

Mundaka

Mantra 5

यस्मिन् द्यौः पृथिवी चान्तरिक्षं
ओतं मनः सह प्राणैश्च सर्वैः ।
तमेवैकं जानथ आत्मानम्
अन्या वाचो विमुञ्चथामृतस्यैष सेतुः ॥ २ ॥ २ ॥ ५ ॥

yasmin dyauḥ pṛthivī cāntarikṣaṁ
otaṁ manaḥ saha prāṇaiśca sarvaiḥ.
tamevaikaṁ jānatha ātmānam
anyā vāco vimuñcathāmṛtasyaiṣa setuḥ. (2.2.5)

dyauḥ -- the heaven; pṛthivī --the earth; ca -- and;
antarikṣam -- the intermediary space; ca -- and;
manaḥ -- the mind; saha -- along with;
sarvaiḥ -- all; prāṇaiḥ -- organs of actions; otam -- woven;
yasmin -- in which (Brahman); jānatha -- may you know;
tam-- that; ekam -- non-dual; eva -- only;
ātmānam --to be the very ātman; anyāḥ -- all other;
vācaḥ -- words; vimuñcatha -- give up; eṣaḥ -- this;
amṛtasya -- of mokṣa; setuḥ -- the bridge

Heaven, the earth and the space in between the two, and the mind along with *prāṇas* are woven in this Brahman. May you know that non-dual Brahman to be the very *ātman*. Give up all other words. This is the bridge to *mokṣa*.

What is that Brahman, the target? That is pointed out here.

Yasmin dyauḥ pṛthivī antarikṣaṁ ca otaṁ : in which heaven, the earth and the intermediary space are woven. Everything is woven in Brahman. The phrase 'heaven and the earth' means the entire *jagat*, known and unknown. The *jagat* is woven in *Brahman*, like the cloth is woven in the threads. The cloth is a name with a form, which is non-separate from the threads. The yarn or the threads themselves are in the form of cloth. Similarly, the entire *jagat* characterized by earth, heaven and the space in between is woven in Brahman, and is non-separate from *Brahman*.

'*Ota-prota*' is an expression, the long thread is called *ota*, the cross thread is called *prota*. It is the warp and woof. First, one sets up the long threads and then weaves the cross threads into the long ones by operating the loom. One calls it a fabric, but all that is there is only thread, very nicely arranged. That arrangement is human effort. It is called creation. If one analyses it, one finds there is no creation. It is 'as though' creation.

In an embroidered cloth whatever appears as the sun, the mountains, the trees, the animals and the people, is only mere name and form. The cloth alone is the truth. It is called *citra-paṭa-nyāya*, an analogy of embroidered cloth. Really speaking, thread alone is the truth. If one pulls the threads appearing as the sun from the embroidery, the sun is gone. It is now in the form of a bunch of threads; every form will become a ball of thread. With reference to the *jagat*, when one says, 'the sun is' it means the sun consciousness is there. In fact, 'is' is consciousness. What we call sun is only a name and form of this consciousness. Heaven, the space and the earth are woven into it.

Manah saha prāṇaiśca sarvaiḥ: the mind along with the senses that are necessary to experience this vast jagat are also woven in the same Brahman. One's expressions in this jagat through one's organs of actions such as hands, legs and so on, as well as the power behind the expressions called *prāṇa*, are also woven. All these are nothing but *akṣaram brahma* which is represented by Om.

Tam eva ekam ātmānam jānatha: may you know that Brahman to be non-dual, and that non-dual Brahman to be the very self. This statement is a *mahā-vākya*, revealing the oneness of self and Brahman. Tam eva jānatha may you know that only. Why? Because you wanted to know that, knowing which everything is as well known.

Not only that, **anyā vāco vimuñcatha:** may you give up all other words. It is a very important expression. 'All other words' means all other *śāstras*, other than Vedanta. Before one studies anything else, this alone has to be known. After knowing this, everything else is as well known, in the sense, you know the reality and in that there is fulfillment. Whether you know something else or not does not matter, because after you know the vastu, you can happily learn everything else rather than learn things in order to be happy.

Śaṅkara interprets⁸⁷ *anyā vācaḥ* as words which are in the form of *aparā-vidyā* and the various means and ends revealed by those words. For the one who is desirous of gaining *parā-vidyā*, *aparā-vidyā* has done its job. Whatever is known to one through the Vedas, such as rituals like *agnihotra*, the results of the rituals like going to heaven, the means for performing the rituals such as wealth, wife and so on, are given up. The pursuits of *dharma-artha-kāma* are resolved into one pursuit called *mokṣa*, just as in the ritual of *sannyāsa*, the *gāyatrī-mantra* is absorbed into Om.

Amṛtasya eṣa setuḥ: this is the bridge for *mokṣa*.⁸⁸ *Mokṣa* is the other end of the ocean of *saṁsāra*; it has to be reached. One is now in the ocean, and one cannot enjoy being in the ocean. So, one has to keep the shore as the target. To reach that target, one requires an *upāya*, a means. The *upāya* is meditation on 'Om,' if the direct teaching is not enough. Inquiry into Om itself is the method for one to reach the target. It is like a bridge. *Setu* can also be explained as a dam. The knowledge of this *ātman* stop *saṁsāra*. That is the *mokṣa*.

The teacher here exhorts the students to know the *ātman* because knowing *ātman* is the only means for *mokṣa*. Knowing that *ātman* alone one crosses *saṁsāra*, there is no other path for *mokṣa*.⁸⁹ Going to heaven is not the real crossing of *saṁsāra*. To go to the other shore of *saṁsāra*, the ocean should dry up. Drying up the ocean of *saṁsāra* is called crossing the ocean.

87 अपर-विद्या-रूपः विमुञ्चथ विमुञ्चत परित्यजत तत्प्रकाश्यं च सर्वं कर्म ससाधनम् । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

88 एतदात्मज्ञानम् अमृतत्वस्य मोक्षस्य प्राप्तये सेतुरिव सेतुः संसार-महोदधेः उत्तरण-हेतुत्वात् । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

89 तमेव विदित्वा अतिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय (श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत् ३ ॥८ । ६ ॥१५) इति । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

to be continued...