

# ऐतरीय उपनिषद् *Aitareya Upaniṣad*

## Chapter 1, Section 1, *Mantra-s* 2-4

Having given this introduction to *paramātmā* as *abhinna nimitta upādhāna kāraṇam*, and yet stating that *paramātmā* alone was, is and will ever be and so the whole creation is just *paramātmā*'s visualization, hereafter we enter the details of creation.

स इमान्लोकान्, असृजत् ।  
अम्भो मरीचीः, मरम् आपः, अदः अम्भः, परेण दिवं  
द्यौः प्रतिष्ठा, अन्तरिक्षं मरीचयः  
पृथिवी मरो या, अधस्तात् ता आपः ॥२॥

*sa imānlokān, asṛjata.*

*Ambho marīcīḥ, maram āpaḥ, adaḥ ambhaḥ, pareṇa divaṁ  
dyauḥ pratiṣṭhā, antarikṣaṁ marīcayaḥ  
pṛthivī maro yā, adhastāt tā āpaḥ (2)*

From this portion onward, *sṛṣṭi prakaraṇa* begins. We call this technically as the *adhyāropa prakaraṇa*. We had seen in *Praśnopa upaniṣad* that *adhyāropa* and *apavāda* is the two-step method used to reveal the *adhiṣṭāna brahma*. *Adhyāropa apavādābhyām niśprapañcam prapañcate, śiṣyāṇāṁ sukha bodhārtham tadvajñai kalpita kramaḥ*. There we had discussed the four steps. First introduce the pot, from there introduce the clay, later deny the pot and finally say clay alone was, clay alone is and clay alone will be. Pot is nothing but a *nāma*, name and *rūpa*, form which are not real. They do not have independent existence. To reveal the clay I start from pot. Introducing the pot first is called *adhyāropa*, from there you go to clay, and later negate the pot which is called *apavāda*. In the same way, world is introduced, from the world *brahman* is introduced. Thereafter world is negated, *brahman* alone

will remain. This is called *adhyāropa-apavāda prakriya*. We had discussed this elaborately in *Praśnopa upaniṣad* recently and in *Vedānta Sāra* a few years back. This *adhyāropa prakriya* that starts here goes up to 1st chapter, 3<sup>rd</sup> section, 12<sup>th</sup> *mantra*. *Apavāda* is just one *mantra*. Negation does not need much time.

Here the creation is not given in the regular order as we see in *Taittiriya upaniṣad*. In *Taittiriya* first we see the five subtle elements and then the five gross elements and thereafter the mixing of them and then the subtle body and gross body and so on. Here the *bhūta sṛṣṭi* is not at all mentioned. The *pañca bhūta sṛṣṭi* is not mentioned. We have add that. From *paramātmā* the *pañca bhūta*-s were first created including the subtle and gross. This step is skipped in this *upaniṣad*. Anyway we are going to negate it. After *bhūta sṛṣṭi* comes *loka sṛṣṭi* and that alone is mentioned here, *sa imān lokān asṛjata*. *Saḥ, paramātmā, asṛjata*, created, as if created, apparently projected, all these 14 *loka*-s.

These 14 *loka*-s are divided into four categories and they are named here. They are, *ambāḥ, marīcīḥ, maram* and *āpaḥ*. These are the four names given to the 14 *loka*-s. How are they classified? First you must know the 14 *loka*-s. *Bhūmi*, the world that we are in, is in the middle. So we have *bhūloka*, upper you go to *bhuvarloka, suvarloka, maharloka, janarloka, tapoloka, satyaloka*. These are the seven upper *loka*-s including the *bhūloka*. The seven lower worlds are *atala, vitala, sutala, ratāsala, talātala, mahātala* and *pātala*. Of these, the top five *loka*-s are together called *ambāḥ*. The highest is *satyaloka* also known as *brahmaloka*. So upper five are called *ambāḥ*. It looks like these worlds are predominantly water and so they are called watery worlds *ambāḥ*.

