

Mundaka

Mantra 10

पुरुष एवेदं विश्वं कर्म
तपो ब्रह्म परामृतम् ।
एतद्यो वेद निहितं गुहायां
सोऽविद्याग्रन्थिं विकिरतीह सोम्य ॥ २ ॥ १ ॥ १० ॥

*puruṣa evedaṁ viśvaṁ karma
tapo brahma parāmṛtam.
etat yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ
so'vidyāgranthiṁ vikiratīha somya. (2.1.10)*

idam - this; *viśvam* - world; *karma* - rituals revealed by the Veda;
tapah - religious disciplines and meditation; *brahma* - Veda;
puruṣa - is *puruṣa*; *eva* - alone; *ṣaḥ* - the one; *yaḥ* - who; *veda* - knows; *etat* - this;
parāmṛtam - limitless; *nihitam* - present; *guhāyām* - in the *buddhi*;
vikirati - resolves; *avidyā-granthim* - the knot of ignorance; *iha* - here itself;
somya - O pleasing one!

O pleasing one! The world consisting of Vedic rituals, religious disciplines and meditation, and Vedas is Brahman alone. The one who knows this limitless, timeless Brahman present in the *buddhi*, resolves the knot of ignorance here itself.

So far the *mantras* have conclusively unfolded that the entire *jagat* is born from this *puruṣa*. It means there is a clean set-up for the *śruti* to reveal what it exactly wants to teach. Previously, the *śruti* used the fifth case with the word '*puruṣa*' when it said, '*etasmāt jāyate, born from this puruṣa*'.⁵¹ Now it uses the nominative, '*puruṣaḥ eva idam, this alone is puruṣa*.' It is a *prakriyā*, a methodology. If the pot comes from the clay, then pot is clay. From the *puruṣa* everything came, and so *puruṣa* is everything. Śaṅkara points out the *prakriyā* here at the right time. He says, "Since the *jagat* is an effect of Brahman, it is *vācārambhaṇam vikāro nāmadheyam*— it exists only in speech, it is an effect and mere name." *Puruṣa*, the cause, alone is real. Anything that is born is *mithyā* because it is a product. Everything has come from this *puruṣa*, therefore, everything is *mithyā*; it cannot exist apart from *puruṣa*. Whenever the *mithyā* name and form is, there the *puruṣa* is. One does not require removing *mithyā* to understand the *puruṣa*.

In fact, there is no object called hills *mithyā* except in our understanding of the reality of the objects. We have the word, '*mithyā*' because we have the knowledge, and the knowledge is that the creation is non-separate from the cause. Creation is only name and form. It has no independent existence. It is *mithyā*.

There are two types of sentences in the *śāstra*, *adhyāropa-vākya* and *apavāda-vākya*. When the *śāstra* says, '*etasmāt jāyate sarvaṃ*, everything is born of this,' the sentence is called *adhyāropa-vākya*, a sentence making a deliberate superimposition. The sentence presents the *puruṣa* as the intelligent and material cause, and the *jagat* as the effect. The causal status attributed to the *puruṣa* is not a fact; it is a superimposition.

The *adhyāropa-vākya* is not to prove that all that is here is born of the *puruṣa*. It is meant to prove that 'all that is here is *puruṣa*'. The statement, '*puruṣaḥ eva idaṃ viśvam*, all that is here is *puruṣa* alone' is *apavāda-vākya*, a sentence negating the earlier attribution. The independent reality of 'all that is born' is negated here. In the sentence, 'all that is here is indeed *puruṣa*,' there is *bādhāyām sāmānādhikaraṇyam*,⁵² where the *sāmānādhikaraṇya* is to be understood in the sense of negation alone. It is similar to the sentence, '*sthāṇurayam puruṣaḥ*, the person is but a stump of a tree.' The sentence is meant to correct an error in perception wherein a stump of a tree is mistaken for a person. We are not qualifying the word '*sthāṇu*' with the word '*puruṣa*' or vice versa. The sentence negates the idea that it is the thief and what remains is the trunk of the tree alone.

Similarly, when one says, "All that is here is *puruṣa*," everything is swallowed or devoured, and the *puruṣa* remains. One's sight is only in the *puruṣa*. Only when the negation is done, can one understand, 'all that is here is *puruṣa*.' This negation is of the cause-effect relationship, not of the names and forms. Names and forms may continue to exist, but they do not matter.

