



मुण्डकोपनिषद् Muṇḍakopaniṣad



Mantra 1.2.12 (contd. From the last issue)

The nirvikalpa samādhi also is not the solution because it depends upon the condition of the mind. The nature of the mind is to change; so nirvikalpa samādhi also is not going to last. If one wants a non-changing mind, it is better to be a stone. In nirvikalpa samādhi the concept of time is not there. So, one is timeless—but only for a length of time. Really, timelessness is the nature of the vastu. If at all there is mokṣa, it should be centred on the vastu, and is not gained in time to be lost again. That gain is a gain without loss. It is the gain of the vastu that is already free. A gain depending upon some factor is going to be anitya. Now, if there is an uncreated freedom, it should be centred on oneself and it should be there already. Mokṣa should be the very nature of the vastu, the ātman. Then only one can have mokṣa. There is no other mokṣa. The mokṣa that is dependent upon a situation is not mokṣa, because it is created.

If mokṣa is one's nature, one is always free. Then one would be free to have a limited mind, limited senses, everything limited. One is not seeking freedom from a limited mind; one is seeking freedom from being limited. A limited mind is not the problem; 'limited me' is the problem. One is not trying to free oneself from a limited mind, limited set of senses, limited body, limited wealth, or limited relationships. Freedom from being limited confers upon the person the freedom to have limited 'anything'. This is something beautiful. One appreciates that this freedom is possible presumptuously by analysis. That is the parikṣā. If it is a possibility, then it should be uncreated.

Uncreated means it should be 'me'. It is not a created condition of the mind, it is not a created condition of an external situation which again is meant for a created condition of the mind. Even heaven-going is to enjoy with the mind alone. All the time we are working for a created condition of a mind that is conducive. But one should know that the nature of mind is to change. No mind will remain without change. That is the reason why people begin believing that if one stones the mind, one will be OK. So, the practical people go for stoning. Stoning of the mind is not what we are working for.

The problem is not the mind, the problem is just the person who has the sense of bondage. That person happens to be totally free. If the person thinks that all his limitations are true and intrinsic to the self, then one has no freedom. If they are not, then one is already free. Then mokṣa is one's nature. If I do not see myself

free, then the problem is one of ignorance. “Ātman should be seen”,¹ The knower of the ātman crosses sorrow², “The knower of Brahman gains the limitless”,³—all these sentences reveal the existence of ignorance about the ātman and its removal as freedom.

We take ātman for granted. We always think we know the ātman and we have only to know everything else. No, ātman has to be known. To keep you going, everything else also has to be known. That is all right, but ātman also has to be known. One has no choice in that. In everything else one can have some choices—one may know a little bit less, a little bit more. There is no question of having complete knowledge of any one thing in the jagat. But, ātman is to be known because knowing that, everything is as well known. That is the original proposition.

Our experience also confirms self-ignorance. Suppose someone asks, “Do you know that you are Brahman?” The response would be, “which Brahman you are talking about?” That is enough to prove the existence of self-ignorance. Using presumption also, we can arrive at the existence of ignorance.

But how does the self-ignorance go? It is preceded by a desire to know. First there is a desire for wealth, there is desire for pleasures and a desire for heaven—which is also pleasure. Then one set of desires is converted into another set. If one analyses these desires, then one understands that one wants freedom from being unhappy, from being limited, from being insecure. So, all desires are converted into one desire, the only one predominant desire—desire for mokṣa.

When the nature of mokṣa is not understood, anything that is out of the ordinary becomes the means for fulfilling one’s desire for mokṣa. Since mokṣa is something uncommon, one goes for anything that does not have normal features. So, another big conversion is necessary here. The desire for mokṣa should be converted into a desire to know, jijñāsā. Then one goes for śravaṇa, listening to śāstra. In fact, the śāstra does not leave one in any doubt. It says, “Ātman has to be known for which one has to listen”.⁴

Vicāra, inquiry goes along with śravaṇa. Even though inquiry is not the pramāṇa, only the words of the Śāstra are the pramāṇa, the inquiry is an aṅga, part, of pramāṇa, in the sense that it helps you eliminate all doubts. A question arises here as to what gives rise to knowledge—inquiry or the words of the śāstra? The words give one the knowledge, not inquiry. If inquiry gives knowledge, then inquiry becomes the pramāṇa. We are not averse to reasoning or to analysis. Inquiry is only to gain the vision of the śruti.

१ आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः ॥ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत् चर ॥४ ॥५फ

२ तरति शोकम् आत्मवित् । छान्दोग्योपनिषत् च७ ।१ ।३

३ ब्रह्मविद् आप्नोति परम् । तैत्तिरीयपनिषत् चर ॥१फ