

## Second Muṇḍaka Section 1

### Mantra 7

We have more details of creation here, in terms of the Veda, Vedic rituals etc., to dwell upon this fact that everything came from Brahman.

तस्माच्च देवा बहुधा सम्प्रसूताः  
साध्या मनुष्याः पशवो वयांसि ।  
प्राणापानौ व्रीहियवौ तपश्च  
श्रद्धा सत्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं विधिश्च ॥ २ ॥७ ॥  
*tasmācca devā bahudhā samprasūtāḥ*  
*sādhyā manuṣyāḥ paśavo vayāmsi.*  
*prāṇāpānau vrīhiyavau tapaśca*  
*śraddhā satyaṁ brahmacaryaṁ vidhiśca. (2.1.7)*

*tasmāt* - from that (Brahman); *ca* - and;  
*samprasūtāḥ* - are born; *bahudhā* - in many forms;  
*devāḥ* - devas; *sādhyāḥ* - a class of celestials;  
*manuṣyāḥ* - human beings; *paśavaḥ* - wild and domestic animals;  
*vayāmsi* - birds; *prāṇāpānau* - the life-breath;  
*vrīhiyavau* - paddy and barley; *tapaḥ* - religious discipline;  
*ca* - and; *śraddhā* - faith; *satyaṁ* - the order of *dharma*;  
*brahmacaryam* - discipline; *vidhiḥ* - know-how of rituals; *ca* - and

And from that Brahman alone are born varieties of *devas*, celestials, human beings, animals, birds, the life-breath, all forms of food, religious discipline, faith, the order of *dharma*, discipline in sense pursuits and know-how of action.

*Tasmāt ca devā bahudhā samprasūtāḥ* : from that Brahman alone the *devatās* came in many forms. Every rituals is meant to please the various *devatā* s like Indra, Agni, and Varuṇa so that one gets the *karma-phala*. So, the rituals involve offering oblations to the *devatās*. These *devatās*, who are an important limb of rituals, came from Īśvara alone, in keeping with their *karma*. They are only the tip of the iceberg floating in the ocean. Īśvara is the ocean including the iceberg. A *jīva* is born as a *devatā* due to exalted *puṇya*. Pure *pāpa-karmas* in various combinations cause birth in various lower bodies, like those of animals and

birds. A combination of *puṇya* and *pāpa* gives one the human body, and so every human being is a *miśra*, a mixture of both types of *karmas*. Pure *puṇya* will result in taking birth in higher *lokas* where one becomes a *deva*, celestial. *Sādhyas* are a class of celestials mentioned by the *śruti*. The whole set-up here is not really to reveal the source of all of them, but to point out that nothing is separate from Brahman.

*Manuṣyas* are human beings who are qualified to perform rituals and so on. *Paśavaḥ* refers to all the animals, domestic as well as wild. Animals such as cows are necessary, as they are given as *dakṣiṇā* in the rituals. *Vayāmsi* means the crows, who stand for all the reptiles and birds. Crows are necessary for offering *bali*, oblation, as a part of one's daily like of worship.

*Prāṇāpānau* : the *prāṇa* and *apāna*. They are the breaths that go in and out, the respiration system. *Prāṇāpānau* includes the five *prāṇas*, the senses and the organs of action. *Prāṇa* and *apāna* mean the very life, which is an important aspect in the creation. When the *prāṇa* goes away, the body is dead. Endless research is going on to discover how and when life started on this planet. The Lord says, "It is all me." To keep this *prāṇa* going, one requires food. So *vrihi-yavau*, rice and barley, came from Parameśvara. Śaṅkara says they are meant for preparing the *havis*, offerings, in the rituals.<sup>38</sup> Rice and barley represent all forms of food.

Connected to rituals there are certain other things. For performing the rituals, one requires *śraddhā*. Śaṅkara defines *śraddhā*<sup>39</sup> as that endowed with which alone one can pursue the various *sādhanas* mentioned in the Veda. The subject matter of the Vedas is beyond one's perception and inference. One does not know how these rituals are connected to the result. It is revealed in the Veda that if one does the *putra-kāmeṣmi* ritual one will get a son. If one is desirous of begetting a son, this ritual becomes a *sādhana*. One has no clue at all about the connection between the son and the ritual, wherein one pours ghee in the fire which turns into ashes. There are a number of such rituals revealed in the Vedas as *sādhanas*. The connection between the action and the results is not conceivable at all by any stretch of one's imagination. Ritual is a prayer, an action for which there is a result promised by the *śāstra*. Except for that promise, one does not have anything else to go by. Therefore, one has to have *śraddhā* in the *śāstra* before one can think of performing a ritual. *Śraddhā* is *citta-prasāda*, cheerful, trusting disposition of the mind towards the *śāstra*, accepting that the *śāstra* is a valid means of knowledge and that what it says is true and should work. *Śraddhā* also is born of *Īśvara*.