Then comes *marīcīḥ* indicates the *bhuvarloka*, that is the immediate upper to our *bhūloka*. Literally *marīcīḥ* means the rays of the sun. It is said that in the *bhuvarloka*, that is otherwise called *antarikṣam*, the intermediary space, the

sun's rays are maximum and because of the excessive rays of the sun in this *loka*, it is called *marīcayaḥ* (*marīcīḥ* is *vedic* expression).

*Maram* represents the *bhūloka*. *Śaṅkarācārya* gives an explanation, *mṛyante asmin janāḥ*, the world in which *jīvā*-s quickly perish, that is called *maram*. The last group is *āpaḥ* and that includes all the seven remaining lower worlds. Why it is called *āpaḥ*? The commentator does not take the literal meaning which is water. Instead he takes the etymological meaning, *āpyante bahubhiḥ janaiḥ*, those worlds that are full of too many people. Looks like too many people are in the lower worlds. There is a population explosion in the lower worlds.

Now since the *upaniṣad* has used these uncommon expressions, the *upaniṣad* is compelled to comment upon them. So now each one is going to be defined. *Adaḥ ambhaḥ*, *ambholoka*-s are those that are *pareṇa divam* that include the four *loka*-s beyond *svarga*. *Divam* means *svarga*. *Dyauḥ pratiṣṭā*, including *svarga*, and therefore the five upper worlds together are called *ambhaḥ*. *Pratiṣṭā*, support, *svarga* supports the four further worlds above. So one support world and the four supported worlds, all together five top worlds form the *ambhaḥ*.

Then *antarikṣam marīcayaḥ*, the intermediary world, the *bhuvarloka*, is called *marīcayaḥ*. The third set, again with just one member, is *maram*. *Ṛtīvī maraḥ*. This earth, otherwise called *bhūloka*, is called *marāḥ*. The fourth set is *āpaḥ* and the *upaniṣad* says, *yā adhistāt tā āpaḥ*, those that are down under, *adhistāt*, means down below, the lower seven worlds put together is called *āpolokāḥ*. Thus these 14 *loka*-s were created by the Lord. With this *loka sṛṣṭi* is over. Next we are going to get *lokapāla sṛṣṭi*. Let us read the portion.

स ईक्षत, इमे नु लोकाः, लोकपालान्नु सृजा इति ।

सोऽद्भ्य एव, पुरुषं समुद्भृत्य, अमूर्च्छयत् ॥३॥

*sa īkṣata, ime nu lokāḥ, lokapālānnu sṛjā iti.*

*So'dbhya eva, puruṣaṁ samuddhṛtya, amūrchayat* (3)

*Sa īkṣata, saḥ paramātmā*, now *īkṣata*, visualized. What did he say? *Ime nu lokāḥ*, these worlds have been created by me. So I created these worlds, but what is the condition of the world at this stage? There is no one to maintain the worlds! There should be someone to rule over the worlds, to sustain the created worlds. Without such supporters, without such sustenance the worlds will perish. *Paramātmā* visualized this need also. Immediately what did he think?

Therefore what should I do now? *Lokapālānnu sṛjā iti*, he thought I have to create the *lokapālā*-s, protectors of the worlds. They are all going to be *adidaiva sṛṣṭiḥ*, creation of various presiding deities. So he thought may I create these deities! So what did he do? The *adidaiva sṛṣṭi* is again going to be very peculiar in this *upaniṣad*. The normal pattern in which they are created is that they are created out of *pañca sūkṣma bhūta*-s, the five subtle elements. The *adidevata*-s are invisible powers and therefore they are created out of subtle elements, *sattva pradhāna, rāja pradhāna sūkṣma bhūta*-s. Here the *upaniṣad* describes the creation differently.

