'After all, the *ātmajñā* is a mortal. I go and worship him to get some grace but he is running temperature. He himself requires some grace! He may be blessed with knowledge but how can he be a source of blessing to others?' One does not worship the body; one worships the *ātmajñā*. When one worships an idol, the idol does not give the grace; the grace comes from Īśvara. Similarly, the grace comes from Īśvara, and not the body of the wise person.

Doing worship by washing the feet and so on is purely cultural. In the Vedic culture, one does *pūjā* in that form. If a tribal person worships a wise person, he will offer him a deer-skin to sit on. One may worship according to one's own culture; there is no rule that it has to be done in a particular way.

177 य एवमुक्तलक्षणं सर्वात्मानम् आत्मत्वेन प्रतिपन्नस्तस्य सर्वात्मत्वादेव सर्वावाप्ति लक्षणं फलमाह ।(मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

178 परमिव सेवन्ते । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

179 ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ... । (भगवद् गीता 4.11)

। इति तृतीयमुण्डके प्रथमखण्डः ।

iti tṛtīyamunḍake prathamakhaṇḍaḥ

Thus ends the first section in the third chapter.