

# ऐतरीय उपनिषद् *Aitareya Upaniṣad*

## Chapter 1, Section 3, *Mantra*- s 1-11

We have seen the *loka* and *lokapāla sṛṣṭi* in the first section and in the second section we saw *puruṣa sṛṣṭi* and *aśanāyā/pipāsā sṛṣṭi*, and the sharing arrangements. Now the third section deals with *anna sṛṣṭi*.

स ईक्षत, इमे नु लोकाश्च लोकपालाश्च, अन्नमेभ्यः सृजा इति ॥१॥

*sa īkṣata, ime nu lokāśca lokapālāśca, annamebhyaḥ sṛjā iti* (1)

Now we are going to get *anna sṛṣṭi* and for that also the Lord has to visualize. At every stage, visualization is mentioned to emphasize that nothing can be created by itself. We do not believe in evolution theory. We do accept that species adapt to the environment. That does not mean that all that happens without an intelligent being. In Darwinian theory there is no need for *Īśvara*. That is the part we do not agree. To resolve this only the *upaniṣad* repeatedly says *sa īkṣata, sa īkṣata*, to discredit the evolution theory which in *saṁskṛta* is called *svabhāva vādaḥ*. *Svabhāva vādaḥ* says everything comes naturally by itself. The probability of something like that happening is infinitesimal. Our *śāstra*-s vehemently dismisses such notions by repeating *sa īkṣata*. The Lord saw, visualized. He is capable of doing that because he is *sarvajña, sarvavit*. We saw that in *Mundakopaniṣad*. Here also, *saḥ īkṣata*, he visualized. *Ime nu lokāśca lokapālāśca*, here I have created all these worlds and *devatā*-s. I also created the physical bodies, hunger and thirst. They need food to eat! *Ebhyaḥ annam sṛjai iti*, for these hungry people, may I create *annam*, food. So the order is *bhokta, bhoga karaṇam* and *bhoga viṣaya*. *Bhokta* is not said yet. The creation of *karaṇam* is complete. Now is the creation of *bhoga viṣaya*. Creation of instruments are done, now the objects are to be created. Now you please note that the *jīva* has not come at all. *Caitanya*, sentience has

not come yet. They are all like statues, physical equipment has come, eating instruments have come. Who is the one to eat? That individual, the owner, that *puraḥ svāmi*, has not been created. That is crucial and that comes later. Everything is only matter as of now. Seeing that he will later enter as *jīvātmā*. You may ask if sentience is not there, how do you say that these matter asked, said this and that. Really speaking the *devatā*-s, hunger, thirst, they did not speak. It is only for the sake telling this story it is said in this manner. It is an imaginary dialog for describing the creation. Right now *agni devatā* is inert. *Vāg indriya* is inert. Finally after creating the inert, he will enliven them. He does by he himself occupying the inert! How did the Lord create food?

सोऽपोऽभ्यतपत्, ताभ्योऽभितप्ताभ्यः, मूर्तिरजायत ।

या वै सा मूर्तिः, अजायत, अन्नं वै तत् ॥२॥

*so'po'bhyatapat, tābhyo'bitaptābhyaḥ, mūrtirajāyata*  
*yā vai sā mūrtiḥ, ajāyata, annam vai tat (2)*

*Saḥ apaḥ abhyatapat*, that *Īśvara* again *abhyatapat*, did *tapas* of visualization. *Bhagavān's tapas* is *saṅkalpa* only. So he meditated on *apaḥ*, waters. Here water represents all the five elements with the thought that food is necessary for these people. Then what happened? With the *saṅkalpa* of the Lord, from them, *tābhyaḥ abitaptābhyaḥ*, from that meditation, *mūrtiḥ ajāyata*, *mūrtiḥ* here refers to solid food. The *upaniṣad* itself says that, *yā vai sā mūrtiḥ ajāyata annam*, whatever *mūrtiḥ ajāyata*, shaped thing that was born that is known as *annam*, food. Then after the Lord created food, what happened? Imagination of the *upaniṣad* goes further.

