

अमृतबिन्दु उपनिषद्  
*Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad*  
Verses 5 - 7

We have seen how to shift the attention of the mind from thoughts of objects to the subject, to the awareness to *ātmanaḥ bhāvam*, the state of self-hood, just being the Self, and thus attaining the *paramaṁ padam*. Supreme state is attained! Mission accomplished! *Upaniṣad* is over! Not quite, the teacher continues,

तावदेव निरोद्धव्यं, यावद्हृदि गतं क्षयम् ।

एतज्ज्ञानं च ध्यानं च, शेषो न्यायश्च विस्तरः ॥५॥

*tāvadeva niroddhavyaṁ, yāvad-hṛdi gataṁ kṣayam*  
*etajñānaṁ ca dhyānaṁ ca, śeṣo nyāyaśca vistaraḥ* (5)

*Tāvat eva*, so long only, *niroddhavyaṁ*, to be controlled, what has to be controlled? *Manaḥ*, the mind of course! Mind has to be controlled only up to that – till when? *Yāvat*, as long as, till *hṛdi gataṁ kṣayam*, till the mind has gone and merged into the heart, *hṛdi*, in the heart, *manaḥ*, the mind, *gataṁ kṣayam*, become one with that. To get merged, *layam* or *kṣayam*, it has become extremely quiet or it has disappeared into the heart, merged into that. *Tāvat eva niroddhavyaṁ yāvad-hṛdi gataṁ kṣayam*, the mind has to be kept under control only till it merges with the heart, till it merges into the Self. It is not just one day practice. That is what is called *sādhana*, constant attempt to make the mind object-less awareness. Mind, because of its propensity, previous *vāsanā*-s, tendencies, and present likes and dislikes, memories, intentions, ambitions, all sorts of things, keeps on moving, pushes itself of objects. Therefore one cannot take the mind to be free. You practice for sometime, the mind is still and quiet. Don't think you have become enlightened! Suddenly it will go back to its old ways. The *sādhana* has to continue till the mind totally disappears and becomes that pure awareness.

When the mind has completely merged into that awareness, then the mind is no mind, it is pure awareness itself! The state of mind, in spite of thoughts, remains as pure awareness. Thoughts will be there, but you are not disturbed by the thoughts at all. You know yourself to be the pure Self! A *mahātmā*, when he looks at the world, the objects in it, he will have a thought about the object, but there will not be any identification with the thought. The thought appears, it goes away. Just like when you are watching a movie, you do not get carried away with everything that is going on the screen. If you start moving with the movie, you will be in big trouble! You are still. So many things are happening on the screen. You just watch.

So he says, *etat jñānam*, this is what is called *jñānam*, and not only that, *etat jñānam ca dhyānam ca*, this is called *dhyānam ca*, meditation also! *Śeṣaḥ*, anything else that is said is, *nyāyaśca vistaraḥ*, is logic or further explanation, elaboration. It is a mere logical reasoning, elucidation. All that is meant for only to convince your intellect, to ensure, reinforce your conviction. You may continue your practice. Practice from many thoughts about many objects, to many thoughts about one object to one thought about one object, one thought about the subject, *akhaṇḍākāra vṛtti* or *brahmākāra vṛtti* and finally it is *nirvikalpa*! When the mind is no more oscillating or thinking about any object. Object is nothing but the subject itself! Ultimately it merges in that awareness, *hṛdi gataṁ kṣayam*! This should be practiced, *nityam mumukṣuṇā kāryam*, constantly. This is not rejection of the world, but stopping the projection of the world. Do not get caught up in the flow of thoughts and get carried away. World is there, thought will appear, just watch. Let the world play as the movie on the screen.

So the one who is desirous of freedom has no hatred with the world. He has no misunderstanding with the world. He does not give any reality to the world. If you give reality to the world, if you identify with the world, you will have desire, anger, likes, dislikes, lust, passion, own it, possess it, or want

to get rid of it, come out of it, all these will be there. All these things are happening because I have given reality to it, I have given importance to it. If you want freedom, if your attention is to your inner freedom, then you will not have interest in all those things. You can observe all of them. You do not have to reject them. This is quite simple, while at the same time it is very difficult. You have to work at it. Now the question is, if my mind is to be turned toward the subject, should it think or not think? Replacing the object with the subject, is it thinking or not thinking? So the teacher says, the next *mantra* is very interesting. Let us read.

