

Second Muṇḍaka Section 1

Mantra 5

तस्मादग्निः समिधो यस्य सूर्यः
सोमात् पर्जन्य ओषधयः पृथिव्याम् ।
पुमान् रेतः सिञ्चति योषितायां
बह्वीः प्रजाः पुरुषात् सम्प्रसूताः ॥२ ॥१ ॥५ ॥

*tasmādagñiḥ samidho yasya sūryaḥ
somāt parjanya oṣadhayaḥ pṛthivyām.
pumān retaḥ siñcati yoṣitāyām
bahvīḥ prajāḥ puruṣāt samprasūtāḥ. (2.1.5)*

tasmāt - from that Brahman; *agniḥ* - the heavens;
yasya - whose; *samidhaḥ* - light; *sūryaḥ* - the sun;
somāt - from the moon; *parjanyaḥ* - clouds (are born);
oṣadhayaḥ - from the vegetation; *pṛthivyām* - on the earth (are
born);
pumān - the male; *siñcati* - places; *retaḥ* - the seed;
yoṣitāyām - into the female; *bahvīḥ* - (thus) varieties of;
prajāḥ - beings; *samprasūtāḥ* - are born; *puruṣāt* - out of Brahman

From that Brahman is born the heaven whose light is the sun (which is lighted by the sun). From the moon, which is born of the heaven , clouds are born. The male born of food places the seed into the female. Thus varieties of beings are born out of Brahman.

The *śāstra* talks about various rituals that one has to perform, and it also talks about meditation on the very rituals. A rituals is used as the basis for *upāsanā*, meditation. Sometimes the word '*vidyā*' is used in the place of *upāsanā*, and there are many types of *vidyās* mentioned in various *upaniṣads*. The *Cāndogyopaniṣad* mentions one *pañcāgni-vidyā* involving five fires. It is purely poetic for the purpose of *upāsanā*.

In *upāsanā* one has *atasmin tad buddhiḥ*, perception of a thing as different from what it is. It is a deliberate superimposition. There is another

type of superimposition where there is no deliberation, like seeing a snake on a rope; it is an error. Suppose one sees Lord Viṣṇu in a *śāligrāma* stone. It is a deliberate superimposition. The Lord is all-pervasive, whereas the stone occupies an insignificant space. When one worships the Lord in a particular form, there is deliberate superimposition.

When one offers a garland to a photograph of a deceased person, it is not offered to the frame. It is to the departed soul. The photograph helps one to remember the person one wants to respect. It can be anything including sandals or even hair. In Indonesia Buddha's tooth is worshipped. The whole country, the will of the people, the constitution, is superimposed on a piece of cloth called a flag. So too, in the *śāstra* there are various forms of meditation asking one to superimpose one thing upon the other. They are meant for gaining *citta-naiścalya*, steadiness of the mind, through repeated practice. Being worship, they also give rise to *citta-śuddhi*, purity of mind.

In *pañcāgni-vidyā*, *Īśvara* is looked upon as five fires. These fires have come from *Īśvara*, so they are non-separate from him. Whatever one superimposes on these fires are also from *Īśvara*. This is the *sarvātma-bhāva* that goes all the way. *Īśvara* alone in the form of clouds, rain, food and seed in male and female becomes finally this body. That is being told here.

When the *puṇya* is exhausted, the *jīva* in heaven comes down through rain by entering the clouds. Then it enters into the earth as the sap and converts itself in the form of the food. The food eaten becomes the seed in a male and is placed in the woman. Then the child is born. Each stage of this transformation is looked upon as a fire ritual and meditated upon. This is the *pañcāgni-vidyā*.

The context here in this *mantra* is not *upāsanā*. The creation is being talked about in the language of *upāsanā*. In the *upaniṣads* one has to know which is the *upāsanā* section, where one has to do something, and which is the knowledge section, where one has to just know. Otherwise, one will get into problems in arriving at the intended vision of the *śāstra*. The sentence, 'The mind is Brahman' is different from 'Look upon the mind as Brahman.' In the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* the later *mantras*³³ are for *upāsanā*. We have two *mantras* in that section where the word '*vidyā*' occurs: '*tato bhūya iva te tamaḥ ya u vidyāyām ratāḥ*, those who revel in *vidyā* enter into deeper darkness' (9) and '*vidyayā amṛtam aśnute*, one gains liberation by *vidyā*' (11).

³³ From the 9th *mantra* onwards.

Suppose one interprets *vidyā* in one *mantra* as knowledge, one will get into trouble in the other *mantra*. The context there is *upāsanā*.

Tasmād agniḥ samidho yasya sūryaḥ: from that Brahman, fire came, for which the sun is the fuel. Here, fire means the effulgent heavenly world. Heaven includes all the *lokas* up to *brahma-loka*. All of them are from that *Īśvara* alone. Heaven is the first fire. The fuel for this fire is the sun. Then *somāt parjanyaḥ*: from the moon, the clouds are born. The moon can be taken as the water vapours formed by the sun. From that water vapour alone the clouds are formed. Clouds are the second fire.

Oṣadhayaḥ pṛthivyām: from the clouds, the plants are born on the earth. From the clouds the rains come and because of the rains, there are plants on the earth. All vegetation is from the earth alone. Food is always vegetarian. The earth is the third fire. The earth and the vegetation are from *Parameśvara* alone.

Then the food eaten is offered as oblations unto the fire of digestion in the person's body. The food that one eats is an oblation to all the five *prāṇas*, the physiological system. The *prāṇas* are kept in good humour so that they function properly. Before eating one offers oblation to them by saying *prāṇāya svāhā*, oblation to the fire responsible for respiration; *apānāya svāhā*, oblation to the fire responsible for evacuation; *vyānāya svāhā*, oblation to the fire responsible for circulation of blood; *udānāya svāhā*, oblation to the fire responsible for upward functions; *samānāya svāhā*, oblation to the fire responsible for digestion. Finally one says '*brahmaṇe svāhā* ', oblation to *hiraṇyagarbha*, who is present in every living organism as all these. The *pumān*, male, who consumes the food is, therefore, the fourth fire. The food eaten is converted into the *retas*, seed, which is the cause for the child. He places the seed in the womb of the female, that is the fifth fire, to get progeny. Thus all the beings are born. There is some connection in all these things.

Bahvīḥ prajāḥ puruṣāt samprasūtāḥ: varieties of people are born from the *puruṣa*. They are born according to their *karma* following certain order. The *devatās* are born first, and because of the *devatās*, activities take place leading to birth of people. So there is an order here.