What did he do? *Saḥ adbhyaḥ puruṣaṁ samuddhṛtya amūrchayat*, that *paramātmā amūrchayat*, shaped, gave shape to, fashioned what? *Puruṣam!* Here *puruṣa* indicates the *virāt* body, the cosmic form of the Lord. *Adbhyaḥ samuddhṛtya*, while taking the matter from *adbhyaḥ*. Literally *adbhyaḥ* means waters, here it stands for all the *pañca bhūta*-s, taking the matter out of *pañca bhūta*-s, here they are the gross elements, so out of *pañca sthūla bhūta*-s, *paramātmā* shaped the cosmic *virāt* form. What is unique about what is said here? The sequence is uniquely different from other *upaniṣad*-s. The *adidaiva sṛṣṭi* which is *sūkṣmam*, will be said later. Before that this *upaniṣad* mentions *sthūla śarīra sṛṣṭi* and keep in mind that it is not the *vyaṣṭi śarīra* but the *samaṣṭi śarīra sṛṣṭi* is what is mentioned here. Out of this *sthūla śarīra* we are going to get each of the *adidevata*-s.

What is the condition of this *virāt* body? It is nothing but a *māṁsa piṇḍam*. It does not have clear shapes; the final form has not come. Now *paramātmā* is going to visualize and *indriya*-s will come and each part is going to open up, opening of the eyes, opening of the ears, opening of organs of action, each one will open. The creation will be three-step creation. What are they? It is a wonderful concept here. First the physical part will open up. They are technically called *golaka*-s, apertures. The physical *golaka* by itself cannot do anything, cannot perceive, cannot act. Even in a dead body the *golaka*-s, are there; the eyeballs are there, ears are there, the two nose openings are there, the big mouth is there. The physical aspects are there, but those apertures, organs cannot do any function because the subtle parts are lacking. The subtle organs are called *indriya*-s. Behind the eye *golaka* is eye *indriya*. *Golaka* belongs to *sthūla śarīra* and *indriya* belongs to *sūkṣma śarīra*. *Golaka* is visible; *indriya* is invisible. Now we are talking about *golaka sṛṣṭi*, *indriya sṛṣṭi* and not only that, for each *indriya* there is a corresponding *adhiṣṭāna devatā*, the total controlling power. In this *upaniṣad* the *devatā* is called *lokapāla*. What we need to remember is that we are still talking about the total physical body and we have not come to the individual physical body. The discussion will proceed as *golaka*, *indriya*, *devatā* order.

तमभ्यतपत्, तस्याभितप्तस्य, मुखं निरभिद्यत  
यताण्डं, मुखाद् वाग्, वाचोऽग्निः ।  
नासिके निरभिद्येतां, नासिकाभ्यां प्राणः, प्राणाद्वायुः ।  
अक्षिणी निरभिद्येताम्, अक्षिभ्यां चक्षुः, चक्षुष आदित्यः ।  
कर्णौ निरभिद्येतां, कर्णाभ्यां श्रोत्रं, श्रोत्राद्दिशः ।  
त्वङ् निरभिद्यत, त्वचो लोमानि, लोमभ्य ओषधिवनस्पतयो ।  
हृदयं निरभिद्यत, हृदयान्मनः, मनसश्चन्द्रमाः ।  
नाभिः निरभिद्यत, नाभ्या अपानः, अपानान्मृत्युः ।  
शिश्रं निरभिद्यत, शिश्राद्रेतः, रेतस आपः ॥४॥

*tamabhyatapat, tasyābhitaptasya, mukhaṁ nirabhidyata*  
*yatāṇḍam, mukhād vāg, vāco'gniḥ*

*nāsike nirabhidyetām, nāsikābhyām prāṇaḥ, prāṇādvāyuh  
akṣiṇī nirabhidyetām, akṣibhyām cakṣuḥ, cakṣuṣa ādityaḥ  
karṇai nirabhidyetām, karṇābhyām śrotraṁ, śrotrāddiśaḥ  
tvaṅ nirabhidyata, tvaco lomāni, lomabhya oṣadhivanaspatayo  
hṛdayaṁ nirabhidyata, hṛdayānmanaḥ, manasacandramāḥ  
nābhiḥ nirabhidyata, nābhyā apānaḥ, apānānmṛtyuḥ  
śiśnaṁ nirabhidyata, śiśnādreṭa, retasa āpaḥ (4)*