नैव चिन्त्यं न चाचिन्त्यं, न चिन्त्यं चिन्त्यमेवतत् ।

पक्षपाद विनिर्मुक्तं, ब्रह्म संपद्येति तदा ॥६॥

*naiva cintyam na cācintyam, na cintyam cintyamevatat*  
*pakṣapāda vinirmuktaṁ, brahma saṁpadyate tadā* (6)

I think the teacher is confused! *Na eva cintyam*, don't think! *Na ca acintyam*, don't stop thinking! *Na cintyam*, don't think! *Cintyamevatat*, think! *Guruji*, are you okay? Did you have something to eat or are you very hungry? Why all this confusion? Did you sleep well last night? Tell me one thing, why are you saying so many things and that too contradicting things! *Na eva cintyam*, don't think! *Na ca acintyam*, don't stop thinking! *Na cintyam*, should not be thought of! *Cintyamevatat*, think! Are you really having any understanding or not? You yourself are not sure? No, no, no, we should try to understand what he means by all this.

*Na cintyam*, should not be thought of! What do we naturally, spontaneously think? In our mind, if something we like, spontaneously it comes. When it is about some object that we like, the thinking about the object is so natural, so spontaneous. At any time your mind is invariably thinking about things that you like, an object, a person, a place, an experience, some memory. So he says, do not think about *ātman*, the awareness, the Self, as something you like, as an object of your liking. Also do not think of things that you do not

like. *Na ca acintyam*, neither to be thought of as liking, nor not to be not thought as disliking. A thought that you don't like, 'I don't want to even think about it'. An object that you don't like, get rid of it, I tell you, get it out. I don't want to see it, I do not want to even think about it. An object that gives you a bitter feeling, anger, frustration, it should not be rejected like an object of hate. So it should not be entertained as an object of liking, nor should it be rejected as an object of dislike.

Again *na cintyam*, *viṣaya abhāvena na cintyam*, don't think of it like something other than the object. First don't think of it as something that you like. Do not try to get rid of it as something that you do not like. Now it is said do not think of it as an object other than that, *ananya cintanam*. What does it mean? Thinking of something different! But what should I do? *Cintyameva!* You should think! *Avicāro kṛto bandhaḥ, vicāro nivartate*, when you live thoughtlessly, that is prescription for bondage. You come out of that bondage by proper thinking. So *cintyameva tat*, think about that. Think about what? You should entertain thought of awareness, which is not other than that. That is why any question you ask *Ramaṇa Maharṣi*, the answer comes back to who am I? Anything other than that, will take you outward. Only extrovertedness will come. When the inquiry about the Truth is done, it is to be thought of as my own Self, not something yonder, somewhere in heaven or anything like that. It is my own true nature. So *cintyameva tat*, it should be thought of as the subject.

So when you are standing in front of a beautiful scenery, say sun just rising from the horizon, a beautiful sunrise. If you are a poet, and you are thinking about the beauty of the sunrise, a beautiful poem will come from you. If you are painter, you will run to get your easel, canvas and your paint brush, and your thought will be I should capture it in this picture. A *vedantin* looking at the sunrise begins to think, who or what is seeing this beautiful sunrise? The eyes are seeing it. So the attention is turned from what you are seeing to who

is seeing. The eyes are only an instrument with which I am seeing. As the sun quickly emerges from the horizon, the orange glow now becomes bright yellow. I am still seeing it. What I am seeing has changed. I am the one who is constantly present in and through all the changes. Your mind becomes still. Even when you close your eyes, various thoughts may come to the mind and pass. Who is thinking all these thoughts? I am the one thinking all these thoughts. I am the one behind all these thoughts. Who am I? Don't give any answer like I am *saccidānanda ātmā*. I am not looking for an answer. Instead the *upaniṣad* says, *cintyameva*, engage in that analysis of the subject. Just think of the subject.