तदेनत् सृष्टं, पराङ् अत्यजिघांसत्,

तद्वाचा अजिघृक्षत्, तन्नाशक्रोद्धाचा ग्रहीतुम्

स यद्वैनत्, वाचा अग्रहैष्यत्, अभिव्याहृत्य हैव अन्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥३॥

*tadenat sṛṣṭam, parāṅ atyajighāṁsat,*

*tadvācā ajighṛkṣat, tannāśaknodvāca grhītum*

*sa yaddhainat, vācā agraḥaiṣyat, abhivyāhṛtya haiva annamatrapsyat (3)*

*Tat enat sṛṣṭam, parāṇi atyajighāṁsat*, this is also an imaginative idea, do not take it literally. The whole thing is highly imaginative. *Annam*, food got frightened that once the hunger and thirst and other *karaṇa*-s got hold of food, it will get eaten up! So it started running away. Just like a rat which is the food for the cat runs off at the sight of a cat, so did all food started running away. This is the story part of it. What is the idea? *Ānandagiri* writes, it ran away means that the food does not enter into our system, it remains outside if we try to eat by any other organs. Remaining outside is called running away, that is all. Don't argue with examples of feeding tubes, intravenous feeding and so on. So the food, *parāṇi atyajighāṁsat*, ran away.

Then each organ started running after the food. Every organ ran after the fleeing food. Now *upaniṣad* takes each *karaṇa* and says that all of them failed. They could not catch up with food. Here certain expressions are repeated. If I mention that statement, you will understand all the statements. In every case there is one thing common, *ajighṛkṣat*, tried to grasp or catch. Each organ, be it speech or eyes or ear, each one tried to catch that food. Then the common theme is *tat na aśaknod grhītum*, it was not able to catch. Next line says *yad agrahaiṣyat*, if it had grasped, what would have happened? Food would have been eaten by that organ. For example if the eye had been able to grasp the food, just by seeing the food, hunger would be satisfied. Obviously we know that does not happen. So all organs failed though except *apāna*, that is eating, so eating alone was able to catch that food. This is the essence of the last two lines of 3<sup>rd</sup> *mantra* to the 10<sup>th</sup> *mantra*.

*Annam* which is very essential for the survival of human body is consumed by *apāna vāyuh* only and not the other organs. *Apāna vāyuh* means what? That function of *prāṇa* by which the *vāyu* goes down, *adho gamanavān vāyuh*, *apāna vāyuh*. The meaning of *apāna vāyuh* will differ according to the context. For example, when you are inhaling the air, the air is going through the nostrils and going towards the lungs and therefore the inhalation air is

called *apāna vāyuh*. This is one meaning. Another meaning is, when you eat food, there is a power by which the food is pushed down to the stomach, you may call it peristaltic movement in anatomy, there is some power by which the food is pushed inside and that is the power of *apāna vāyuh* alone. Later after digestion and all, when the rest of the waste matter is pushed down to the excretory organ, that power is also called *apāna vāyuh*. Right from the top of the alimentary canal to bottom most portion, every movement is aided by the power of *prāṇa* and the downward movement power is called *apāna vāyuh*. Of the three, inhalation, swallowing and excretion functions of *apāna vāyuh*, the *upaniṣad* talks about the swallowing function. This function of *apāna vāyuh* is responsible for the consumption of food.

To talk about the glory of *apāna vāyuh*, the talks about the other organs and how they failed to catch the food. Each organ tried to eat the food, but failed. You could have simply said that, but the *upaniṣad* has its own style and so it enumerates each organ's effort and how each failed leading up to *apāna vāyuh*. The style is that the *upaniṣad* says, the organ tried, it failed, if it had succeeded, we would be eating through that organ even now. This the repetitive statements and first of it with respective the speech is *mantra* #3. *Tad vācā ajighṛkṣat, tannāśaknod vāca grhītum*, speech tried to catch the food by the organ of speech, but it could not. *Sa yaddhainat vācā agrahaiṣyat*, if he could have eaten the food through the organ of speech, then we would all eat just by talking about food. Then, *abhivyāhṛtya haiva annam*, just by uttering the word food, *atrapsyat*, we would be satisfied. In the same fashion we read for the other organs.