First *golaka* then *indriya* and *devatā* the third, this is the sequence. This is elaborately described in the *purāṇa*-s and is also summarized in *prakaraṇa grantha*-s such as *Tattva Bodha*. Here it is said, *tam abhyatapat*, here *tam*, that, refers to *puruṣa*, that is the *virāt śarīra*, that is called *virāt piṇḍa*, shapeless mass of a body. Every one of us in the womb of the mother initially was only a *piṇḍa*. Thereafter one by one each part opens and develops. We do see such cases in which certain parts do not open up and develop. Thank God those are rare and in most cases beautiful babies are born. The same thing is extended to the cosmic creation also. *Tasmadvirādajāyata. Virājo adhi pūruṣaḥ. Sa jāto atyricyata. Yaścādbhūmimatho puraḥ. Yatpuruṣeṇa haviṣā.* This has been beautifully said in *Pruṣa Sūktam*.

*Puruṣa* represents the cosmic *virāt piṇḍa*, keeping that *piṇḍa* in front, *paramātmā abhyatapat*, means *saṅkalpakṛtavān*, concentrated on the creation, just like how a bird sits on the egg waiting for it to hatch. So *paramātmā* did *tapas*. Just like how the egg breaks open and the baby bird comes out, the cosmic egg is going to hatch and creation comes out. *Paramātmā* has to do the *tapas* because he is the father and the mother. He directed his *saṅkalpa* to the *piṇḍa*. The purpose of this statement is that if we do not bring in this statement, one may think that the *pañca bhūta*-s and the creation will evolve naturally. Then the evolution theory will come. That will mean that the inert universe itself is capable of working itself; no God is necessary; no *cetana tattva* is necessary. Scientists will put forth all those kind of theories

such as big bang theory. They will say that the whole world was cosmic matter. Out of this cosmic matter, things gradually joined together. How did it happen? It just happened accidentally. In a random fashion a unicellular organism came about and from there evolved the multi cellular organisms. Like the Darwinian theory one may think that nature is capable of evolving itself.

Our *śāstra*-s strongly deny any such theories. Even in our own systems like the *sāṅkhya* school of philosophy, idea very close to such evolution theory is propounded. They also talk about *pradhāna* and say that *pradhāna* is capable of working for itself. They call this *svabhāva vāda* which means things evolve naturally. We do not require an intelligent God. This is the theory of *sāṅkhya* school, but that theory is not accepted by *vedānta*. Our *śāstra* says that *paramātmā* certainly plays a role. Only with *paramātmā*'s *saṅkalpa* and blessings, *māyā adhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sacarācaram*, *Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa* says in *Gītā*. I, the intelligent cause, is there to preside over everything, movable and immovable. So *paramātmā saṅkalpakṛtavān*, visualized. Then you should not ask how can *paramātmā* do *saṅkalpa*? You say that *paramātmā* has no instruments to function and that includes a mind that does *saṅkalpa*. Remember *māyā vṛttyā saṅkalpakṛtavān*, *paramātmā* is now associated with *māyā* and he does not need a mind.

All that is needed is *māyā*. Hands, legs, mind, intellect, everything is *māyā*. With the help of *māyā*, *paramātmā* can do everything. Ah, you just make this up! No, tell me, when you build a huge mansion in the dream, who is the architect, who is the contractor, and from where did the brick, mortar, concrete, steel, wood and other various instruments come? You are the architect, builder of that mansion in the dream and you build it with your own steel and concrete! Not just the mansion, you are creating the whole dream world with yourself! Similarly *Bhagavān* does not need anything to bring about this creation! *Māyā* is enough, so *tam abhyatapat*.

Then what is the first creation? *Tasyābhitaptasya, mukhaṁ nirabhidyata*, out of that cosmic *piṇḍa*, the first thing to open up was *mukham*, mouth. No wonder our mouth is the most active part of the body, either constantly talk, and if not eat! Anyway, *mukhaṁ nirabhidyata, nirabhidyata* means broke open. This *mukham* is the *golaka*, the physical part, like what? *Yatā aṇḍam*, just like an egg. Just like an egg that opens up at the right time, the mouth of the *virāt* body broke open. Then, *mukhād vāk*, out of the *mukha golaka* came *vāg indriya*, the speech. Here we should understand it properly. It should not be taken in a literal sense that *vāg indriya* was born from *mukham* because *vāg indriya* is a *sūkṣma śarīra aṁśa* and the subtle cannot come from gross. So we should reinterpret as manifestation. So we should understand that *vāg indriya* manifested in the mouth. *Vāco'gniḥ*, out of *vāk* came *agniḥ*, here *agniḥ* refers to *devatā*, the presiding deity of speech. The presiding deity is *adidaivam* and the other two are *adhyātmam*. That *adhyātmam* and *adidaivam* were both created. *Adidaivam* is called *lokapālaḥ*.

