



# मुण्डकोपनिषद् Muṇḍakopaniṣad Mantra 1.2.8



*(continued from the last issue)*

India is a country of sampradāya. People always say, “This is our sampradāya”. Sampradāya means that the guru should be reasonable. He cannot be illogical. What he says can be a matter of belief, either verifiable or non-verifiable, but it cannot be a belief that is against reason. If it is illogical, one cannot call it a belief. When I say, “I have a flower in my hand, ‘therefore’ there is a horse behind the stage”, it is illogical. The presence of a horse behind due to my having a flower in my hand is not a matter of belief. If I simply say, “there is a horse behind the stage”, that is OK. You may think that Swamiji has extra-sensory perception. That is fine, that is a belief. One can verify it. One can go and see if a horse is there or not. ‘There is a flower in my hand’ is not a belief. It is a direct perception. In the sentence, ‘Therefore, there is a horse behind the stage,’ the word ‘therefore’, points to the logic. This is illogical and is not a belief.

One must make sure that a non-verifiable belief is not illogical. That there is heaven is a non-verifiable belief. But if you say, “It is eternal heaven,” it is illogical. ‘If one goes there, one will remain there for ever’—that is not possible. One goes to heaven because of the result of one’s good karmas. If one has done good deeds all through one’s life, then that puṇya may keep the person in heaven for another life-time or a little more, not forever. There is no such thing as ‘eternal heaven’. Heaven is the result of actions. Śāstra tells,<sup>1</sup> “Just as in this world, experiences gathered through karma come to an end, so too, the lokas like heaven gained as a result of good actions are also limited in time”. If you buy a house, all your diamond sets are gone. Similarly, if one goes to heaven and experiences pleasures there, then one’s puṇya is exhausted. One comes back again. The karma-phala, like heaven, is desirable all right, but it is finite.

These self-appointed leaders are not leaders. Someone said that the one who leads is the leader, but that is not totally true. If there is no following at all, the person is not a leader. Such persons should lead some people or some people should follow them; only then can they be considered as leaders. If people follow the person then he or she is a good leader, like Gandhiji. His leadership was something very beautiful. He believed in something, he began living it, and then people found themselves following him, and therefore he became a leader. He

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<sup>१</sup> यथा इह कर्म-जितो लोकः क्षीयते तथा अमुत्र पुण्य-चित्तो लोकः क्षीयते । छान्दोग्योपनिषद् (8.1.6)

was ready to reshuffle his ideas and had no cast-iron ideologies. That is what made Gandhiji a leader. There are some others who are convinced about some philosophy, and then they lead. Hitler believed in the blue blood theory of the Aryans. He believed that only Germans are Aryans and they are born to rule, others are all nobodies. He propagated that idea and he made people follow him. He was an idealist—a dangerous kind of person. Then there is an opportunist, a union leader. He creates issues and appoints himself as the one who will solve them. Whenever there is a chance, like bonus time, he becomes the leader. He also leads people. So, there is an opportunist leader, there is an idealist leader, and there is the real leader. Here, these people are all idealist leaders because they think they know. They commit themselves to a belief and then lead.

Andhenaiva nīyamāna yathāndhāḥ : like the blind people being led by a leader, who is blind himself. The blind people do not know whether the person who offers himself to lead has eyesight or not. They cannot see the blind. Therefore, they follow this person. Holding on to this person, they will never reach the destination. When a blind person follows another blind person, his chances of falling are double. He will fall whenever the other also falls. So, all these blind people enter into the ditch of saṁsāra. Already they are in a ditch anyway. They get out of one ditch, and they again get into another. They move in circles. So, they do not reach the destination called mokṣa. Blindness is here is with respect to the limitation of karma. The buddhi is very bright and brilliant with respect to other things in life, but when it comes to ātma-tattva, it is anaesthetised.

If there is a blind person who knows himself to be blind and still offers himself as a guide to another blind person, definitely he is a cheat. But here the ‘cheat’ is not the example. Here one has wrong convictions and he thinks that he is right. People do not know whether this person knows or not. Naturally they are gullible.

Here one has to understand what is being said, irrespective of who said it. One should be able to see through whether it is proper or not. One can give the benefit of doubt to anybody, but one cannot simply swallow anything. When one is embarking upon the inquiry of what is true, then one cannot have a ‘charismatic approach’. The blind people, therefore, follow the person who says, “I will lead you”.

अविध्यायां बहुधा वर्तमानाः वयं कृतार्था इत्यभिमन्यन्ति बालाः ।  
यत् कर्मिणो न प्रवेदयन्ति रागात् तेनातुराः क्षीणलोकाश्च्यवन्ते ॥ १।२।९  
avidhyāyām bahudhā vartamānāḥ vayaṁ kṛtārthā ityabhimanyanti bālā ।  
yat karminō na pravedayanti rāgāt tenāturrāḥ kṣīṇalokāścyavante ॥ 1.2.9

Steeped in ignorance and error with many notions, these immature people think, ‘we are well informed’. Because they do not know the self due to their longing

for worldly ends, they are constantly afflicted and fall from heaven when their puṇya is exhausted.

Avidhyāyām bahudhā vartamānāḥ existing variously in ignorance. These people exist in ignorance with different notions about themselves, the world, the God, the ultimate end and the means to achieve it. All are ignorant but each one has some special notions. There are no varieties in the basic delusion. 'I am the self, the self is a kartṛ, doer, and it is limited'—this notion is common to all. Within this there are varieties. The ramifications of the sense of limitation are varied. The conclusions that people arrive at, are varied. One will say, "What I say is true. What he says is not true. I am the latest, and the last". Another will say, "Your mokṣa lies in heaven. Unless you follow me, you will not go to heaven". Here are different belief systems, and people hold on to different types of theologies.

Vayaṁ kṛtārthā ityabhimanyanti bālāḥ : these immature people think, 'all that is to be gained, has been gained by us'. They consider themselves as accomplished people. Abhimāna is false identification. They falsely identify themselves as fulfilled people. But they are bālāḥ, immature people, because they do not see anything beyond means and ends. Within the avidyā alone they live their life in various ways, following various means and ends. Again they advocate various means and ends to others also. They are people who are still ignorant and childish in their thinking.

Rāgāt na pravedayanti : due to rāga they do not know. Rāga is the longing for a desirable end, like security and pleasure in this world and heaven after death. They have discovered some value for the results of action, and the very longing for the results blinds them. This is like holding a bubble floating in the air. They do not see the perishable nature of lokas. All the religions are committed to going to heaven. It is a trip. They do certain special rituals to achieve desirable ends. They do not know what is to be known. They do not know Brahman. But they think they know everything.

Tena āturāḥ : remaining ignorant, they are afflicted by sorrow and pain. They constantly have a sense of dissatisfaction. Whatever loka is gained as a result of karma, it is going to be lost in time. Therefore, kṣiṇa-lokāścyavante : having lost the lokas that are gained through karma, however desirable they are, they slip from there. They fall down into wombs where they can fulfil the rest of the karma. These karmas are infinite. Therefore, when one sphere of enjoyment is over, they get another sphere.

There are people who live a good life, a life of dharma, performing good karmas. The result of such karmas is talked about here in order to point out that even the good results are not good enough to achieve what we are looking for.

*To be continued.....*