तत् प्राणेन अजिघृक्षत्, तन्नाशक्रोत्राणेन ग्रहीतुम्

स यद्धैनत्, प्राणेन अग्रहैष्यत्, अभिप्राण्य हैव अन्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥४॥

*tat prāṇena ajighṛkṣat, tannāśaknot prāṇena grhītum*

*sa yaddhainat, prāṇena agrahaiṣyat, abhi prāṇya haiva annamatrapsyat* (4)

It tried *tat prāṇena ajighṛkṣat*, to grasp food through *prāṇa*, here by *prāṇa* is

meant *ghrāṇa*, by smelling. *Tannāśaknot prāṇena grhītum*, it could not catch it like that. If it had grasped the food with breathing or by smelling, then we all would have been satisfied just by smelling food. Really smelling food acts an appetizer and instead increases our hunger for food! Similarly,

तत् चक्षुसा अजिघृक्षत्, तन्नाशक्रोच्चक्षुसा ग्रहीतुम्  
स यद्वैनत्, चक्षुसा अग्रहैष्यत्, दृष्ट्वा हैव अन्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥५॥

*tat cakṣusā ajighṛkṣat, tannāśaknot cakṣusā grhītum*  
*sa yaddhainat, cakṣusā agrahaiṣyat, dr̥ṣṭvā haiva annamatrapsyat* (5)

He tried to go through, *cakṣusā*, with the eyes it failed. If it had succeeded, we would have got satisfaction by seeing food. Then,

तत् श्रोत्रेण अजिघृक्षत्, तन्नाशक्रोच्छ्रोत्रेण ग्रहीतुम्  
स यद्वैनत्, श्रोत्रेण अग्रहैष्यत्, श्रुत्वा हैव अन्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥६॥

*tat śrotreṇa ajighṛkṣat, tannāśaknocchotreṇa grhītum*  
*sa yaddhainat, śrotreṇa agrahaiṣyat, śrutvā annamatrapsyat* (6)

*Śrotreṇa*, through the ears he tried, it failed. If it had succeeded, we would have been satisfied by hearing about food. Then,

तत् त्वजा अजिघृक्षत्, तन्नाशक्रोत्त्वजा ग्रहीतुम्  
स यद्वैनत्, त्वजा अग्रहैष्यत्, स्पृष्ट्वा हैव अन्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥७॥

*tat tvajā ajighṛkṣat, tannāśaknottvajā grhītum*  
*sa yaddhainat, tvajā agrahaiṣyat, spr̥ṣṭvā annamatrapsyat* (7)

*Tvak*, the organ of touch tried and failed. If it had succeeded, we would have been satisfied by touching the food. It would be very easy. Just one plate of food and just pass it around and everybody touches the plate and immediately hunger is gone. Nothing of that sort. Then,

तत् मनसा अजिघृक्षत्, तन्नाशक्रोन्मनसा ग्रहीतुम्  
स यद्वैनत्, मनसा अग्रहैष्यत्, ध्यात्वा हैव अन्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥८॥

*tat manasā ajighṛkṣat, tannāśaknon manasā grhītum  
sa yaddhainat, manasā agrahaiṣyat, dhyāvā annamatrapsyat (8)*

It tried through the mind, it could not. If it had succeeded, by merely thinking about food we would have been satisfied. That does not work that way either. Then finally,

तत् शिश्रेण अजिघृक्षत्, तन्नाशक्रोच्छिश्रेण ग्रहीतुम्  
स यद्वैनत्, शिश्रेण अग्रहैष्यत्, विसृज्य हैव अन्नमत्रप्स्यत् ॥९॥  
*tat śiśnena ajighṛkṣat, tannāśaknoncchiśnena grhītum  
sa yaddhainat, śiśnena agrahaiṣyat, visṛjya annamatrapsyat (9)*

*Śiśnena*, by the organ of procreation or generation, the food could not be caught. If it had worked, then *visṛjya*, just by excretion, hunger would be satiated. All of them failed. Then came the real hero. Now comes the *apāna vāyuh*.