When you engage in this type of inquiry, *tadā*, then, *brahma saṁpadyate*, *Brahman* is obtained, what type of *Brahman*? *Pakṣa pāda vinirmuktam*, that which is beyond, devoid of my partiality. It is not something to be liked or something to be not liked, it is not an object. It should be thought of impartially, objectively! The subject should be thought of objectively, meaning without likes and dislikes! It is not something away from me. It is not something other than me. It is me, myself! My own Self! It is 'I'. I am the pure Self, one who has all thoughts, but not a thought of object. I am the one who knows the presence and absence of thoughts, but who is ever present and never absent. *Naiva cintyaṁ na cācintyaṁ, na cintyaṁ cintyam eva tat, pakṣapāda vinirmuktaṁ, tadā brahma saṁpadyate*.

So the teacher here, clarifies to the student, when I say think, don't think, I mean, don't think like the way you think about everything else. Do think, though. Don't think of it as an object. Don't think of it as something that you like or something that you do not like. It is not that easy. Therefore one needs some support, a method by which you gradually reach there. There is a need for you to prepare and go into that stage. You need an *ālambana*, support. Like a child just starting to walk, it needs to hold on to something. Till the child develops the necessary motor skills, it need support. In the

same way, this kind of meditation or ability to think of subject exclusively needs preparation. Therefore the next few *mantra*-s give the *sādhana*-s required for preparing the mind to reach that stage.

Should I think or not? Do not stop thinking, think of the subject, but do not think of it as an object of perception. It has to be thought of as a subject of all our thoughts. So turn the mind's attention to its own source, source of all thoughts. In *upadeśa sāra*, it is said, *ṛtastyastvahaṁ ṛttimāśritāḥ, ṛttayo mano viddhyahaṁ manaḥ*, the very source of all thoughts is the 'I' thought. *Ṛttyaḥ tu ahaṁ ṛttim āśritāḥ*, 'I' thought is the source of all thoughts. In each and every thought we have, I am thinking, I am walking, I am doing this, I am doing that, 'I' is the common factor. This 'I' thought is presently 'i', limited, identified, conditioned by its own limitations. When your attention is on the objects, what you see, hear, smell, taste and touch, you get carried away. Turn the attention from all that and direct it to the subject and not the limited ego self, but 'I', the source of all thoughts. It is the source of all joy. That is what we seek, bliss and peace! 'I' awareness is the source of all thoughts. I am that awareness. The ability to stay put in that pure awareness is what is referred to as *tadā brahma samīpadyate*, attaining that *Brahman*. How to get that ability, what is the method?

स्वरेण सन्धयेद् योगं, अस्वरं भावयेत् परम् ।

अस्वरेण अनुभावेन, भावो नाभाव इष्यते ॥७॥

*svareṇa sandhayed yogaṁ, asvaraṁ bhāvayet param*

*asvareṇa anubhāvena, bhāvo nābhāva iṣyate (7)*

*Svaram*, here it refers to *Om*, the sound symbol of *Brahman*. *Om iti brahma, Om iti etat sarvam*, says the *upaniṣad*. *Om* is the symbol of the supreme Truth. It represents the Absolute. *Om* is an *ālambanam*, support. *Etat ālambanam śreṣṭham, etat ālambanam param*, is said in *Kaṭhopanīṣad*. This is verily important and the most powerful support. You all have seen the high wire act in circus, how the performer uses a long pole in the hand as she

makes her way on the tight rope 50' above ground. In the same way control of mind is such an act and for that *Om* is a great support. As we proceed in our meditation, we will understand the use of *Om*. *Om* is a support for us to keep the mind focused on the Absolute Truth. *Svareṇa*, with the support of the *Omkāra mantra*, *sandhayed yogam*, unite with the higher. Let one engage in the union with the Absolute. So it is a means to quieten the mind and the abode of Truth. This is not outside somewhere, it is within oneself. It is beyond all thoughts as awareness. *Svareṇa sandhayet*, let one engage with the help of *Om* and pursue and discover the Truth!