All that is here is *Īśvara*. This is entirely a matter for understanding. The *Kaṭhapaniṣad* says, "There is nothing other than the *puruṣa* and *puruṣa* alone is the final end."⁵³ That *puruṣa* is to be recognised. What was originally asked by Śaunaka, knowing which everything is known, is now answered here.

Puruṣa eva idam karma tapo brahma: all this, including *karma* and *tapas*, is *puruṣa* alone. The word '*karma*' includes Vedic as well as worldly *karmas*. *Tapas* refers to various religious disciplines mentioned in the Vedas. It includes different forms of meditations also. The word '*brahma*' here means Veda. The Veda that reveals the various *karmas* and *tapas* is also included in 'all this'. That *puruṣa* is *param amṛtam*, limitless and immortal Brahman. Brahman is not bound by time and space.

Yaḥ veda: one who knows this Brahman. One may object here that if one knows Brahman, then Brahman becomes an object of knowledge and it becomes inert like a pot- because anything that is known is inert, being known, like a pot.⁵⁴ If Brahman is inert then one can gain only an indirect knowledge, and one is not interested in that at all. This is not a valid objection because one does not know Brahman as an object; it is the truth of the knower.

That Brahman is *guhāyān nihitam*: abiding in the cave. The cave here is *buddhi*. *Buddhi* is compared to a cave because like a cave it is dark. One does not see anything inside a cave unless light is brought in. *Brahma-vidyā* is the light because of which one can recognise Brahman in the *buddhi*. The cognition that takes place while listening to the *śāstra*, dismisses ignorance about Brahman. It is unlike the cognition of a pot. The pot ignorance goes when one objectifies the pot. The object of thought is recognised and one says, "This is a pot." But here, there is no object for the thought, 'I am Brahman.' There is no subject-object relationship in this knowledge. The subject is Brahman and the object also is Brahman.

^{५३} पुरुषान्न परं किञ्चित् सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः (कठोपनिषत् १ ॥३ ॥११)

^{५४} यद्दृश्यं तज्जडं दृश्यत्वाद् घटवत् ।

Sah avidyā-granthim vikirati: he resolves the knot of ignorance. The word 'he' refers to the one who knows Brahman. *Avidyā-granthi* means the knot of ignorance. A knot is something that you can resolve. When you cannot resolve a knot, you say, "I do not even get 'the hang' of it." In a cluster of threads, the knot is all mixed up. Then you do not know which end to pull. If you pull one wrong end, it gets tightened. If you pull another wrong end, it gets tightened even more. You do not get the hang of it. This is *samsāra*. Anything that you do to get out, only pushes you into one more layer of *samsāra*. You do *karma*, *tapas*, *yoga*, and so on, and find again that you are a *samsārin*. You do not get the hang of *samsāra*, but get hanged in the process. You think you are resolving the knot, but you are tightening it all the time. It is because the notion, 'I am the doer' prompts you to go about doing things. It is the doer who has all the knots. If you ask the question, "Am I really a doer?" then you get some hang of it. When you understand, "I am not a *samsārin*, I am limitless Brahman, nothing is away from me," then the knot of is resolved.

Ignorance of the *ātman* makes one a small person. One becomes a desirer, desiring to be free from being small. The desire to be free is not there out of one's freewill, but is a natural desire. A *samsārin* thinks that he can become free by achieving one thing or the other. If he matures in life, he becomes the desirer of the knowledge that frees him from the very desire itself. He seeks freedom in self-knowledge. The desirer of self-knowledge will last until that knowledge takes place. Ignorance keeps the desirer going, and keeps perpetuating itself. Due to ignorance there is desire, and due to desire there is action. This is the knot. When ignorance goes, the knot also goes.

The teacher says here that this knowledge has to be gained *iha*, here, when one is alive. He addresses the disciple as *somya*, O pleasing one. The address indicates that the teacher is happy with his disciple. Instead of addressing one, 'O sinner,' it is a nice form of endearment. We are not talking of bondage which is real; we are talking of the notion of bondage that gets negated by knowledge. One resolves the knot of ignorance at this time and place in this body. While living one becomes free, and not after death. That is why the *śāstra* teaches a person, "All that is here is *puruṣa* and the *puruṣa* is yourself." We do not have any other agenda. When that knowledge takes place, the knot of ignorance is resolved for good.

The next section of this *Muṇḍaka* explains the same teaching that 'this *puruṣa* is everything' from another standpoint with a bow and arrow analogy.

। इति द्वितीयमुण्डके प्रथमखण्डः ।
iti dvitīyamuṇḍake prathamakhaṇḍaḥ ।

Thus ends the first section of the second chapter.

..... to be continued.