तत् अपानेन अजिघृक्षत्, तदावयत्, सैषोऽन्नस्य ग्रहो  
यद्वायुरन्नायुर्वा एष यद्वायुः ॥१०॥  
*tat apānena ajighṛkṣat, tadāvayat, saiṣo'nnasya grahaḥ  
yadvāyurannāyurvā eṣa yadvāyuh (10)*

*Tat apānena ajighṛkṣat*, it wanted to catch that, did it succeed? *Tadāvayat*, yes it caught it! It succeeded in taking the food! So what is the conclusion? *Ṣaḥ eṣaḥ annasya grahaḥ, yadvāyuh*, so *yaḥ apāna vāyuh*, that which is known as *apāna vāyuh*, *ṣaḥ eṣaḥ annasya grahaḥ*, that *apāna vāyu* alone is known as *annasya grahaḥ*, the receiver of food, the eater of food, the consumer of food. *Annāyurvā eṣaḥ yadvāyuh, yaḥ eṣaḥ apāna vāyuh*, that which is known as *apāna vāyuh*, is therefore called *anna āyuh*. This *apāna vāyu* is given a title by the *upaniṣad* as *anna āyuh*. What is the meaning of *anna āyuh*? Peculiar meaning, *anna dvārā āyuṣaḥ hetuḥ anna āyuh*, that which is the cause of longevity by giving you food. *Apāna vāyu* is the cause of longevity. How?

*Apāna vāyu* directly does not give you a long life, it helps you in eating food and food is the cause of longevity. Thereby it gives a longer life, it sustains the body.

With this *anna sṛṣṭi* is over. Remember *annam*, the food represents all objects of experience in the world. With food the entire cosmos is included. The entire cosmos is the field of objects of experience. Sound is the food for the ears, form and color are the food for the eyes, all smells are the food for the nose, in short, sound, touch, form, taste and smell are the object of the world, food to be experienced in the world. They are the food for ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose. So *bhogya*, *bhoga sṛṣṭi* is over. Still nothing is happening. With just *bhogya* and *bhoga* nothing can happen because still the universe is an inert world. It is like a statue and food kept in front of the statue. What is needed? A *bhoktā* must be there who must use the instruments and enjoy the food. Therefore now comes the crucial point of *bhoktṛ praveśaḥ*.

स ईक्षत, कथं न्विदं मदृते स्यादिति, स ईक्षत, कतरेण प्रपद्या इति ।

स ईक्षत, यदि वाचाभिव्याहृतं, यदि प्राणेनाभिप्राणितं, यदि चक्षुषा

दृष्टं, यदि श्रोत्रेण श्रुतं, यदि त्वचा स्पृष्टं, यदि मनसा ध्यातं,

यद्यपानेनाभ्यपीनितं, यदि शिश्रेण विसृष्टम्, अथ कोऽहमिति ॥११॥

*sa īkṣata, katham nvidam madṛte syāditi, sa īkṣata, katareṇa prapadyā iti,*

*sa īkṣata, yadi vācābhivyāhṛtaṁ, yadi prāṇenābhiprāṇitaṁ, yadi cakṣuṣā*

*dṛṣṭaṁ, yadi śrotreṇa śrutaṁ, yadi tvacā spṛṣṭaṁ, yadi manasa dhyātaṁ,*

*yadyapānenābhyapīnitaṁ, yadi śīśnena visṛṣṭaṁ, atha ko'hamiti (11)*

*Saḥ īkṣata*, he visualized, at each stage of creation, *paramātmā* visualizes. So now before *bhoktṛ sṛṣṭi*, creation of the enjoyer also, he visualizes. What did he visualize? *Mat ṛte idam katham syāt?* Without me how can all this be? How will they function? Without me, the touch of consciousness, the touch of life, the touch of sentience, what can the instruments and the objects do? It is like when you build a house, you have done all the wiring, installed the fans, and the air-conditioner and all kitchen appliances are hooked up, but

you forgot to call the electric company to start the service. Electricity had to be here or none of the equipment will function. Similarly here with the instruments and objects being there, there will not be any life without that touch of *paramātmā*. Without the *cetana tattva*, what will these *jaḍa vastu* do? So *paramātmā iti aikṣata*, thought in this way.