Now one may ask, why not use some other sound? Why *Om*? *Om* has its own meaning. That meaning indicates the highest. That meaning we will see later. *Om* is not only a symbol, but indicates the Truth. When we use *Om*, initially it is only a support. Your mind is not thinking of anything else. It thinks of only one thing, *Om*. As we have been discussing, the mind usually has many thoughts about many objects. From that it moves to many thoughts about one object, then to few thoughts about one object, then one thought about one object. When we use *Om* as the support, it helps us to come away from all other thoughts to just *Om*. That *Om* represents the Absolute Truth which is none other than you, the subject. Even chanting *Om* is also the occupation of the mind. It is true that all other thoughts are removed, but this one thought will be there. So it is said even that *Om* should end in silence.

*Asvaram bhāvayet param*, meditate, contemplate on the absence of sound. May you move from the chanting of *Om* to that silence, *asvaram*, the absence of sound which is referred to as silence, is not created! You cannot silence. You can only observe silence. Sound can be created, but not silence. Silence is always there, but on top that you make noise and that becomes sound. In silence only sound appears and disappears. That which is there before and after, and while there is sound, is silence. When sound is not there, you can

recognize silence. It is the silence that supports sound. To hear my sound you should be silent. If you are talking and I am talking who is listening? Like the talking heads on the politicians panel of TV. All six of them are talking at the same time. It is called cacophony. You cannot hear anybody. Cut out all the sound and you can hear the silence. The silence is there before, during and after, always.

In the same way, stretching this example a little bit, thoughts appear in awareness. Thoughts disappear in awareness. Thoughts are known in awareness. Awareness is there before, during and after thoughts. So this is the connection, between silence and awareness. Just like sound appears and disappears in silence, so do thoughts appear and disappear in awareness. Know the silence through the sound. Know the awareness through the thoughts. In *Kenopaniṣad* it is said, *pratibodha veditam matam*. So *asvararī bhāvayet param*, meditate on silence. Then, *asvareṇa anubhāvena*, when one is able to remain in the stillness of silence, where the absence of sound is observed, your attention is first in the absence of sound. Then slowly you begin to appreciate the presence of silence. Our mind is so full of thoughts, noisy, just listening to so much of noise. Suddenly there is no noise. When you come to experience that inner silence, *asvareṇa anubhāvena*, not the external silence alone. External silence is the absence of sound. Internal silence is the absence of thoughts. Thoughts have reached a state of no expression. Stillness is achieved. Then what is one able to get out of this?

*Bhāvaḥ na abhāvaḥ iṣyate*, this statement can be interpreted in two ways. *Bhāvaḥ* means existence and *abhāvaḥ* means non-existence, *iṣyate*, reaches, is attained. So the existence thing reaches non-existence. Or a non-existent thing begins to exist. That which is existing for us, this world of plurality that ceases to exist when one reaches the inner silence. One understands the emptiness of the world which is only an appearance. This world of names and forms and all other qualities is nothing but various manifestations of my



thoughts. It has no reality. That one comes to realize. Also, the other way around, the non-existent becomes existent. What was not realized as inner awareness is manifest now. The world which was perceived to be so real in now seen as mere appearance, imagination and *ātman* that was not known before, becomes known now. Like the snake and the rope example. The presence of the snake ceases to exist and the rope that was not seen before is now seen. They are not two different experiences, but one and the same. The one and only thing is the real, the other was just imagined, it was an illusion. That which was earlier non-existent, the rope, is now known. Earlier what was seen, the snake, is no more. These are not two different things. In the absence of the rope, the snake was seen. In the understanding that the snake is not real, the rope is realized. In the same way, the world of plurality that was seen in ignorance is no more when knowledge is gained, when you see the presence of awareness.

So the inquiry is not about the reality of the world *per se*, the inquiry is about the Absolute nature of the Self. That is experienced in the merging of the thoughts in awareness and *Om* is used as the support. What is that which one comes to experience as Reality? So the next two *mantra*-s are about what is experienced by a man who has attempted this journey. Let us see that next.