

## कठोपनिषद् Kāthopanīṣad

2.3.12

If Paramātmā could be the object of one's intellect, it should be known as 'this is such and such'. When the intellect does not function as in sleep, there is no instrument of cognition and hence Brahman should have no existence as such. We generally say that a thing exists when it is cognized by the senses and take it as non-existing if it is not cognized by them. In this way, yoga as mentioned earlier becomes ineffective. As through senses, mind or the intellect Brahman is not cognized, it will be taken as non-existence. In this situation, Śruti says:

नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न चक्षुषा ।

।सतीति ब्रुवतोऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥ १२ ॥

*“Paramātmā cannot be gained through speech nor through mind or through eye. How can it be known to any one apart from him who speaks of It as existing?”*

*Paramātmā vācā prāptuṃ na śakyaḥ | manasā prāptuṃ naiva śakyaḥ | cakṣuṣā prāptuṃ naiva śakyaḥ |* We can understand a lot of things by words, which the mind and the senses cannot see. Through words we can understand the existence of heaven etc. But by words or by the mind or by inference or perception or by sense organs, it is not possible for one to know Brahman or Ātmā. Though it is devoid of all attributes, it does exist, since it is known as the root cause of the universe.

Brahman is being understood as the cause of the entire world. *jagat kāraṇam Brahma astyeva iti*. Cause for this entire jagat is— *astyeva*. When the created object is destroyed, its cause continues to be. Existence of a pot is recognized when one says there is a pot. When the pot is destroyed we

say 'ghaṭo naṣṭah', meaning, the pot is destroyed. But we see broken pieces of the pot do exist. When the broken pieces are destroyed, it is available as powder. When the powder— *cūrṇa* also is split into atom etc., atom etc. *asti*. As long as we can objectify, there is an object and we say it exists— *ghaṭa*. It has got a particular form. And it can be taken that it exists in this form. It exists in the form of *ghaṭa*. It exists in the form of chip, it exists in the form of powder, it exists in the form of atom, it exists in the form of particle.

*Tat asti iti bruvataḥ| anyanna katham upalabhyate ||* Neither through the eyes nor even through the other senses can It be attained. This is the idea. Though It is devoid of all attributes, It does exist since It is known as the root of the universe. The denial of effects presupposes some existence as their ultimate limit. Any *kārya* is dependent on something. That something must be always existent. Any existent object depends entirely upon another existent object and that also depends on another existent object.

Other than the person who has śraddhā in the śāstrās, there are some who say there is no *Brahman* or *Ātmā* and there is no cause for the *jagat* and the entire *kārya* has no basis. They say the *kāryam* is not supported by anything because of its absence— *abhāvāt*. Therefore, non existence alone is the truth. So, the one who has got the opposite view is a *Bauddhā*. Except for the one who says *Ātmā asti*, how the truth of the *Ātmā* is going to be recognized for the other person. *Sastra* says, '*asanneva sa bhavati asat brahmeti veda cet*' If the one says *Ātmā nāsti*, the *Ātmā* is not going to correct him at all. He can have his opinion. It will simply bless that opinion. By giving *prakasha* to that opinion it will bless the opinion. *Ātmā* is unopposed to anything. That is why we can have any number of opinions. *Sastra* says '*asti Brahma jagat kāraṇam*. *Jagat* here is *mithyā* and *mithyā* must have *satya vastu* as its basis. For the person who says the cause for the *jagat* is *Ātmā upalabhyate*.