Therefore the Lord decided to, go into every *karaṇam*, instrument as the *jīvātmā*. For the *bhoga* and *bhogyā* to be useful for transactions, the Lord decided to enter every *karaṇam*, as the *bhoktṛ caitanya*, the *cidābhāsa*. The *bhoga* and *bhogyā* are created but the *bhoktā* is not created. Instead the original entity itself takes up the role of *bhoktā*. If we take the example of a dream, I, the waker create the dream body, dream world etc., but the waker enters the dream body as the enjoyer of the dream. How do you say that? When after sometime, the dream world is resolved, the dream instruments are resolved, but the dream experiencer is not destroyed. The very experiencer comes back as the waker. So the waker alone plays the role of the dreamer. The dreamer only comes back as the waker. So the waker and dreamer are identical. Dreamer is not created, only the dream instruments and objects are created. Similarly *Bhagavān* creates both *bhoga* and *bhogyā*, but enters them.

He also had another desire that he should create someone who will be able to know himself. Now I am the only *cetana tattva*, sentient being, everything else is *jaḍa*, inert. The inert cannot know me. So he said that I should create someone who will come to know me. To do that *Bhagavān* thought I will enter the instruments as the *jīvātmā*. Then the *jīvātmā* begins to experience the world. Initially the *jīvātmā* thinks I am the body, I am the sense organs, I am the mind etc. This is the general confusion for everyone. Then once the *jīvātmā* begins to think, the sense organs are the instruments with which I experience the world. I see through the eyes. I hear through the ears. I smell with the nose and all these are *karaṇam* that I use. If all these are just instruments that I use, then who am I? Suddenly this question comes! I



thought I am the eyes or ears, but I know I am the user of the eye or the ear. I thought I am the mind, now I know I am thinking through the mind. If all these are instruments, I should be someone who is the employer of the instruments, operator of the instrument. Then every *jīvā* faces the basic question, who am I?

Now *Brahman* was thinking if I were to become something far away, if I am a remote star somewhere, *jīvā* will not inquire. I will enter the very body as the *jīvā*. Initially he will not think into himself, he will be busy with wife, house and all these things, but one day the question will come, who am I? Once this question comes, then *jīvātmā* will come to know *paramātmā*. So *paramātmā* thought I should create a situation like that. That is what is said here. For now skip the next line and go to the one after. *Saḥ ikṣata, yadi vācābhivyāhṛtam*, if I utter the words through the organ of speech, then speech becomes a *karaṇam*, an instrument and a *karaṇam* can never be a *kartā*. I am the user of the organ of speech. So I am not the organ of speech. Similarly, *yadi prāṇenābhiprāṇitam*, if I breath through the *prāṇa*, I have to be different from that. So also, *yadi cakṣuṣā dṛṣṭam*, if I see with my eyes, eyes cannot be who I am. Then *yadi śrotreṇa śrutam*, I hear with my ears, so the ears are the instruments and so I am not the ears. Then *yadi tvacā spṛṣṭam*, if I touch with my skin, I am the user of the skin, skin is an instrument and I am different from the skin. *Yadi manasa dhyātam*, if I think through my mind, I am using my mind as an instrument, I cannot be the mind or the thought. *Yadi apānena abhyapānitam*, if I eat through the *apāna vāyu*, here *apāna* refers to the eating *vāyu*, swallowing air, then again the *apāna vāyu* is an instrument and I am the user different from that. Similarly, *yadi śīśnena viṣṛṣṭam*, I excrete through the excretory organs, again those organs are instruments used by me.

*Atha ko'ham*, then who am I? This is the fundamental question. This baffles even the scientists because whatever research I do, I can do on observed

things, I can never do research on the observer. The observer will remain the eternal mystery, say the material scientists. It is not a mystery to *Ṛṣī*-s. More and more powerful telescopes may discover more and more, farther and farther galaxies, but there is no scope to observe the observer. So he will ever remain a mystery for all of them. So *jīvātmā* is curious to know who am I, the observer, *ko'ham iti*. This is the thought of *jīvātmā*. *Jīvātmā* will think like that not the *paramātmā*. So be careful when you read these lines. Therefore *paramātmā* thought that if I create *jīvātmā*, he will think like that. So *paramātmā* wanted to create *jīvātmā* for two purposes, one is for *loka vyavahārāram*, for transactions in the world, and the second is for *brahma jñānāram*. Now we will go back to the second line that we skipped before. Having thought in this manner, then the next visualization is, *sa īkṣata, katarēṇa prapadyā iti*, now *Bhagavān* thought, through which path or door shall I enter the body? At last, *paramātmā* decided to enter through the top of the skull. That is going to be said next.