

## Mundaka

*Continuation of mantra 2.2.7 and 8....*

*Brahman* is everywhere. How can one recognise it in a particular place? Where one recognises everything, there alone one has to recognise *Brahman* also. The *buddhi* is the place where everything else is recognised and *Brahman* also is recognised there. It is called *upalabdhi-sthāna*, a place of recognition. For the all-pervasive *Brahman* there cannot be a location.

The word '*divya*,' which is an adjective for '*brahma-pura*' is also important, it literally means that which obtains in the heaven. We may think that *Brahman* is somewhere in heaven. It is not so. Here, the word means that which is of the nature of illumination, and it is in the form of consciousness alone. So *divye brahma-pure* means 'in the *buddhi* which is conscious'. *Brahman* is 'as though' located there. In fact, everything is located in *Brahman*.

This *ātman* is *manomayah*: he has the mind as the *upādhi*. Due to this *upādhi* *ātman* becomes a thinker. This is *vyāṣṭi* *ātman*. The *samaṣṭi* *ātman* is *sarvajñāḥ* and *sarvavit*. Śaṅkara says, <sup>94</sup> "*Ātman* is recognised by the modifications of the mind and hence called *manomayah*." Any thought that obtains in the mind reveals the presence of the *caitanya* which is invariable. We understand by *anvaya-vyatireka-nyāya*, the inherence-exclusion method,<sup>95</sup> the degree of reality enjoyed by the thoughts. When a thought is there, *caitanya* *ātman* is there; when a thought is not there, the *caitanya* *ātman* is still there. The *caitanya* *ātman* is present irrespective of the thoughts. It is unlike the chair and table, each of which is there in the absence of the other. But in the clay pot, the pot is not independent of the clay. One does not see a pot without the clay or some other material. The pot has, no doubt, a reality of being available for transaction. It holds water, but it does not hold water in terms of reality. The clay remains irrespective of whether the pot is there or not. The clay is invariable, the name and the form called pot is the variable. Similarly, the variable thought has no independent reality and the invariable *caitanya* *ātman* is *satya*. It is *manomayah* which manifests in the form of the various modifications of the mind.

This *ātman* alone is *prāṇa-śarīra-netā*: the one who leads the subtle body. It is *prāṇa*, which is subtle, and it is also the *śarīra* because it obtains within this body.<sup>96</sup> *Prāṇa-śarīra* refers to the subtle body. The subtle body itself does not leave the physical body; *ātman* conditioned by the subtle body, called the *jīva*,<sup>97</sup> alone leaves the subtle body and assumes another body according to karma. From the *upādhi* standpoint alone there is leaving, assuming and so on. The *upādhi* cannot exit the body by itself, and *ātman* also cannot exit anything, being all-pervasive. The subtle body moves like the pot space. The pot space moves when the pot is moved from one place to another. The space that is all-pervasive does not move. The *ātman* is called *prāṇa-śarīra-netā* for this reason too--- all life activities take place only in its presence.

Further, *anne pratiṣṭhitah*: the *ātman* abides in the physical body. 'Anne' does not mean in the food; it means 'annamaye,' in the physical body which is the modification of the food that is eaten. How does it abide? *Hṛdayaṁ sannidhāya*: presiding over the *buddhi*. *Hṛdaya* means *buddhi*. The *ātman* abides in this body as *adhiṣṭhāna*, the basis for the *buddhi*, as the one who provides existence and consciousness to *buddhi*. It seems there are two things here, *ātman* and *Īśvara*. It is not so. *Īśvara* covers one's physical body, mind and senses, and the same *Īśvara* is the *ātman*. All that is here is one *Īśvara* alone.

The *jīva* is beginning-less. Because of karma a given physical body is born. Due to ignorance of its true nature, the *jīva* identifies with its physical body, and thinks it is separate from everybody. This individuality rarely gets removed. One is born with it, and it will be there as long as ignorance is there. The individuality is not true as it is born of ignorance. In order to remove the ignorance alone *śruti* reveals, "tat tvam asi --- you are that *Īśvara* who is *sarvajñah* and *sarvavit*." Consciousness alone is the truth of all the subtle bodies in the body politic, and all the physical bodies are not away from that consciousness. All the bodies are pervaded, blessed and sustained by that consciousness alone. Consciousness identifies with the totality of all the physical bodies and says "I am *virāṭ*." At the subtle level it is *Hiraṇyagarbha* and at the causal level it is *Īśvara*. *Hiraṇyagarbha* includes one's subtle body and *virāṭ* includes one's physical body. *Īśvara* swallows the individuality.

None has any entity. If one wants to gain the status of being an entity, one should go for the only entity that is there, *akṣara puruṣa*. *Puruṣa* is not really an entity. *Puruṣa* is the one because of which everything gains the status of being an entity. When one goes for the *puruṣa*, the individuality is swallowed by *Īśvara*, and what is left out is only one limitless consciousness that pervades the total as well as the individual *upādhis*. They are *mithyā*, having their being in *ātman*.

*Tad-vijñānena*: by the knowledge of that *ātma-tattva*. The prefix 'vi' indicates that the knowledge is born of the teaching of the *śāstra*,<sup>98</sup> and not of someone's personal experience. Such knowledge alone would be complete, and would not leave anything to be desired if the student is a qualified person. The qualifications of an *adhikārin* are listed by *Śaṅkara* as mastery of the mind and senses, meditation and the readiness to renounce everything.<sup>99</sup> Before I can say, 'I am all this,' I should be able to realise that everything belongs to *Īśvara*, which in turn removes the sense of 'mine'. I cannot say, "I am everything," and then hold on to a few things as mine. In renunciation, even if there are a few possessions, there cannot be a sense of ownership. *Śama* and *dama* helps to remove the hold of likes and dislikes.

94 स हि आत्मा तत्रस्थो मनोवृत्तिभिरेव विभाव्यते इति मनोमयः मन-उपाधित्वात् । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

95 Also called the rule of co-presence or absence.

96 प्राणश्च शरीरं च प्राण-शरीरं तस्यायं नेता स्थूलाच्छरीराच्छरीरान्तरं प्रति । ( मुण्डक भाष्यम् )

97 The consciousness that obtains in a given subtle body becomes *jīva*, an individual entity, when it identifies with that subtle body.

98 विज्ञानेन विशिष्टेन शास्त्राचार्यापदेश-जनितेन ज्ञानेन । ( मुण्डक भाष्यम् )

99 शम-दम-ध्यान-सर्वत्याग-वैराग्योद्भूतेन । ( मुण्डक भाष्यम् )

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