Continuing, *nāsike nirabhidyetām*, the *golaka* the physical nostrils were born; *nāsikābhyāṁ prāṇaḥ*, the *indriya*, the respiratory system, the power manifested; *prāṇādvāyuh*, for *prāṇa* the presiding deity is *vayuh*. *Akṣiṇī nirabhidyetām*, the *golaka* the physical eyes were born; *akṣibhyāṁ cakṣuḥ*, the *indriya*, vision, seeing manifested; *cakṣuṣa ādityaḥ*, the presiding deity is *ādityaḥ*. Then *karṇai nirabhidyetām*, the *golaka* the physical ears were born; *karṇābhyāṁ śrotram*, the *indriya*, hearing power manifested; *śrotrāddiśaḥ*, the presiding deity is *dig devatā*. *Tvak nirabhidyata*, the *golaka* the physical organ of touch, skin was born; *tvaco lomāni*, out of the skin came the hair follicles. According to our *śāstra*, the hair is responsible for the feeling of touch. It is the *śāstric* view, it may be correct, may not be correct, we do not question. *Lomabhyaḥ oṣadhivanaspatayaḥ*, all the plants and trees are the presiding deities of hair. If you take the *virāt puruṣa*, what is his hair? All the plants and trees! What a beautiful concept! Any time you cut a tree, you are cutting of *virāt puruṣa*'s hair, his sensation.



Then, *hṛdayam nirabhidyata*, the *golaka* the physical heart was born; *hṛdayāt manaḥ*, from the heart, the *indriya*, the *antaḥkaraṇa*, the mind manifested. *Hṛdayam* is the physical heart and *manaḥ* is the subtle heart, the faculty and it resides in the physical heart. Don't we use statements like that was heartfelt or don't you have a heart? The residence of the mind, according to *śāstra* is the heart. In the day to day activity, the mind functions all over the body. The mind goes to its residence only during the *suṣupti avasthā*. In other states, waking and dream, it pervades the entire body through *nādi*-s. The point is that the place for the mind is the heart. *Manasacandramāḥ*, the presiding deity for the mind is the moon.

*Nābhiḥ nirabhidyata*, the navel, the *golaka*, the physical part was born; from that *nābhyā apānaḥ*, the *indriya* subtle part manifested. *Apāna* is one of the *pañca vāyu*-s responsible for excretion. *Apānānmṛtyuḥ*, out of *apāna* the Lord of death manifested to preside. *Śīśnam nirabhidyata*, the organ of procreation, the physical *golaka* was then born; *śīśnādretaḥ*, *retas* literally means *puruṣa bījam*, but in this context *retas* must be understood as *upastha indriya* that has the power of procreation, the reproductive power manifested. *Retasa āpaḥ*, and from that or for that came the *ap devatā*. Here the *upaniṣad* has not given the exhaustive list. All *karmendriya*-s have not been taken, all *jñānedriya*-s have not been taken. Only a few samples have been given. *Vāk* represents the organs of action, *cakṣuḥ* represents organs of perception and *prāṇa* represents *pañca prāṇa*-s. You have to extend this to everything. Thus the *golaka*-s, *indriya*-s, *devatā*-s were born or manifested from the *samaṣṭi virāt deha*. From that the *vyāṣṭi śarīra*-s are to be created later and into them the *indriya*-s and *devatā*-s will enter. Right now they are all unconnected. The connection is the next topic. With this the first section is completed. The essence of this first *khaṇḍa* is *loka* and *lokapāla sṛṣṭi* out of *ātmā*.