

कठोपनिषद् Kaṭhopaniṣad

(2nd Adhyaya, Third Valli)

अयक्तात् परः पुरुषो व्यापकोऽलिङ्गं एव च ।
यं ज्ञात्वा मुच्यते जन्तुरमृतत्वं च गच्छति ॥ ८ ॥

In truth, beyond the unmanifest is the all-pervading Purusha devoid of all distinctive marks, knowing whom, one becomes freed and attains immortality

Avyaktāttu paraḥ puruṣah vyāpakah: The senses pervade only a limited sphere. The mind pervades more. Buddhi pervades more than the mind and the senses. And Avyakta indeed pervades more than the buddhi. Purusha pervades everything. Purusha is the satya vastu and it stands by itself, and there is no other vastu besides the Purusha. Avyakta itself depends upon Purusha. He is all-pervasive—vyapakaha.

Aliṅga eva ca : That by which a thing is known and sustained is called linga—lingyate gamyate yena talliṅgam. Śivaliṅga is called linga because it represents the invisible, all-pervading intelligent cause. Any vighraḥ used for worship can be called linga. Senses, mind and buddhi are called lingam for Ātmā. Sthūlaśarīra, Sūkṣmaśarīra and Kāraṇaśarīra are all linga for Ātmā. But Puruṣah is aliṅgah. It is not known by the senses, mind or the buddhi.

Some people think that Ātmā is taken to be the āśraya and a guni. They consider that senses, mind and buddhi are all attributes of Ātmā. In such a case Ātmā becomes qualified and limited for ever. Ātmā is attribute free and is the adhiṣṭhāna for all the attributes.

Sri Sankara says Puruṣah is sarva samsāra dharma varjitaḥ meaning He is the one who is totally free from all the attributes of samsara which are nothing but birth, death, old age etc.

Yam jñātvā mucyate : By knowing this Puruṣah one becomes free and attains immortality. Sri Sankara says one could come to' know' this Puruṣah from the Ācāryā and Śāstra. Śāstra is the pramāṇa—the means of knowledge—and it has to be revealed by the Ācāryā

Jantuḥ amṛtatvam ca gacchati: The comfort seeking creature who is subject to pain and pleasure gains amṛtatvam. Living he becomes free from the knots of the heart, namely avidyā, kāma and karma. The one who was subject to karma was the confused person and that person becomes no more a confused one. He comes to