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<sup>38</sup> व्रीहिभयवौ हविरर्थे । च मुण्डक श्राध्यम् फ

<sup>39</sup> श्रद्धा यत्पूर्वकः सर्वपुरुषार्थभसाधनभप्रयोगः चित्तप्रसाद आस्तिक्यबुद्धिः । च मुण्डक श्राध्यम् फ

People give their life for this *śraddhā*. All religious people are believers; they have *śraddhā*. Some of them become fanatics because what they believe is not verifiable. Yet, they think that what they believe alone is right. It is a kind of blind *śraddhā*. *Śraddhā* is a possibility only for a human being. The cows do not perform rituals for the departed souls.

*Tapah* : a religious discipline also connected to rituals. *Tapas* is of two kinds. One kind of *tapas* qualifies or purifies a person for performing a ritual.<sup>40</sup> A simple fast on the day previous to the ritual may be prescribed for purifying the person. The other kind of *tapas*, such as *upāsana*, produces a particular result<sup>41</sup> that takes one to *lokas*. Both of them are born of *Īśvara* alone.

*Satyam* : speaking truth. It is a universal value which a human being commonly senses. It is already there, and hence one is able to sense something as truth, something as a lie. All values are from *Īśvara*, they do not belong to a human mind. If they are born of a human mind, then one has to be educated about those values. Only then will one come to know of them. If they are values acquired by education, they are not universal. Values are not like eating etiquette, for instance, which is different in each culture. One has to learn about etiquette before interacting with the people belonging to a particular culture. But one does not require being educated about the fact that one should speak the truth. Since these values are not created by human beings, they have come directly from *Īśvara*. If something is created by a human being, it comes indirectly from *Īśvara* because the capacity to create is from *Īśvara*.

*Brahmacaryam*: discipline in everything. Here, *brahma* is the Veda, The study of the Veda is *brahmacarya*, and all the disciplines that go along with this study are included in it. *Brahmacarya* is the capacity to withdraw from all other pursuits for which one has natural tendency in order to pursue Vedic study. The value for and capacity to live a happy, healthy, disciplined life accompanied with study of the *śāstra* is also from *Īśvara*.

*Vidhiśca*: the knowledge of 'this is how it has to be done' with reference to a Vedic ritual. How does one come to know how to do a ritual? The Veda itself has to reveal that knowledge. Like one has to know what is *soma yāga*, what are its various limbs, what is the sequence in which the various steps have to be done, who are the *devatās*, how many priests are necessary, how much *dakṣiṇā* is to be given to each one of them, etc. This is called *iti-kartavyatā*. If one watches a priest performing a *yajña*, one can note that the priest utters some sentences along with the *mantras* of the ritual like '*ācamya*,' having done

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<sup>40</sup> तपश्च कर्मज्ञं पुरुषभसंस्कारभलक्षणम् ।। च मुण्डक श्राव्यम् फ

<sup>41</sup> स्वतन्त्रं च फल-साधनम् । च मुण्डक भाष्यम् फ

ceremonial sipping of water. These sentences are part of the know-how. The priests keep these sentences in the mind so that they are sure about what they have to do at a given stage of the ritual.

The know-how of a ritual, *iti-kartavyatā*, is analysed in the *pūrva-mīmāṃsā śāstra*. The most difficult part of Vedic study is *pūrva-mīmāṃsā*, not Vedānta. In *pūrva-mīmāṃsā śāstra* one learns how to analyse and arrive at the intended meaning of the words as they are. Being a *śāstra*, the Veda is to be understood as it is. One has to analyse what is said before, what is said later, what is the context and so on, and understand properly. With reference to every ritual, and the various limbs of each ritual, there must be *eka-vākyatā*, concordance. All seeming contradictions must be reconciled after proper analysis. Therefore, *mīmāṃsā* is required. There is the word 'ca, and ' along with the word 'vidhi'. It covers all the things that are not said in the previous *mantras*. All of them also are from Īśvara alone.

*Vidhi* can also be taken in a general sense, as do-s and dont-s. Near the high powered transformer boxes one can see a universal sign for danger consisting of a skull and crossed bones in red. It is an excellently conceived sign. The cross, which is a symbol for 'don't do,' is made of two bones. If one grounds the electricity, one goes to the earth. It is Īśvara 's *vidhi*. One should not put one's finger in boiling water. How can one know whether a given vessel of water is boiling water or not? When it is boiling, there are bubbling activities making noise, and sending the message that it is boiling. Īśvara created the bubbles for this purpose. All the natural laws, the do-s and dont-s are Īśvara's *vidhi*.

One must note here that *jīvas* are not born of Īśvara; the *jīva-upādhi* alone is born. The *jīva-upādhi* consists of a physical body and a subtle body. Of these, only the physical body is born. The subtle body is not born independently, but is always in keeping with the physical body. To identify a person as a celestial or a human being or an animal, there must be a physical body. In keeping with that body, there must be a subtle body. If the physical body is a human body and the subtle body is that of a frog, it will not work because that *jīva* will be leaping around! The theologians think that the *jīvas* also are born when the physical body is born. To account for consciousness they have to say that *jīvas* are 'sparks' and so on. It is similar to a person covering up one mistake by another. Whenever the *śāstra* says, from Īśvara is born the *jīva*, one must note that except the *jīvas* everything else is born.